

Handout 8. Finding and Forming Leaders

According to research studies, only about 10% of “registered” members are actively engaged in ministry leadership positions in most churches. This generally follows the 80-20 rule (also known as the Pareto Principle) which asserts that 80% of outcomes (or outputs) result from 20% of all causes (or inputs) for any given event. Other studies show that large parishes (defined as 2000 members or more) receive significantly lower support at all levels when calculated as a factor of participation, with people feeling that their participation won’t be missed since there are so many “others” who will contribute talent and financial resources.

If only 10% of members are accomplishing more than 80% of what your church is doing today, imagine what 20% or 30% could do. If your church engaged just an additional 2% of your members over the next year, it could result in 20% more volunteer hours, which would allow the church to expand and deepen its ministries. *How can you make this a reality in your church?*

An Equipping and Empowering Mindset

The involvement of volunteer leaders is essential to a healthy, vibrant church life. Developing an effective strategy for engaging people in ministry gives meaning and purpose to the many tasks and responsibilities taken on by volunteer leaders. It will ensure that people who give of their precious time will experience an efficient process and feel they are adding value to a ministry or program.

Churches that are effective in developing leadership—inviting, preparing, and supporting leaders—first embrace an empowering mindset that guides their efforts. These values are rooted in the Christian tradition. In 1 Corinthians 12:4–31, and mirrored in Romans 12 and Ephesians 4, we see a vision of church (body of Christ), of ministry (Spirit-led service to the church and world), of gifts (given by the Holy Spirit for the building up of the body of Christ), and of mutuality or partnership (complementing gifts, given by the Holy Spirit, for the common good) that is essential for developing leaders.

1. The Church is the body of Christ; and through our baptism, we are members of the one body.

Each person in the faith community is called to ministry and is blessed with gifts for ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit. In baptism we celebrate the call of each person to ministry within the church community and the ministry of the church to the world. Through baptism, all Christians share in the mission of Christ and the Spirit. The gift of the Spirit at baptism empowers us to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ. All ministry serves this mission. The baptized serve this mission and share in Christ’s priestly, prophetic, and royal office.

The presence of the Spirit of the risen Lord is the source of power in the ministry of the Christian Church. The Church and all its members emerge from and draw nourishment from the breaking of the bread, the reality of the resurrection and Pentecost, and the sending forth of the disciples to spread the Good News. It is from this perspective that all followers of Jesus share in his ministry.

2. Individuals and the entire community are blessed with gifts for ministry.

Christian ministry is gift-based. Special charisms of the Holy Spirit, which flow from baptism, equip Christians for their special tasks within the church. In the first centuries of the Christian Church, as needs were recognized in the community, those who were discerned to be appropriately gifted by the Spirit were called forth to serve.

Each person is uniquely gifted for ministry and these gifts consist of more than one's talents. Other aspects of our giftedness include our interests, motivations, values, passions, hopes and dreams, and life journeys. Gifts discernment focuses on the whole person and the entire context of his or her life.

3. There is an abundance of gifts for ministry.

An abundance mentality means that there is diversity of gifts already present in the faith community. The Spirit has blessed the community with gifts. There is no shortage of gifts! The primary task of ministry leaders is to facilitate the discovery of these gifts and the utilization of these gifts on behalf of God's kingdom. Some of the gifts will be utilized within church-based ministries, while others will be exercised in the world.

4. Ministry leaders are called to empower and equip individuals and the entire community to utilize their gifts for the mission of the Christian Church.

Ministry leaders are servants to the needs of the community and stewards of the community's resources. They play an essential role in the church by helping identify the gifts of the community, developing these gifts for ministry, utilizing these gifts on behalf of God's kingdom and the mission of the church, and supporting the gifts of all church members.

A Leadership Development Strategy

What does an empowering mindset mean in practice for the development of a leadership strategy for lifelong faith formation? This section provides a way to think about developing roles for today's volunteer leaders and a process for identifying or calling, matching, preparing, and supporting volunteer leaders.

Developing People-Friendly Leadership Roles

Traditionally, faith formation programming has relied on a core of dedicated teachers who taught classes for thirty weeks a year and adults who led youth group meetings and classes weekly. Finding leaders who will commit to weekly service for a whole year is increasingly difficult because people's lives, work, schedules, and commitments have dramatically changed and become much more complex.

