### **Volunteer Position: Therapeutic Horticulture Program Volunteer**

**Location**: God’s Garden at St. John Lutheran Church, Farmington Hills, MI
**Commitment**: Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 and/or 3:30-5:30. Program sessions are 1 hour. Volunteer times allow for 30 minutes before and after for setup and cleanup.

**Garden experience is helpful, but not required.**

**Program Overview:**Our Therapeutic Horticulture Program provides adults with developmental and physical disabilities an opportunity to engage in therapeutic gardening activities that promote physical, emotional, and social well-being. Through nature-based activities, participants develop life skills, improve motor function, and enhance their overall quality of life in a supportive and inclusive environment.

**Position Summary:**As a volunteer, you will play a key role in assisting participants with gardening tasks and supporting the therapeutic intent of the program. Volunteers help create a welcoming and safe environment for participants, offer hands-on support during activities, and ensure that the session runs smoothly.

**Key Responsibilities:**

* **Assist Participants**: Help participants engage in gardening and related activities, offering encouragement and support as needed.
* **Support Facilitators**: Work alongside program facilitators to assist with the activities of program sessions.
* **Set Up and Clean Up**: Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of each session to help prepare materials, tools, and the activity area. Stay 30 minutes after each session to assist with cleaning up and organizing the space.
* **Safety and Supervision**: Ensure that participants are safe and comfortable while engaging in gardening tasks. Assist with any needs, while encouraging independence.
* **Create a Positive Environment**: Foster a warm, inclusive, and supportive atmosphere where all participants feel respected and valued.

**Volunteer Requirements:**

* **Commitment**: Volunteers are expected to commit to a weekly schedule, with an hour-long session plus additional time for setup and cleanup (approximately 2 hours per session). Two volunteers needed per session. Looking for 4 committed volunteers for each time slot to accommodate scheduling needs.
* **Patience & Compassion**: An empathetic attitude and patience when working with individuals with developmental and physical disabilities.
* **Physical Activity**: Ability to participate in light physical activity, such as planting, watering, and arranging plants.
* **Reliability**: Consistent attendance and punctuality are crucial to ensure the program’s smooth operation.
* **Background Check**: All volunteers are required to undergo a background check prior to participation.

**Ideal Candidate**:

* **Experience or interest in horticulture, gardening, or therapeutic practices is helpful but not required**.
* Previous experience working with individuals with disabilities is a plus, but a passion for helping others is most important.
* Friendly, patient, and positive attitude with strong communication skills.

**Benefits of Volunteering:**

* Gain hands-on experience working in a therapeutic, nature-based setting.
* Make a meaningful difference in the lives of adults with developmental and physical disabilities.
* Join a dedicated team of volunteers and facilitators working toward a shared goal of inclusivity and growth.
* Build new connections and friendships, stay active, and enjoy the satisfaction of contributing to your community.

**How to Apply:**Please contact St. John Lutheran Church at 248-474-0584 or gardenstjohn@gmail.com for more information. Apply at: <https://form.jotform.com/gardenstjohn/GodsGardenVolunteer>