

Ministry Minute

Westwood Office Volunteers

"Serving with Purpose, Behind the Scenes"



Have you ever wondered about who stuffs all the envelopes for stewardship campaigns, who are the kind voices answering the phone, or who makes the first impression on a member or visitor coming to the Westwood office during the week? These essential tasks are accomplished by a wonderful group of volunteers who, like many ministries at Westwood, work behind the scenes to create ripples of impact throughout our community.

Westwood's dedicated office volunteers give of their time and talents each week, contributing an essential role in keeping the office running smoothly. With diverse backgrounds and unique skills, these women not only impact the church's mission, but have also felt a deep impact in their own lives.

Marilyn Nelson began volunteering just before the pandemic. She brings a wealth of experience to the front desk with a background in reception and education. Particularly, teaching English as a Second Language has proven invaluable; Marilyn's careful attention to detail in proofreading materials is a unique way her gifts have found a home at Westwood, and another is connecting with people.

"I enjoy interacting with a variety of people each week," she shared. "Whether it's members, non-members, or staff, these connections enrich my life. Being at the front desk is one small way I can support our ministry."

Another familiar face for over 18 years is Donna Bushway. She echoed similar sentiments: "The flexibility of hours is great, and I love staying connected to my church family. Volunteering gives me a sense of purpose, and I always feel appreciated." Donna's contributions extend beyond simple tasks; she creates a welcoming, organized, and efficient environment that supports both staff and members alike.

Volunteering became a way for Luanne Bachman to stay engaged after retiring from teaching. "Joyce Kautz asked if I could take over for her in the office, and 13 years later, I'm still here!" The ever-changing nature of the office keeps her on her toes. "Each day is different, and I thrive on finding answers and solving problems," she reflected. As a result of her enjoyment, Luanne has even recruited others like Patricia Lasse!

Patricia has been making her mark for about a year. "I hadn't done much office work before, but I've been able to bring my graphics knowledge to help where needed," she says. Volunteering allows her to assist others but has impacted her even more with a deeper connection to the Westwood community and a new purpose in retirement.

After being inspired by one of Pastor Jason's sermons, Pat Dix said, "It felt like it just hit me, the need to volunteer at Westwood!" After seeing Sara Moran's interactions with elders and many other members, Pat knew Sara was the person to talk to. As fall programming and activities began to gain momentum, the next thing she knew, both Lisa Boers, Westwood Office Manager, and Ann Kisch, Westwood Kitchen Manager, reached out with new opportunities. Enthusiastically, Pat said, "I'll do it! I'll do it! So that's how I ended up in the office...and today is my first day."

Whether it is the joy of day one or the knowledge of nearly two decades, these volunteers share a common thread: their commitment to serving the Westwood community creates meaningful connections that transcend simple office tasks.

"Together, these wonderful women and our fantastic subs - Karen Rohweder, Eileen Dahlen, Rene Kaluza, and Mary Anderson - form the backbone of volunteer support," said Lisa Boers. "I rely on this dedicated support team to accomplish all the necessary responsibilities with their collective efforts and unique skills. They are invaluable!"

In their service, the Westwood office volunteers find joy, purpose, and connection. As Marilyn put it, "It takes a village to support a church, and we are all a part of that village."