Creative pastoral leaders are rethinking leadership roles and designing commitments to be more people friendly. They are building programming around what people can do, not what they want or need them to do. They are designing or redesigning programming around the leaders. How can you develop more leader-friendly roles and commitments? Here are a few ideas to spark your creativity in building programming around leader schedules and commitments:

- ✓ Work with the time commitments that fit people's schedules. If leaders can serve for one day or one weekend per year, then have an opportunity ready for them. If leaders can serve for a month (four weeks) in the fall and again in the spring, have four-week program options for them.
- ✓ Offer a variety of roles. Many people don't want to teach or lead a program but would like to mentor or guide people one-to-one or in a small group. Develop mentoring relationships for people to learn how to pray, to serve those in need, and much more.
- ✓ Develop leadership roles with fewer tasks and divide up a large leadership role into smaller responsibilities. It's easier to find and prepare people for a more limited and clearly defined leadership role, than to find a leader to do a large job. It is also a way to involve more leaders in a project or program.

- ✓ Design a program with a primary leadership role (teaching, presenting, facilitating activities) and support roles. For example, a children’s program might have a lead teacher (or two) and adults or youth who serve as small group activity leaders. Small group activity leaders make a four week commitment each year. The same could apply to any other program where there are lead presenters or facilitators and small group leaders.
- ✓ Design programming in shorter units of time. Rather than a twenty-four week program with one leader, create four, six-week minicourses—each with a different leader. Eight-week programs can be conducted in two four-week minicourses.

As you build a leadership system, remember that you can build the system around the leadership roles that are needed and around the leaders you need. And you can build it around the gifts of your people and create opportunities for them to utilize their gifts.

Five Principles for Calling and Supporting People in Ministry

Every ministry experience in the church deepens a leader’s relationship with Jesus Christ. We recognize that people have an opportunity to grow in their faith through involvement in ministry. We are concerned about their spiritual growth and their knowledge and skills for the practice of ministry.

People are respected as full partners in ministry. We give people responsibility and work with them as team members, sharing the decision-making and work.

The gifts, abilities, interests, and passions of people are honored. We take the time to discern people’s gifts and talents and see that their role matches well with their gifts.

People receive specialized training, resources, and support so that they can adequately perform their ministry, especially when the knowledge or skills involved are new to them. We ensure they feel capable and confident that they can perform their ministry. We tailor the training and resources to their roles and responsibilities.

People are appreciated and recognized for the value of their contributions to their ministry and to the church. We take the time, formally and informally, to express the gratitude of the church for their work. We create specific strategies to demonstrate appreciation and recognize the contributions of leaders.

Process

Step 1: Assess the way that you currently engage in identifying or calling, matching, preparing, and supporting volunteer leaders. One way to do this is to use the leadership development principles (above) as a reflection tool and describe how your church or ministry practices each principle.

1. Every leadership experience in the church deepens a leader’s relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Leaders are respected as full partners in ministry.
3. The gifts, abilities, interests, and passions of the leader are honored.
4. Leaders receive specialized training, resources, and support so that they can adequately perform their ministry.
5. Leaders are appreciated and recognized for the value of their contributions to their ministry and to the church.

Another way is to use the “Leadership System Checklist” (at the end of this section) to assess each aspect of your leadership development system, identify strengths and areas for growth, and develop action plans to improve.

Step 2. Identify the ways that people can be engaged in the life and mission of the parish community.

Create a *Ministries Guide* (in print, digital, and website versions) with the ways that people can be involved in the ministries of the church – within the parish and out into the wider community. Use or adapt the “Researching Ministry Opportunities in Your Church” worksheet to collect information.

Step 3. Develop a Gifts Inventory for all ministries (or for a particular ministry) by using or adapting the “Gifts Inventory” to help people identify their gifts and help the church community recognize and celebrate the abundance of the community’s gifts. Have people complete the gifts list (left column) and then the list of ways they can be involved (right column). Be sure to add specific gifts (left column) from your analysis of leadership roles in the *Ministry Guide*. Add specific leadership opportunities from your *Ministry Guide* to the experience and interest list (right column).

