

Exploring volunteering

Volunteering can be a very rewarding and enriching experience. As well as developing new skills and meeting new people, volunteering is a great opportunity in which to make a difference!

Through volunteering in GB lives and communities are transformed, as the unconditional love of Jesus is seen in action – both in word and deed! Many of our leaders and team leaders feel their work in GB is a calling from God. They serve God by getting involved in the mission of GB.

Below are some ideas to help you identify, invite and encourage people to volunteer and join your GB Team.



Identifying...

There are a number of different places from which volunteers can be sourced including:

- Your own church congregation
- Christians from other churches who are keen to be involved in mission among children/young people
- Students from university/college Christian Unions
- Children's and youth workers e.g. in the Methodist Circuit, CofE Diocese and Churches Together Networks etc.
- Parents of children linked with the church (and later new GB) who are sympathetic to the Christian faith may be able to help in a wide range of practical ways (this in itself can be a great form of outreach!)
- Christian teachers and members of staff – particularly if the new GB is going to be set up in their school.

Inviting...

Although general appeals for volunteers can be helpful, it is often the personal approach which works best. Things worth trying include:

- Sharing the vision of GB with the wider church and helping them to see how volunteering with GB is a great opportunity in which to share hope and see lives transformed. You could share our vision film – https://youtu.be/bOC9ldWO_ik
- Encouraging volunteers to share their stories and experiences of volunteering with GB or share GB's short film about being a volunteer – https://youtu.be/_nBOqFYT4Mc
- Placing a 'Don't miss out on this great opportunity...' advert in your church/circuit/diocese newsletters/social media/website/noticeboards and local Christian press/bookshop, university Christian Union/chaplaincy, your town/city's volunteering hub or network etc.
- Having a five minute slot at a local Churches Together meeting
- Sharing one-to-one with potential volunteers over a coffee
- Approaching someone direct saying 'We think you'd be great to be involved in this...' and providing them with the opportunity to go away to think and pray about things
- Purchase GB Trading's postcard for recruiting leaders to give to potential volunteers

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- Having a get-together for people potentially interested in volunteering, so as to share, pray and provide people with the opportunity to ask questions/find out more about what's involved
- You might also want to think through what commitment you're asking potential volunteers to give e.g. asking them to commit for a year in the first instance/setting up a rota of helpers. Remember some people may be put off if they think the volunteering is indefinite and so would prefer a specific timeframe.

Encouraging...

Don't forget, once your team is in place, as well as supporting existing volunteers, it's also good to be continually encouraging new people to join too. This could be done through:

- Providing 'Give it a try' taster events – opportunities to come along and experience what your GB involves
- Developing younger leaders through a mentoring system; providing the opportunity for people to shadow others, ask questions and try new things in a safe environment
- Regularly sharing with the wider church about the different activities/what God has been doing through your group – so that they continue to be praying about and enthused by things
- Maintaining close links/good relationships with, for example, your local college Christian Union and/or Christian bookshop, so that it's easier to spot potential volunteers both for now and the future
- Offering 'one-off' opportunities to volunteer e.g. through special events
- Valuing people for their support/contributions with positive feedback, meals out and regular thanks.

Don't forget!

In all of the above it's important to be regularly praying both for your existing volunteers and for new volunteers. Pray that God will provide, equip and develop your GB Team to be the best that it can be for Him.



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