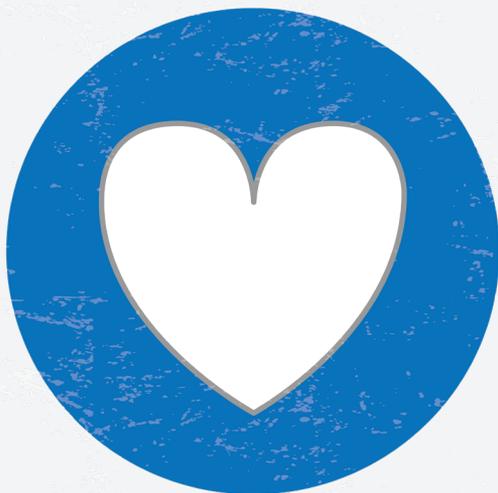


Serve

Theological Reflections and Conversations



SERVE

**COMMIT
2018**



GIVE



SERVE



GROW

Week 1

Read and review *Ways to Serve at Church*. As you reflect on these opportunities, highlight phrases that resonate.

Which opportunities describe things you like to do?

Which opportunities intrigue you and challenge you to grow?

And which opportunities do not appeal to you at all?

How are you using the phrases that you highlighted to serve God by serving others in your family, your work, your church, and your community?

"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21, 23)

In what ways do you feel the Master saying to you, "Well done!"

What are few things you have been faithful that resulted in many things? Sometimes the reward for good work is more work.

How does your role and responsibilities as a servant bring you joy and happiness and the feeling of a job well done?

Week 2

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45 (NIV))

What thoughts come to mind when you see/read the word "serve"?

In what ways do you serve in your family, serve in your work, and serve in your church?

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" (John 4:8)

What are the similarities of worship and serve?

What are the differences of worship and serve?

What is a "worship service?"

Do you think that faithfully attending worship services an act of service?

"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people." (Ephesians 6:7)

How would you define "serving the Lord?"

How would you define "serve wholeheartedly?"

What is the difference in having the mindset of serving the Lord versus serving people?

Week 3

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." (1st Peter 4:10)

Read Ephesians 4:11-16 along with the verse above.

What does it mean "to prepare God's people for works of service?"

Who prepares God's people for works of service?

Who are the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in your life and in what ways are they preparing you for works of service?

Key statements often come after "so that" – what is the purpose for being prepared and participating in "works of service?"

1. Verse 13
2. Verse 14
3. Verse 15

Review the Serve Opportunities and Commitment card for First Presbyterian Commit 2018. Reflect and prayerfully consider ways that you are already serving, new opportunities that you would like to consider, and needs that you may have at this time in your life. Please complete the card and return on Serve Commitment Sunday, April 22, 2018.

Ways to Serve at Church

Is it possible to be a member of a church, but never be part of the team that makes the church function properly? Can one "join the church" and yet not feel like a member of the church family? Taking the initiative to move from being a receiver to a server promotes spiritual growth. Finding an opportunity to serve others using our time and talents nurtures our relationships both with God and others.

There are many opportunities to be involved in the ministry of our and your church. Some opportunities do require major commitments of time and talents, but there are also many other ways to serve that, equally important, require a timely service at a timely moment. Some acts of service may involve joining a committee lead by one of our Deacons while others require a commitment under the leadership of a staff member or Elder. God made us all in a different way so that he could prepare us to be one body in Christ (1st Corinthians 12:12-31).

Review and reflect on the following ways to serve at church to find one or two opportunities where you can be a member of a church AND know you are a part of a team that helps the church build up the body of Christ.

Teach a Class or Facilitate a Group

Education is as key within the church as it is within our community. Teaching a class of children or adults is a great honor. Do you like to study and stimulate others to think? Our different Sunday School classes have different requirements for teaching and getting involved. Many classes have teams of teachers. Facilitating a small group involves the skills of including all participants in fellowship and conversation. Our staff can help you find the best class suited for your teaching abilities.

Mentoring and Discipleship

Many young people today are growing up without good role models. Older men and women serve by listening and offering wise counsel. Discipleship involves teaching the basics of Christian growth to others perhaps in a two person Bible Study. Discipling others promotes spiritual maturity for both people involved. Teaching, facilitating, mentoring and discipling others includes activities such as Vacation Bible School, Confirmation partner, coaching basketball teams, shepherding new members, and youth group trips.

Transportation

You can volunteer to give people a ride to church services and other activities especially special evening services or activities in the evening. Many times people who are interested in a ministry like this may already have people that they are bringing to church, but if you do not, then ask our staff if there is someone you could pick up. There may be a homebound person who would love to come to church if they only had a way to get there.

Visit People in the Hospital, Assisted Living or Homebound

Find out about church members who are in the hospital and take the initiative to visit. A visitor from the church with a friendly hello encourages those in the hospital or those homebound and their caretakers. Often the drive may be longer than the visit but even a few minutes visiting lets people know that our church cares and is praying for them. Our church has a Deacon ministry for taking Sunday's flowers to those who are not able to attend worship that day.