Step 4. Engage the community in identifying their gifts, experiences, passions, and interests using the *Gifts Inventory* and in finding ways to be involved using the *Ministries Guide*. The *Gifts Inventory* can be conducted in gathered settings such as during or after Sunday worship or church events. Consider sponsoring a Stewardship Sunday with displays of ministries and volunteer leadership opportunities and presentation by leaders representing church ministries who can speak briefly about the ways people can get involved. Use church meetings and gatherings to present the opportunities for engagement and have people complete the *Gifts Inventory*. Be sure to distribute the *Ministries Guide* at all gathered events. Make the *Gifts Inventory* and *Ministry Guide* part of new member welcome kits, and preparation programs for Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, and other program settings.

The *Gifts Inventory* can be designed into an online form or survey using SurveyMonkey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com>) or Google Forms (<https://www.google.com/forms/about/>). Send the invitation via email, e-newsletter, and social media to the whole community. Send personalized invitations to targeted audiences. Be sure to have the *Ministries Guide* available online for people to review.

If your church does not have a communication system to send invitations and directly communicate with those who are interested (matching gifts with ministries), this is the time to create one. There are three widely-used email systems, each with different annual subscription fees (and often nonprofit discounts): Constant Contact: <https://www.constantcontact.com>, Mail Chimp: <https://mailchimp.com>, and Flocknote: <https://flocknote.com>. It’s also a good time to select a group texting app to communicate with people.

Step 5. Develop a system to inventory people’s gifts and match them with potential ministry leadership positions. If you use SurveyMonkey or Google Forms you can easily create individual profiles of people who have responded, as well as Google Sheets or Excel spreadsheets of all people who responded.

Step 6. Meet with people (in-person, phone, video meeting) to interview them and match people with a ministry leadership position. Connect them to the leader who is responsible for coordinating the ministry or program or activity.

Step 7. Prepare people for their ministry leadership role with specialized training and resources so that they can adequately perform their ministry. First, provide an orientation to their ministry so they feel confident and knowledgeable about their leadership role. Second, provide them with the knowledge and skills for performing their role. Leaders bring experience, so it’s important to discern what they need, rather than what we think they need. Here are several key insights to guide designing training experiences for leaders.

- ✓ Training needs to be *applicable* to the leadership role. We customize the training around the required knowledge and skills. There is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to training leaders. The scope and the depth of training are related to the requirements of the volunteer leadership position and the knowledge and skills the leader possesses. This approach focuses on what he or she *needs* to learn.
- ✓ Training needs to be *experiential* (“hands-on”), so that leaders develop both the knowledge and the practical skills for their ministry.
- ✓ Training needs to be *on-the-job*. The best context for training is the actual work the leader is doing. Learning and performing are intertwined. In this sense training is embedded in the doing of the ministry, such as planning meetings, individual preparation, conducting the program or activity, and evaluation meetings. Training is woven into every aspect of the ministry.
- ✓ Training needs to be *just-in-time* so that there is immediacy of application. This provides a way for the leader to see progress, immediate results, and some rewards for the time they put into training.
- ✓ Training needs to use a *variety of learning approaches*—independent learning, apprenticeship learning, group learning, and courses and workshops. There are lots of ways for leaders to develop the knowledge and skills they need.

Step 8. Support and encourage leaders continuously.

- ✓ Recognize leaders as they begin their ministry. Sometimes this is done in a commissioning service where leaders are recognized and blessed.
- ✓ Provide leaders with easy access to the resources, information, and tools they need to accomplish their work.
- ✓ Gather information and evaluate the work of leaders through observation, consultation, group discussion, instruments, or other means; and guide leaders in creating plans for their continued growth.
- ✓ Express and celebrate the support of the church. There are many ways to do this throughout the year: public recognition (at worship, in a church bulletin or newsletter), support (childcare while they provide their service), gatherings (an annual recognition dinner, an annual picnic), personal (notes of appreciation, praying for leaders), and enrichment (an annual retreat, support meetings, paying for workshops or conference fees).

7 Ways to Reengage Volunteers – Susan Beaumont

(<https://susanbeaumont.com/2022/05/18/re-engaging-the-volunteers>)

1. Evaluate needs and streamline roles.

Make certain that every role you define has a meaningful part to play in making ministry happen. You may need to downsize your board and committee structure. You may need to rewrite your bylaws and policy statements to support a leaner structure. People have no patience for tasks that serve no useful purpose. If you are unable to fill a particular role, leave the position open for a time to see what you learn about the void. Is the position really needed?

