

Sarah Flannery

# Working with Volunteers

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- Volunteers are your congregation
  - On the front lines of ministry
  - If volunteers aren't there, the ministry might not happen at all.
- Paid ministry staff should be able to do the ministry better than most anyone else but should refuse to take over.

# Invitation to Belong

- Serving in the church is the best way to achieve belonging in community.
- Everyone has a built-in call to meaningful work.
- We are simply coordinators.



# Recruiting

- Personal asks are key
- Start with a BIG ask, then go smaller if needed
- Ask a question about serving during every visitation
- Customize ministry around the volunteers you have
- Create ministry teams.



# Recruiting

- What to include in the ask:
  - Structure and curriculum, if applicable
  - Number & ages of participants
  - Background check & training requirements
  - Schedule expectations
  - The reason you chose them
  - Deadline to respond



# Recruiting

- When people say “no”
  - Plug people into areas of passion – if not the ministry you asked for, find another one.
  - Be curious. Ask questions, learn more about them.
- When the volunteers just are not there.
  - Intergenerational worship & discipleship.
  - Adapt the ministry to fit the community.
  - Do not assume more responsibility forever.



# Training

- Safety
- Goals of the ministry
- Participants who need extra care
- Process for getting substitutes
- Curriculum



# Accountability

- Be present before, during and after ministry time to observe
- Have courageous conversations when needed
  - Baby steps – this is ongoing training
- Examples
  - Preteen leader & inappropriate skit
  - Sunday school partners who didn't get along
  - Colleague complaining



# Support & appreciation

- Create teams!
- Be approachable – say yes when you can
- Be flexible – help with scheduling subs, pay for requested supplies
- Commiserate
- Handle the hard conversations with kids or parents

