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## A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

November 2023 Gospel Seeds

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### **Inviting Volunteers** **Western North Dakota Synod** **Paul N. Marsh, CFRE, GSB Fundraising**



For more than a decade, church clients have repeated the same challenge to me: volunteers are harder to recruit than ever before.

Volunteers are the backbone of any successful congregational ministry. What used to be called the 80/20 Rule (80% of the work is done by 20% of the people) is now 90/10 or worse. So how do you reverse this trend in your church?

We have talked in this space about the process to get a financial gift: we inform about what we are raising money for specifically, we inspire by answering the question why this project is so important, we invite a specific gift or gift commitment, and we thank the donor. The process for recruiting a volunteer is the same!



Prospective volunteers want to serve, but most are concerned about signing on for an endless term of service, being drawn into unrelated tasks for which they have no interest or ability, and being unsupported. When you address these concerns up front, you will have a far greater chance of success in recruitment.

We suggest preparing a one-pager that describes three to five specific tasks of the role, the specific term of service (usually one year except for council members), and email and phone numbers for leaders who will respond to questions or problems which may arise. Also nice to have are some quotes from those who have served in that role in the past, describing how meaningful the role was to them.



Finally, plan an exhaustive annual volunteer orientation and training program.

When you begin implementing this plan for recruitment, you will see an increase in dedicated volunteers.

