



## Interested in Volunteering?



**For more than fifty years volunteers have played an important role in Village life; they contribute to creating a place of welcome, celebration and hilarity in all aspects of Village life. Volunteer staff members, through their contributions of work, support Holden's ministry by helping the Village operate. Each year as many as 5,000 people come to offer their gifts as volunteers.**

**Before applying to volunteer, please, read this document to find out what to expect as a volunteer, what is expected, and about life in the Village.**

The purpose of this booklet is to help potential volunteers decide whether life in the village seems like a good fit. Not all the information will be relevant to everyone because there are multiple ways to volunteer for varying lengths of time. Some information is geared towards those who are considering spending multiple months and up to a year in the village. This booklet cannot anticipate all questions; please be in touch with the staffing office if you have further questions.

# Vision, Mission, Core Values

Holden Village's ministry is guided by a vision, a mission, and a set of core values. These were adopted by the Board of Directors in 2006.

**The Vision of Holden Village** is the love of God making new the church and world through the cross of Jesus Christ.

**The Mission of Holden Village**, a Lutheran ministry, is to welcome all people into the wilderness to be called, equipped and sent by God as we share rhythms of:

- Word and sacrament
- work, recreation and study
- intercession and healing.

## The Core Values of Holden Village:

- WORSHIP** We are grounded and united in daily Gospel-centered worship.
- THEOLOGY** We interpret Word, sacrament, and daily life through the Lutheran theology of the cross.
- HOSPITALITY** We offer lavish hospitality to all.
- VOCATION** We believe that God calls all persons to love and serve God and neighbor.
- DIVERSITY** We celebrate the unity and diversity of all God's children.
- GRACE** We offer ourselves to one another in mutual forgiveness, conversation and respect.
- SHALOM** We trust God's mercy as we pray and work for justice and peace.
- ECOLOGY** We celebrate and seek to serve creation's well being through faithful patterns of daily living.
- GIFTS** We express gratitude to God for extravagant gifts of creativity, imagination and ingenuity in all who volunteer.
- STUDY** We value critical thinking, provocative discussion, and the integration of learning and experience.
- REST** We embrace God's gift of sabbath by offering refreshment to those who are weary.
- PLACE** We commit to be grateful stewards of the surprising gift of Holden Village and its place in the wilderness
- COMMUNITY** We believe that the Holden community includes all who care for Holden through their labor, gifts and prayers.
- HILARITY** We love that holy hilarity returns us to the joy and freedom of the Gospel, which alone overcomes all our lapses of mission, strategies, goals, garbology, dishteam, work, and relationships.

## What is Holden?

As you think about whether Holden Village is a fitting place for you to work and live, the following describes key aspects of this unique community that will hopefully help you decide if the time is right for you to submit an application. So what is Holden? Holden is . . .

### **Ministry and Worship: the Centerpiece of Village Life**

Holden Village is a center for renewal, a Lutheran ministry welcoming people of all faiths and backgrounds into the wilderness to be called, equipped and sent by God. While work sends us in many directions throughout the day, each evening we all commit to gathering as a community for vespers.

### **Living in Community**

The commitment of each staff member to personal growth, Christian worship, common work, a spirit of hospitality and service to others is vital. These shared disciplines strengthen our sense of common purpose. Although not all staff members are Christian, Holden Village is specifically a Christian community. We commit to creating and maintaining a community free from discrimination or harassment toward any person because of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, or physical condition. We live in a real flesh and blood community of forgiven sinners. In work, play, and conversation – in agreement and disagreement – we offer ourselves to each other in mutual forgiveness and respect.

### **A Place Rich in its History**

Holden was a mining village until 1957 when the mine was closed. In 1960, Howe Sound Mining Company gave the village to the Lutheran church; programs and ministry began in 1962. During normal operations, Holden attracts more than 6,000 people annually, most of whom come in the summer and stay for about a week.

### **A Special Place to Volunteer**

Everyone gets to claim Holden as their own through volunteer opportunities. Volunteer staff are key to creating a place of welcome, celebration, and hilarity in all aspects of Village life. The staff supports Holden's ministry by helping the Village operate in their many work areas. Holden is able to offer reasonable rates to all who come here because of the dedicated volunteers and donors who support this ministry of hospitality. It is important that staff members have a strong interest in the mission of Holden.

### **Wilderness Living**

Holden's remote location means access to emergency medical care is anywhere from 4 hours to 4 days away. You should be in good health to consider volunteering and living in the Village. Another lifestyle adjustment is the limited access to technology. Phone access is restricted, and there is no television, radio or cell phone reception. Staff members in the Village longer than three weeks have limited access to Internet, e.g., for email and research, but functions such as downloading or streaming are not available. All Villagers are asked to avoid using technological devices in public spaces.

