

Hello Trinity Presbytery Family,

As Covid restrictions begin to loosen, opportunities to volunteer and share God's love begin to open up as well. I'm currently serving as the Clinical Chaplain to William S. Hall Psychiatric Hospital for Children and Adolescents here in Columbia. We are located right off of Farrow Road and Interstate 20. My supervisor recently told me that we can begin to allow volunteers and visitors to join us in the near future.

What I'd like to do is have four churches in our presbytery each come once-a-month to visit with our patients and do a little Bible Study / Sunday School lesson. Here's what I was thinking: We would start the first Sunday in August. Each church would come in and do groups with our kids and teens from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. on Sunday evenings. (The kids eat dinner at 5 p.m.) There would be a 30-40-minute lesson / group with snacks afterwards (Capri Suns, bags of chips, and Little Debbie cakes are always winners with kids and teens). A super simple and fun way for your church to be missional and share the love of Christ with hurting kids and teens.

Here are some more logistics: We have three pods at our hospital. A pod of teen boys ages 12-17, a pod of teen girls ages 12-17, and a mixed gender pod of kids ages 5-11. We have no more than nine patients on each pod. I would suggest that you have three male adults for the teen boys, three female adults for the teen girls, and three adults of any gender for the "puppies." Also, the puppies can be rambunctious, so folks who have lots of patience are recommended for the "puppy pod." I could help you with curriculum, or you could bring in lessons of your own. Just treat it like a regular youth group time with a fun game and a little lesson or a children's church time with simple arts and crafts. Even though they're in a psychiatric hospital, they're still just kids and teens. A normal youth group time or a normal children's church time means the world to them.

I was hoping to have a rotation of 4-5 churches who would each come once-a-month on Sundays from 6-7 p.m. starting in August. Sound like something your church would be interested in? Email me at daniel.loffredo@scdmh.org or call me on my cell at 850-736-3621.

Yours In Christ's Love,
Dan

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