

AFFIRMATION

Support and affirmation are closely linked but are not synonymous!



Support is the work involved in helping a person feel prepared for and comfortable with serving as a volunteer in the project or with a committee or program.



Affirmation is the reassurance that you, or a leader of a program, provides to members performing their ministry. It is the comment, the smile, the word of welcome or thanks that says "We're glad you're here," "I know that you are an important child of God." Affirmation is not the same as recognizing a person for a job well done.* Rather, it is the ongoing acknowledgment of the person for who the person is and for being a person in ministry for the kingdom. It is a quiet kind of sharing that says to the member "you are important in the life of this church."

Ways to Affirm:

- listen thoughtfully and respond
- call and ask about the ministry experience
- make a point of observing and offering feedback
- write a note of appreciation
- provide guidance, share an article, invite to a lecture
- give a hug
- smile
- offer help and encouragement
- call by name
- introduce to others
- invite to a staff meeting
- ask the member to serve as a mentor or trainer
- recognize a disappointment
- have coffee together
- ask about the family, the job, the kids, the parents
- say thank you for just being you
- sit and talk together over a meal
- wait for the member and walk together down a hallway
- share a ride
- involve in a crisis situation
- keep candy on your desk
- remind about a pending meeting
- challenge a member to new heights
- respect sensitivities
- provide child care
- share a joke or a story
- maintain a coffee bar complete with decaffeinated and herbal beverages
- allow for guilt-free sabbaticals
- hold a reflection session or a Bible study
- call when absent and express concern

Affirmation is a key to the retention and continued involvement of your members in ministry.

Make affirmation a habit. People need to be acknowledged and we all need to feel needed and special.

* Celebration and recognition will be discussed in *Step 7*.