2. Embrace technology.

We have learned many things about working remotely and working more efficiently via technology. Let go of the notion that all ministry needs to take place in the church building. Let people do their work for the church the way they have learned to work for their employers.

3. Promote flexibility.

Don't limit volunteer opportunities based on physical availability during narrow time slots. Certainly, some positions have a very specific time commitment. However, much ministry can be accomplished whenever the volunteer has time to get the job done. Be creative about how you structure volunteer roles to allow people to use their available time.

4. Move toward episodic micro-volunteering.

People are less interested in joining committee and boards with ambiguous workloads. They are more inclined to say yes to a specific task that falls within their wheelhouse — a task that they can complete on their own timeframe, working with other individuals who are equally invested in the task. This requires more work on the part of volunteer managers and committee chairs, dividing the tasks and delegating them between available workers.

5. Clarify the expected outcomes of volunteer assignments.

Create volunteer position charters. What is the purpose of this role? How does it contribute to the mission of the congregation? What are the boundaries of the role and the expectations of its occupant? How will the volunteer grow by serving in this capacity? How will the volunteer be supervised and evaluated? How will the volunteer know that their work made a difference?

6. Help people pursue passion.

Too many volunteer jobs are just plain boring. Too many meetings. Too many restrictions based on “how we've always done it.” Too many instances of being unsupported and overwhelmed by the need because all the work fell on too few shoulders. Other instances of being recruited to serve when there wasn't a meaningful contribution to make.

7. Begin with the volunteer.

Consider this: Instead of starting with a position that the church wants filled, begin with the volunteer. Figure out what they are passionate about, where they feel compelled to make a difference, and then craft opportunities that honor the passion while also supporting the mission and priorities of the congregation. Volunteers will always be the life force of the congregation. The success of the future church depends in part on our ability to reimagine volunteerism. Don't wait for clarity about the future to emerge. Begin the important work of reinvention now.

Leadership System Checklist

Assess the leadership system in your church and identify areas for growth.

Part 1. Inviting People into Leadership

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. We list all the tasks and positions for which leaders will be needed. | Yes | No |
| 2. We write a job description for each leadership position. | Yes | No |
| 3. We use a variety of targeted strategies for recruiting leaders. | Yes | No |
| 4. We use a variety of community-wide strategies for recruiting leaders. | Yes | No |
| 5. We survey the church community to discover leadership abilities and interests (gifts inventory). | Yes | No |
| 6. We search throughout the year for persons with leadership potential. | Yes | No |
| 7. We maintain an up-to-date database of potential leaders. | Yes | No |
| 8. We select each prospective leader based on a thorough knowledge of both the job and the person. | Yes | No |
| 9. We interview each person and explain the responsibilities involved. | Yes | No |
| 10. With each leader, we establish a clear agreement regarding the responsibilities and terms of his or her service. | Yes | No |

Part 2. Preparing and Training Leaders

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|--|-----|----|
| 11. We customize the training to each leader and leadership position. | Yes | No |
| 12. We use a variety of learning approaches including independent learning, apprenticeship, group learning, and courses and workshops. | Yes | No |
| 13. We provide an orientation program for all leaders. | Yes | No |
| 14. We develop a training plan to prepare for leaders. | Yes | No |
| 15. All leaders participate in the training they need. | Yes | No |
| 16. We evaluate the effectiveness of the training with leaders. | Yes | No |

Part 3. Supporting Leaders

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 17. We authorize leaders to begin their service. | Yes | No |
| 18. We provide all leaders with the resources and information they need for their work. | Yes | No |
| 19. We gather information and evaluate the work of leaders. | Yes | No |
| 20. We express and celebrate the community's appreciation for leaders. | Yes | No |

We need to strengthen or improve the following areas of our leadership system:

Ministry Opportunities in Your Church

This tool is one way to gather information about the leadership roles and needs for each ministry, program, and organization in your church.

Ministry/Program/Organization

Please indicate the key leader or leaders in your ministry, program, or organization.

Leader/Coordinator	Leader/Coordinator	Leader/Coordinator
Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone
Email	Email	Email

Volunteer Jobs for Your Ministry/Program/Organization

For each volunteer job please indicate the name of the job, a few key responsibilities, the abilities needed, where the job is done (in the parish, in the community, etc.), and the amount of time required. Please complete this information for each of your volunteer jobs.

