

Title of the ministry position: Side by Side Activity Leader

Responsible to: Side by Side Program Coordinator

Goals of the ministry: To prepare for and lead an activity that will engage participants and companions for 15 to 45 minutes.

Roles, Responsibilities, and Tasks:

- Plan and prepare for your activity. For the creative time, for example, this might involve shopping for materials, trying a demo, and if needed, preparing parts of the activity in advance. For sing-along time, this might include choosing and/or practicing songs.
- If applicable, try to incorporate the weekly theme in your activity. Check with the program coordinator to find out what theme is planned.
- If you anticipate that a participant may have trouble with an activity, you may want to touch base with their companion in advance so that the companion is prepared to support to their participant appropriately.
- Arrive early enough to complete any required set up for your activity.
- Wear your Side by Side nametag.
- If you are also acting as a companion, please ensure that someone else is walking alongside your participant while you are leading the activity.
- Announce your activity and invite everyone to participate, or ask the program coordinator to do this for you.
- When giving instructions, speak clearly and slowly enough for everyone to follow your instruction. Watch for understanding and repeat as needed. You may need to find different ways of explaining, break things down into smaller steps, and/or provide alternate instructions. Always be respectful, positive, and upbeat. If someone is not following, take responsibility for not explaining well so that no one is embarrassed.
- Ensure that everyone is engaged and enjoying the activity.

Length of appointment: Indefinite.

Personal traits and gifts required: Leading an activity requires leadership, planning, organizing and communication skills. Some skills needed vary with the type of activity led:

Brain Gym/Exercise: knowledge of the exercises, ability to monitor participants to ensure they are following and are performing the exercises safely.

Devotion: knowledge of the Bible and the ability to provide a 15-minute message that is meaningful for participants and companions alike.

Creative Time: creativity, patience, understanding of the participants' abilities and limitations, and how to adapt activities while being sensitive to participants' dignity.

Games: ability to play the game, and to facilitate others playing.

Sing-along: Ability to sing or play piano. Willingness to stand up and lead the group by announcing the next song and providing vocal leadership.

Training to be provided: Volunteers are required to complete the “Dementia Basics Online” course provide by the Alzheimer Society of Calgary at:

<http://www.alzheimercalgary.ca/find-support/sessions-and-workshops/dementia-basics-online>

The Alzheimer Society of Calgary provides a Certificate upon completion of the online course.

Orientation available: Volunteers will receive information about the needs of the participants who will take part in the activity they are leading.

Support and supervision provided: Support and supervision provided by the program coordinator as needed.

Mandatory activities: Plan, prepare for, and lead an activity during the scheduled program time.

Screening process used in the selection: Conversation to determine a) personal suitability, and b) level and type of experience that the volunteer has with persons with dementia, and c) the person’s qualifications for leading the activity in question.

Schedule and Commitment: Weekly attendance for the scheduled activity time. Additional time is needed for planning and preparation. This varies with the activity. If leadership of an activity is shared between more than one volunteer, then attendance will be based on whatever is agreed upon between volunteers (alternate weeks, or alternate months, for example). Time away is encouraged as needed. Volunteers are asked to advise the program coordinator as soon as possible of any plans to be away.