

Wednesday Night Dinner Ministry Playbook

Description of the Ministry:

Purpose:

This ministry supports the Wednesday Night Dinner program at St. James's, which is a church tradition on most Wednesday evenings (6:00-7:00 p.m.) from September through May.

Activities/Events:

We serve dinner to approximately 125 adults and children on the average Wednesday night. There are cooking teams (presently 6), each of which has approximately 10 volunteers. Our volunteers plan, purchase, cook, and serve dinner, and then assist sextons with clean up.

Impact Observations:

Wednesday nights are a great time of fellowship in our parish with many activities and programs that occur either before or after the Wednesday night dinners. Evening prayer, choir practice, committee meetings, education classes including Pilgrim's Path, Christian Journey and classes of interest all happen against the backdrop of our wonderfully fun Wednesday night dinner and fellowship. Next to Sundays, our church community is most engaged on Wednesday nights.

Roles in the Ministry:

Chairperson(s):

The Chairperson of this committee acts as a coordinator. He/she organizes the interested volunteers into cooking teams, schedules them appropriately, and offers support and supervision. The Chairperson processes reimbursements to each team leader or volunteer who purchases food. The Chairperson also recruits (with assistance from staff) new cooking team volunteers, and a good Chairperson probably stops by to cheer on his/her teams fairly frequently.

This committee presently needs a coordinator who would work with the Director of Servant Ministry in fulfilling this role.

Staff involvement:

Nancy Warman, Director of Servant Ministry serves as the overall supervisor of Wednesday Night Dinner Ministry. David Barnett, Facilities Manager provides wine needed for dinners and supervisors the sextons who set up the tables and assist with clean up.

Committee members/Opportunities for Involvement:

Each cooking team has a team leader, who organizes that team's efforts. The team leader can either plan and purchase the food and ask other members on his/her team to simply show up to cook on Wednesday afternoons. Or, he/she might divvy up the responsibilities differently.

Most team leaders communicate with their team members via email. It is our experience that

six to eight individuals are the ideal team size, and we like to have at least seven teams in place so that every team cooks approximately four times a year.

A good committee member is reliable, able to carve out the time to effectively participate, works well with others, likes to work with food, enjoys the company of others, and is prepared to have great fun in the kitchen! Dinner teams have a blast working together!

Time Commitment by Chair(s) and Committee Members:

Chairperson time commitment: one to two hours/month September through April.

Team leader time commitment: one to two hours/month September through April.

Team member time commitment (assuming a six week rotation): two to three hours every six weeks from September through April.

Involvement by Other St. James's Groups:

None, unless there is a special occasion when a dinner team might be asked to help.

Resources Required:

Financial: Each dinner team is asked to stay within a \$400/meal budget. The designated volunteer to purchase food may pay for it and be reimbursed or may use the church credit card.

Space:

Wednesday Night Dinners are held in Valentine Hall.

Staff:

Nancy Warman currently coordinates and supervises the dinner teams. David Barnett provides the wine and works with sextons for set up and clean up.

Advertising/Publicity:

We typically work with the Director of Communications Valerie Hubbard to remind people of the Wednesday Night Dinners in the various church articles and calendars that appear in the *Chimes*, the eChimes, the Sunday wrappers, and on the website. If we could plan menus far enough in advance, it would be great to be able to publish the menus, as people will call the church and ask "what's for dinner?" It also might be good to have some involved parishioners write the occasional article about what the Wednesday Night Dinners mean to them.

Manpower:

Aside from a coordinator, cooking team lay leaders and team members, and with assistance from sextons, we do not need additional manpower

Community Impact/Partners:

As presently conceived, this is primarily an "in-reach" ministry, designed to strengthen the bonds of our St. James's community. However it is a wonderful opportunity to welcome and reach out to newcomers and to those who are looking for a new church. Friends are always welcome!

(February 2011)