Job

Name

Responsibilities

Abilities Needed

Where?

When?

How Long?

Job

Name

Responsibilities

Abilities Needed

Where?

When?

How Long?

Gifts Discernment Inventory

Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God. (1 Peter 4:10)

Each of us is like a gift package from God. Our combination of gifts is unique. Not one of us has ever been replicated on this earth! Our giftedness includes our talents and abilities, styles, interests, experiences, preferences, and passions for serving in the world. Our gifts are part of an abundant web of giftedness in our faith community. These gifts were given to us so that we might minister together as partners in God's work in the world. And our gifts are meant for us to enjoy too! When we live out our gifts, we discover the joys of an abundant life.

This inventory will help you identify your own gifts, and help our church community recognize and celebrate the abundance of our gifts. Complete the gifts inventory (left column) and then the list of ways you can be involved (right column). Equipped with a list of your gifts and talents, you can now consider the type of activities you want to be involved in. Think about which interests best match with your gifts and talents.

About You

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email

Age

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-29 | <input type="checkbox"/> 60-69 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 70-79 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 | <input type="checkbox"/> 80 and over |

Special Information

- I am interested in becoming more involved in the ministries of our church. Notify me of opportunities that fit my gifts.
- I am interested in changing some of my current commitments.
- I prefer a one-time commitment (1 hour to 1 day).
- I prefer a short-term commitment (up to 6 months)
- I prefer a specific, longer term of service (1 year or more)
- I am satisfied with my current involvements in the ministries of our church.
- I am unable to take on additional commitments at this time.
- I would like to talk with a member of the team about my using my gifts.

Note: Add specific gifts you are seeking based on your analysis of leadership roles in the Ministry Guide.

My gifts are...

Check up to a dozen things you do well. Feel free to add other gifts not specifically listed.

- accounting/finances/budget
- acting/drama
- artwork/crafts
- caring and compassion
- carpentry/building
- childcare
- clerical work
- communication
- computer skills
- cooking and serving food
- coordinating and organizing projects
- dancing
- decorating
- facilitating and working with groups
- faith-sharing
- fundraising
- gardening
- graphic design
- hospitality
- housekeeping
- legal services
- listening
- maintaining buildings/grounds
- mechanical work
- mediating and problem-solving
- medical/nursing care
- mentoring/tutoring
- music: instrumental or voice
- photography
- planning/visioning
- praying
- promotion/advertising
- public speaking
- researching
- social justice work
- sound recording/audio production
- teaching/training
- video and video production
- visiting others
- web design
- writing

Note: Add specific leadership opportunities from your Ministry Guide to this list.

I have experience or interest in these areas of involvement. . .

*Mark the 5 greatest areas of experience (E) with +
Mark the three greatest areas of interest (I) with ▢*

- | E | I | Potential Involvement |
|-------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| _____ | _____ | arts |
| _____ | _____ | children's ministry |
| _____ | _____ | care for and dignity of the elderly |
| _____ | _____ | consolation/grief ministry |
| _____ | _____ | communications |
| _____ | _____ | community outreach/service |
| _____ | _____ | data administration |
| _____ | _____ | disabilities / special needs |
| _____ | _____ | education: children |
| _____ | _____ | education: youth |
| _____ | _____ | education: adults |
| _____ | _____ | environment / care for the earth |
| _____ | _____ | family ministry |
| _____ | _____ | finance |
| _____ | _____ | global mission |
| _____ | _____ | grief and loss |
| _____ | _____ | health ministry |
| _____ | _____ | media (photography, videos) |
| _____ | _____ | music |
| _____ | _____ | new member welcome |
| _____ | _____ | pastoral care |
| _____ | _____ | prayer ministry |
| _____ | _____ | addiction and recovery |
| _____ | _____ | sacramental preparation |
| _____ | _____ | service to the poor and vulnerable |
| _____ | _____ | singles ministry |
| _____ | _____ | small faith communities |
| _____ | _____ | social justice |
| _____ | _____ | social/community life |
| _____ | _____ | spiritual growth |
| _____ | _____ | stewardship |
| _____ | _____ | web ministry |
| _____ | _____ | worship/liturgy |
| _____ | _____ | young adult ministry |
| _____ | _____ | youth ministry |

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