# Conditions of Volunteering

**In order to be invited as a member of the volunteer staff in the Village you must be able to fulfill the following conditions and commitments:**

- You must have a desire to be an active member of a Christian, worshipping community and be able to serve the mission of Holden Village.
- You need to be in good, stable physical health. Holden is in a remote location without the capacity for ongoing care. It is between 4 hours and 4 days (in the winter) from emergency treatment.
- You need to have good mobility. A former copper mining town built in the 1930s, the buildings and site are not handicapped accessible, the terrain is uneven and hilly, and in the winter we walk on packed snow paths, which can be very icy. Most volunteer positions require a basic level of physical activity, which may include lifting, walking, or standing.
- You must be at least 18 years old or applying with your family. You must be at least 21 years old for long-term staff.
- You must be able to commit to the conditions of the volunteer staff covenant. Each applicant is required to submit a signed copy of the covenant with his/her application, which includes the following commitments:
  - WORSHIP - calls us to our purpose and identity as a community. As Villagers, we all agree to the discipline of attending daily worship.
  - HOSPITALITY - Whatever one's position on staff, one of our primary ministries is hospitality to all people who step off the bus and into life at Holden. This includes sharing meals with strangers, engaging in conversation, and reaching out to one another through a kind word or deed.
  - VOLUNTEER WORK and VILLAGE RESPONSIBILITIES – Our volunteer service is a combination of the positions we fill in the Village as well as the additional roles that contribute to our common life together.
    - Positions are assigned prior to arrival and based on your preferences and the needs of the Village (approx. 36hrs/week). Flexibility is important both for you and for the Village; the lead staff person will coordinate your weekly schedule and you may be asked to shift positions in your time to respond as needs in the Village change.
    - All volunteers serve in a variety of roles supporting common Village life (approx. 4 hrs/week). This includes dish teams, garbage teams, and stoking rotations (in the winter), as well as additional roles, such as first response team, fire brigade, assisting at the Holden school, helping with worship, fall inventory, etc. Position responsibilities and activities are to be scheduled around these tasks.
  - STAFF MEETINGS - The entire Holden staff meets to introduce newly arrived volunteers, say goodbye to departing ones, discuss important issues, and share information relevant to life in the Village. Volunteers are expected to attend all staff meetings during their stay at Holden.
  - VILLAGE SAFETY - All volunteer staff members are expected to participate in maintaining a safe environment, to follow Village safety policies, and abide by the law while on staff:
    - No drinking of alcohol by persons under 21.
    - No provision of alcohol to anyone under 21.
    - No use or possession of illegal drugs (including marijuana).
    - No possession or use of firearms, including those for hunting purposes without express written permission from a director.
    - No harassment and/or assault of any staff member or guest.
    - Those serving on fire brigade, first response and other on-call positions must be ready to respond in emergency situations.

No term as a volunteer is guaranteed. In order to maintain the staffing flexibility that is essential to the successful management of the Village, as well as to protect the options of each volunteer, it is understood that either Holden or the volunteer may terminate the volunteer status at any time before the agreed upon departure date.

## Volunteering: Responsibilities and Expectations

### Volunteer Work Responsibilities and Assignments

- Work assignments will be based on both your preference and Holden's needs. In some cases you will be asked to work in an area that is not one of your choices because of our need, but you will be consulted if this becomes necessary. Your willingness to serve where you are most needed is greatly appreciated!
- Volunteers are asked to work approximately 36 hours per week in their assigned work area (or occasionally 2 half-time areas). Supervisors will establish daily work schedules and days off. Some positions work five days a week and others work six days a week.
- In addition, all staff members contribute to additional Village responsibilities. Dish teams, garbology teams, and stoking rotations happen on a weekly and monthly basis. Staff members also help in a variety of other ways including first response team, fall inventory, fire brigade, bus driving, worship committee, etc.
- Responsibility, leadership, and supervisory roles are inherent in each long-term volunteer position. For many long-term positions you may be the primary responsible person. For these reasons, at times, many Holden long-term staff work odd hours and more than the required number of hours. This is also true of the short-term Area Head positions. Staff are encouraged to set healthy boundaries around their personal time.
- While all staff members have specific positions and job descriptions, the primary role of all staff members is to welcome and engage in hospitality with guests and other staff. Long-term staff are often overseeing, training, and incorporating volunteers into work projects and work environments as they come and go from the Village.
- For those who are considering applying as a family, please read the additional Information for Families document.