Greet and Welcome People

While all of us are asked to seek out visitors and help them feel welcome and comfortable, some of us are naturally outgoing and can strike up a conversation with others. You can become an official church greeter welcoming everyone to church services, or become an unofficial church greeter. Sit with newcomers at church breakfasts, Wednesdays Together, and other congregational events and greet them by name the next time you see them. Seek out visitors and introduce them to our pastors at the end of the service or take them on a tour of our church facility. Attend a First Sunday 101 class with those considering membership or help visitors and new members find a Sunday School class for their children and them. Listen and get them the things they need to have a good experience at church. Everyone can be a greeter and extend a hand of hospitality.

Send Cards and Notes

When your schedule may not permit a personal visit, a timely card or a simple note can be an encouragement to someone who has had to be out of church for a while or who is struggling through a difficult time. Our staff and the white board in the hallway list the names of most of our members who may be missing worship services due to illness. Birthday cards, especially to children, reminds us that we belong to the church family. Of course, a phone call or email are appropriate too even if they are not as long lasting as a handwritten card or note.

Mission Trips

Others may need lawn care, building or home maintenance, or other special needs that our church organizes groups to travel and serve. Are you interested in outreach or taking mission trips locally or internationally?

Help Widows/Widowers and Single Parents

Jump in to volunteer to help those who have lost their spouse. Newly widowed and single parents may have needs and may also need to learn about responsibilities that the other person may have taken care of. And don't forget those who have been widowed or single for many years. While they have probably learned to handle certain situations on their own, they may still have a need for someone with a discerning heart or wisdom or even an invitation to a social event. Single parents have additional needs with childcare. Pray to be attentive to the needs of others.

Cooking (Meal Preparation)

Those who have lost a family member appreciate having a church family who can provide a few meals. This gives them one less thing to worry about when dealing with so many other needs and emotions. Single parents could probably use some help trying to provide regular nutritious meals for their children. There are many opportunities to share a meal you have prepared for your family or to provide a casserole for the freezer in times of need.

Invite Others to Church

We can all be involved in sharing our faith. One of the best ways to share our faith and serve the church at the same time is simply invite our friends, new neighbors, and acquaintances who may not attend church to attend a worship service with you. Invite family, friends, and neighbors to Christmas and Easter Services, Wednesdays Together, and any special activities that you plan to attend.

Cleaning

Our church looks for volunteers to help keep the property looking nice. Again, this does not have to be an official position. Take it upon yourself to tidy up when you notice something needs cleaning. Get with a member of the staff or one of the Elders or Deacons and find out if there is a day you can come in and straighten up before the next worship service.

Maintenance

Don't assume that the staff will notice or fix something that is broken. If you see a need to repair something at church take the initiative and contact the church office. If you have the skills to fix the problem, let them know that as well and they can help provide the tools and supplies needed for the repair.

Usher

Every worship service requires ushers to assist worshipers and pastors. Request to become an usher for regular worship, funerals, and other special worship services.

Set Up for Events

There is always a need for people to arrive early at events and help with decorations and setup. Our staff helps with some of the set up, but regulars are needed for Wednesdays Together and other events. Don't assume that you will be called "if you are needed" because many times, whoever is in charge of setting up the event may not realize you have signed up to help. You may see a notice in announcements for Christmas or Easter decorating. Take it upon yourself to contact those in charge and offer to help with setup or cleanup after an event.

Prayer

The ministry of prayer should not be taken lightly. It is often said, "I can't do much, but I can pray." Prayer is never the "least you can do," but should always be thought of as the most important thing you can do. Pray for the church, its leadership, and those in the church who have needs. When praying for situations to be resolved in a positive way, pray also more deeply that people will be changed and become spiritually stronger. Read the first chapter of each of the books that Paul wrote. He prayed less for situations and more for people to become strong in the Lord. Join others on Wednesdays for Morning Prayer.

A/V Ministry

Volunteer to help with the A/V ministry in our church. Even if you don't have much experience with audio and video, you can probably learn all you need to know if you have any interest in helping your church do better in this area. We are now live-streaming the 11:00 Worship and other special services, which require volunteers.

Church Security

Often groups meet at the church in the evening. Members are needed to be present to unlock and lock doors and monitor hallways. Often church security involves making sure the church is locked when everyone leaves.

Nursery

A church full of young couples with babies is a good barometer of a healthy church. No one wants to be pulled out of every church service to tend to the needs of others. However, the more people who will volunteer for this needed ministry, the less likely it is that one person or a parent will have to miss too many worship services and activities.

Choir

Many say "I can't sing." Our music programs are always ready to welcome new participants. Ask about the details for singing or the handbell choir. Perhaps you can share your talents with a musical instrument. Even if you feel you can't sing well, everyone has the opportunity to participate in singing hymns during worship.

Ephesians 4 teaches that church leaders including staff, ministers, elders and deacons "prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (vs. 11-13)

We trust that these ways to serve at church are a good start to helping you see things you can do in our church's ministry. The more involved and invested you are, the more we all work to make our church a vibrant ministry in our community.



First
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