



Doing the numbers on service

Our ministries are blessed with committed volunteers (aka unpaid staff) serving in many ways that support the mission and vision. For many of these volunteers involvement in the ministry is yet another path on their individual spiritual journey. Recently, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the number of volunteers and the volunteer rate (the % of the population that volunteer) are declining.

- 2007—60.8 million Americans age 16 and up volunteered, compared with a high of 65.3 million in 2005.
- 2007—26.2% of the population did unpaid work for an organization compared with 28.8% in 2005.
- Married persons and parents with children are more likely to volunteer than singles or childless individuals.
- Connectedness to school, churches, communities locally and globally creates the desire to volunteer. Be sure to offer easy ways for people to get involved in volunteering short term or in ongoing activities.
- The more education a person has the more likely she or he volunteers.
- Some of the most committed volunteers are the jobless and those with financial challenges.
- Volunteering comes from the heart and is a rich spiritual experience. Take time at board and staff meetings to answer the question “How are we as a ministry motivating congregants to volunteer?” Help people to see their own growth coming out of their service.
- The value of volunteer time while hard to quantify is currently estimated at \$18.77 an hour. This is not based on earning power of the person.

Volunteers bring their time, talent and financial support to churches. Why is this important? Knowing the amount of volunteer time and value demonstrates the support the ministry has. Many ministries have recognition events to honor volunteers and their commitment and value to the church. It is not about the money, rather another way of looking at how important volunteers are to a ministry. We wish to thank the 200 ministers, spiritual leaders, licensed Unity teachers, Association and ministry board trustees and congregants who volunteered their time at the 2007 mid-year meetings of the Association. The dollar value of their time for one hour was \$3,754; for one day, \$30,032. What they contributed—priceless.

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