### Volunteering during Holidays

- Many guests visit Holden over Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter holidays. Because of the high volume of guests, all staff are expected to remain and work in the Village during these holiday times.
- Long-term volunteer staff are also expected to be in the Village over Fall Work Week in mid-October and Spring Work Week in mid-April.

## What to expect: rhythms, seasons, comings and goings

Since its inception, the rhythms of the Village have been shaped by the seasons, the coming and going of staff and guests, the daily practices of worship, and gathering around the table. Holden Village, while set apart by its location, is a flesh and blood ever changing mix of people coming into this valley with their own stories and on their own journeys. It is a place where real life happens.

People new to the Village are often surprised by the busy, bustling nature of daily life. Summer and winter program differ greatly in their energy, but both provide wonderful opportunities to engage your passions and your creative and intellectual pursuits. Villagers work hard and find themselves with multiple recreational and extra-curricular opportunities in addition to their work commitments.

Remember, too, that living and working in a retreat center bears little resemblance to being on retreat. Those who find most joy in serving here do so because they love to offer their gifts and time for the sake of another.

Sharing life together in this place is a gift. The reality of people constantly coming and going can prove to be both emotionally energizing and taxing. Previous staff have remarked that the friendships developed at Holden have been their most meaningful, so learning to say goodbye is one of the hardest lessons.

## Living in the Village: FAQs

### Where will I live?

Housing is limited and strategically planned out with attention paid to individual and family needs. Housing is assigned upon arrival. We have simple and comfortable furnishings. All housing is communal. Short-term volunteers share bedrooms with other short-term volunteers with common bathrooms in a dormitory type setting. Long-term volunteers are housed in shared spaces and may have their own bedrooms, but at times will need to share with another long-term volunteer. Families may be in shared housing and siblings may be asked to share bedrooms.

**Can I bring my pets?** Pets are not allowed at Holden Village for safety and health reasons. Service pets are an exception.

### What will I eat?

The Holden Village Dining Hall is where all villagers share their meals. The Holden kitchen has a long history of preparing healthy, delicious meals. Many of the meals are vegetarian. Meals are served on a schedule, but there are some items such as bread and fruit available 24 hours a day.

The kitchen staff does its best to accommodate food allergies and sensitivities, but it is not possible to guarantee the safety of all food preparation. If you have questions, please be in contact with the kitchen coordinator, [foodservicecoor@holdenvillage.org](mailto:foodservicecoor@holdenvillage.org).

### Can I get medical care?

Ongoing medical care is not possible at Holden. If you are coming for any period of time, you need to be prepared for only having access to basic first aid care. Plan to bring your own medications and basic medical supplies. We cannot guarantee having a licensed medical staff person onsite at all times. Emergency medical care is anywhere from 4 hours at minimum to 4 days (in the winter).

### How will I stay in touch with friends and family?

One of the most significant adjustments to Village Life is the limited Internet access. The satellite Internet is available to all volunteers, but don't count on Internet access as you know it. The bandwidth is limited; it cannot support streaming of audio or video, Skype, or downloading large files. Basic email is possible. Give some thought to how you will stay in touch without relying so heavily on the Internet. If there is an emergency, Holden has an emergency number where a message can be left.

### How will I move to Holden?

Previous volunteers have shared that moving to Holden can be very stressful, and costly, especially if you are moving a family. The Lady of the Lake boat will charge you freight if your belongings weigh more than 75lbs. Their website ([www.ladyofthelake.com](http://www.ladyofthelake.com)) has more detailed information. All volunteers are responsible for paying their travel costs to the village.

### What will I do after my volunteering commitment to Holden?

No one comes to live in the village permanently. Many come without having specific plans after their time of service. It can be challenging to look for a job or make plans for what comes after Holden while still in the village. It is important to proactively think through how you will transition from the Village after your time of volunteering.

## Benefits of Volunteering for Holden Village

**Holden Village benefits from the diversity of volunteers coming and going. Benefits are offered to make volunteering possible. In order to support the wellbeing of volunteers, some benefits are determined by length of service.**

**Opportunities for growth and learning** are available to all volunteers through Holden's acclaimed teaching sessions.

**Room and Board** is provided for all volunteers.

**Parking at Fields Point** is provided for all volunteers.

Many (but not all) volunteers travel by car. All volunteers are able to park their vehicle in the parking lot at Field's Point Landing. Field's Point Landing is where the Lady of the Lake ferry stops to pick up passengers for the trip up the lake.

**Personal days out of the Village** are available to volunteers committed for 3 months or more.

These days are provided to keep village residents healthy and connected to loved ones. Personal out days can be used for doctor visits, job interviews, and personal time. Boat tickets are provided to enable one to travel to and from the Village on the ferry. The number of tickets is determined by length of commitment.

