

Paterson Summer Outreach 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

What is it like to serve in CEF's Paterson Summer Outreach?

First, CEF provides the training and curriculum for the program. We have a one-day training where we get to meet the leaders and volunteers participating. (This year our training date will be June 15.) The CEF leadership team demonstrates a club meeting, so everyone gets a good idea of what the ministry looks like. Then, we have sessions on the methods we'll be using to teach all the club elements (memory verse, songs, prayer time, games, etc.). (For those who are interested in teaching the Bible lessons we'll have an additional evening session on another date.) This training day helps volunteers from various backgrounds and church traditions get on the same page and understand what we'll be doing. Volunteers take home some of the teaching material they'll use in the clubs.

During this training session you'll be asked to let us know what club elements you would feel comfortable teaching. We'll use this information to assign you to a team of volunteers. These teams include experienced volunteers who will be able to help you as you plan and prepare for ministry.

Another evening, a couple of weeks later, we will have what we call our "P4" meeting. (This year it will be on June 27). We **pray** together, **pack** take-home bags for the kids, practice songs and motions, and meet together in our teams to **plan** the schedules for each day. Each team member will know what they'll be responsible for each day—whether it's teaching a memory verse, leading a specific song, counseling children who respond to the salvation invitation, or setting up game equipment.

During the ministry week (July 15-19) we meet at a central location each morning at 8:00 AM for prayer, organizing materials, and planning, then head out in teams to conduct a morning club. Volunteers generally carpool to the clubs as parking is sometimes limited. We return to our central air-conditioned meeting spot for a quick lunch, replenish supplies, and then go back out for another club at a different location in the afternoon. We return to our central location at the end of the day, unload, and generally end the day by about 3:30 PM.

What materials do we use?

We use CEF's annual 5-Day Club kit. This year that kit includes the *One Way* Bible lesson series and memory verses, songs, and other activities that reinforce the day's main teaching.

Churches that participate as a team (at least 5 workers daily) can keep the kit in their church ministry. Some church teams choose to conduct more 5-Day Clubs in their own neighborhoods.

Will the volunteers from my church serve together?

That's up to you. We have many individuals who come together to serve in CEF's Paterson Summer Outreach—and we have to assemble teams based on availability and willingness/aptitudes to teach all the parts of the clubs. A team needs at least 5 members who will be available to conduct the club each day.

Some churches have enough volunteers and form their own team. Other churches choose to promote the opportunity to their congregation. Those who participate will be assigned to work with a team that's made up of volunteers from a number of churches. There are no strangers—everyone gets to know one another quickly and serving together for Christ means teams bond rapidly.

If you do form your own team, you will need a strong team leader who will need to participate in a Team Leader training session. This person will lead your team as they plan, ensure you stay on schedule, serve as liaison with staff at the sites where you conduct clubs, and troubleshoot situations as they arise. Your team will also need one or more members who will teach Bible lessons each day using CEF's methods and curriculum; this requires attending an additional training session.

Does everyone have to serve all day for all 5 days?

We understand that life is busy and a week's commitment seems like a lot to ask. We do request that, as much as possible, individuals and teams plan to serve for the full week. There are two main reasons for this. First, is the quality of the ministry. Usually, we see the same kids each day—and as we spend time with them we build relationships and trust; this is an important part of the ministry. The clubs also run more smoothly when a team develops a rhythm by working together throughout the week.

A secondary but also very important reason is that it's very difficult to coordinate schedules for volunteers who are available only for partial days or some days. Making sure that each team has enough volunteers willing to do what needs to be done each day gets very complicated when individuals are available for some days/times and not others.

We will do our best to accommodate your schedule(s), but strongly ask team members to seriously pray about this and aim to serve as much of the week as possible. It's helpful to view the ministry week as a short-term mission trip with the luxury of sleeping in one's own bed at night.

What kind of follow-up do you have with the kids?

Following up with summer ministry contacts is a challenge for any ministry. We've been blessed to see many of the same children in our 5-Day clubs for a number of years since we frequently conduct clubs at the same locations. We also provide solid follow-up materials for the children to take home. Because of the ministry setting, we cannot always collect names and addresses/phone numbers/etc. for personal follow-up.

We do encourage the children to enroll in The Mailbox Club for Bible lessons through the mail or online. We send home cards and ask parents to enroll their children by returning the card the next day.

Where local churches participate in the ministry, we encourage them to invite the boys and girls to their churches.

We are working to establish Good News Clubs in the public schools in Paterson (and across North Jersey) where children can be further disciplined and through which they can be connected to a local church.