During the winter getting in and out of the village can prove to be challenging. October through April the ferry does not travel up and down the lake every day. If there is a snow storm or the road is blocked by an avalanche, it is possible that it could be a few days without the ability to get transported out of the Village.

**Friends and Family Guest Days** are available to volunteers committed for 4 months or more.

These days are provided so that friends and family members are able to come to visit volunteers in the Village. There are restrictions during peak guest times, including summer and holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter etc.), All reservations must be made through registration in advance of the visit.

**Insurance coverage** is provided for volunteers committed for 1 year or more.

Health, dental, and vision insurance is available and is effective upon arrival (with the proper paperwork completed). Health insurance is through a provider while Holden is self-insured for dental and vision. Volunteers can opt into COBRA coverage upon village departure.

**Monthly stipends** are available for long-term positions and short-term area head and assistant positions.

Volunteers who serve in these positions fill a critical role of leadership and provide continuity, making Holden's operation possible. Stipends are intended to make it possible for individuals and families to volunteer by making a commitment to live responsibly on a small stipend. Holden can provide a monthly stipend of up to \$550 per month to those who commit to volunteering for a year. Area heads and Area assistants may receive a stipend of up to \$350 per months. These stipends are intended to help volunteers cover basic needs. If you do not need any or all of your stipend, you can "opt out" during your initial meeting with the Business Office. Long-term volunteers can opt to contribute to a simple IRA, and Holden will match up to 3%.

There is list of positions offering stipends and their opening dates on the website. Area head and assistant positions, mostly needed during the busy summer months (May through October), require a minimum commitment of three months.

**Severance** is offered to long-term volunteers who serve for a year or more.

As a part of Holden's mission to equip and send out, severance is offered to those who complete a year or more of service to help with the transition to life outside the village community. Severance is a one month stipend and one

month of health/dental insurance premiums paid.

# How to Apply

## What do I need to complete?

- **Application Form.** Fill out one application found on Holden's website for each adult in your family.
- **Application Essays.** Submit written responses on a separate sheet. The number of required essays is determined by whether you are applying as a short-term or long-term volunteer. Due to our location, a formal interview may not be able to take place. These essay questions are often in lieu of an interview.
- **Résumé.** Please include a current résumé of your work and education history.
- **Covenant.** Be sure to read and sign the Holden Village Volunteer Staff Covenant.
- **Health Forms.** Return one Health and Wellness form for each member of your family. Please use additional sheets if additional explanation is needed.
- **References.** We require a different number of references for short-term or long-term applicants. Please do not obtain any references from relatives. Your references should complete the reference form and send it separately to Holden. We will accept hard copies through the mail or a scanned copy by email. Follow-up is your responsibility. **Your application will not be available for consideration until it is complete with all references submitted.**

## When and how will I hear from you?

- You will be contacted by email when your application is complete.
- Holden begins to process your application only when it is complete! (See above.)
- Each applicant will receive an e-mail advising whether or not they are invited to volunteer in the Village.
- Accepted applicants will receive an e-mail letter of invitation, more information regarding dates of service, job descriptions, and additional information on living in the Village and Holden's benefits. Let us know if you prefer a method of communication other than e-mail.
- The **minimum** amount of time from receipt of **all** your materials to the time when a decision will be made is about 3-4 weeks, but the process sometimes takes a few months. We encourage you to check-in on the process by emailing the staff coordinators.
- Although there are exceptions, we usually fill positions 3-4 months before they open.

## Application Tips

- **Essays:** We want to get to know you! Much thought and consideration is put into finding the right fit for volunteers in the Village. The more specifics you can give us in your application regarding your skills, interests, and experience, the more we are able to think about how you might best fit Holden's needs of the time.
- **Position Descriptions:** Look at the positions descriptions on the website. Relate your own experience and gifts which are relevant to the positions in which you are most interested.
- **Availability:**
  - Availability of short-term positions varies between seasons. The majority of our short-term opportunities are during the months of May to October. This is also when we have the most variety in positions.
  - Open dates are listed and updated on the website for long-term and area head/assistant positions. These dates are estimated and subject to change. Keep in mind that a position may not be open at the time you hope to come, but openings arise as staff depart. For that reason, applicants are encourage to list the positions they are most interested in, as well as the positions open which correspond with your potential arrival dates.
- **Timing:** Volunteering at Holden Village is a matter of timing. Many factors contribute to creating a match between an application and the Village. If it is not the right time now, perhaps circumstances will change down the line.
- **Long-term volunteer positions:** If you have never volunteered or visited the Village previously, we encourage you to apply for a short-term volunteering commitment before you apply for a long-term position.

**Thank you for considering applying to volunteer in the Village!  
We look forward to hearing from you.**