

LUTHERAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP  
TEENS SERVICE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

LEADER

# EXTREME SERVANT





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SERVANT**



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# INTRODUCTION

**Extreme Servant** is a helpful resource designed to give participants the opportunity to study the Scriptures and process why we serve in the name of Jesus. In addition, the resource provides an opportunity for congregations to plan service in their local contexts.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the mission trips and servant events being postponed, or cancelled, LCMS Youth Ministry thought this resource might be helpful for congregations looking to serve locally in new or additional ways. Churches' youth ministries may also be looking to pivot from a servant event that requires travel toward service opportunities at home.

Extreme Servant was originally written for one of the Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) Leadership Training events. An expectation of LYF training is that youth participants will go on to lead the same sessions and process them with the youth in their own congregations.

Each lesson includes a leader's guide designed to assist youth in leading the study with other youth. The resource can be used as is if you plan to have youth lead the studies. You may want to begin by reviewing Session 5, as it will provide your youth leaders with suggestions, tips and practice for leading the group.

### **SESSION 1 The Ultimate Servant and SESSION 2 First Things First**

These two sessions are Bible studies that reflect on Christ's love for us and our opportunity to serve others because of His love.

### **SESSION 3 In Their Place or in Their Face**

The Bible study provided in this session looks specifically at witnessing to Christ and sharing our faith\*.

### **SESSION 4 Planning an Extreme Service Project**

This session is helpful if your congregation needs to select how and where your service is most needed. If your congregation already has plans set, this session and process can be skipped.

### **SESSION 5 After your Extreme Service Project**

This session provides an important part of any service opportunity, evaluating and processing your experience.

### **APPENDIX Teaching Tips, Name Games and Ice Breakers**

The appendix provides youth leaders with suggestions, tips and practice for leading the group. It also gives ideas for name games and ice breakers.

May God bless your time in His work and equip you to impact your world through acts of service.

*LCMS Youth Ministry*

\*Young people seeking additional encouragement and resources to share their faith can check out two additional LYF training resources focused on witnessing to others.

**Motivated by Love**

[youthsource.com/2019/12/12/motivated-by-love/](https://youthsource.com/2019/12/12/motivated-by-love/)

**Faith During Times of Transition**

[youthsource.com/2019/12/12/faith-during-times-of-transition/](https://youthsource.com/2019/12/12/faith-during-times-of-transition/)



# SESSION 1

## The Ultimate Servant

### IN PREPARATION:

Read all the Bible verses included in this study. Become familiar with them and the verses around them as well. Prepare the “Who Am I?” icebreaker sheets (*appendix page 26*). Make sure there are participant pages and Bibles available for those who don’t bring their own. Arrange the room so that participants can be comfortable in their small groups and can also return to a space that allows them to focus and interact with you.

### » SESSION 1 PARTICIPANT PAGE *Actions Speak Louder Than Words*

### OPENING:

*Begin by leading an opening prayer.*

If your group hasn’t already had a chance to learn each other’s names, be sure to begin with a name game (a few are listed in the appendix). Then lead the “Who Am I?” ice breaker (*page 26*).

As the ice breaker finishes, divide participants into groups of four or five. Make sure that they have Bibles!

### ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

» **SAY:** We are going to be looking at the book of Mark today. In it we see Jesus giving us the perfect example of the ultimate Servant. Choose someone in your group to read Mark 1:23–34 out loud. Pay close attention to (1) who Jesus calls and heals and (2) how Jesus uses His power.

In your groups, make a list of words that the people who Jesus helped might use to describe Him. You can use your participant page to make the list. Allow 3 minutes for groups to make a list, then gather all the groups together. Ask them to share some of their words with the other groups.

» **SAY:** Actions speak so much louder than words! In Mark 1:27 the people are amazed at the



authority with which Jesus speaks. Yet with all that authority, who does Jesus help? He helps the sick, the crippled, old ladies, little kids. Jesus even tells the demons not to tell people who He is. Why would He do that?

Allow participants to answer the question.

► **THEN SAY:** Jesus was letting His actions speak, not the demons! He could have told them that He is the all-powerful Messiah and given them an earth-shaking display of His divine power. He chose a different way. Those words you listed show who Jesus is. Look at the verses of Mark that we've read so far. Has Jesus told anyone who He really is? No! Yet the people who He helped must have known, simply by what He showed them about Himself.

If someone just observed your actions, what descriptive words would they use for you?

Allow participants to answer the question. Have the participants return to their smaller groups.

► **THEN SAY:** Jesus is leading by example. Make a list of ways that you can lead by example in your own life.

Give participants 3–4 minutes to make a list.

► **THEN SAY:** Mark 8:27–30 is the turning point of the book. Jesus has been showing and showing and showing people who He is by His actions. Even so, the disciples haven't fully grasped what He is trying to do. Choose one person to read these verses out loud. Think of what a revelation it must have been for the disciples to finally understand this!

If someone asked you, "Who do you say Jesus is?" what would you answer? Discuss this in your group; make sure each person gets a turn.

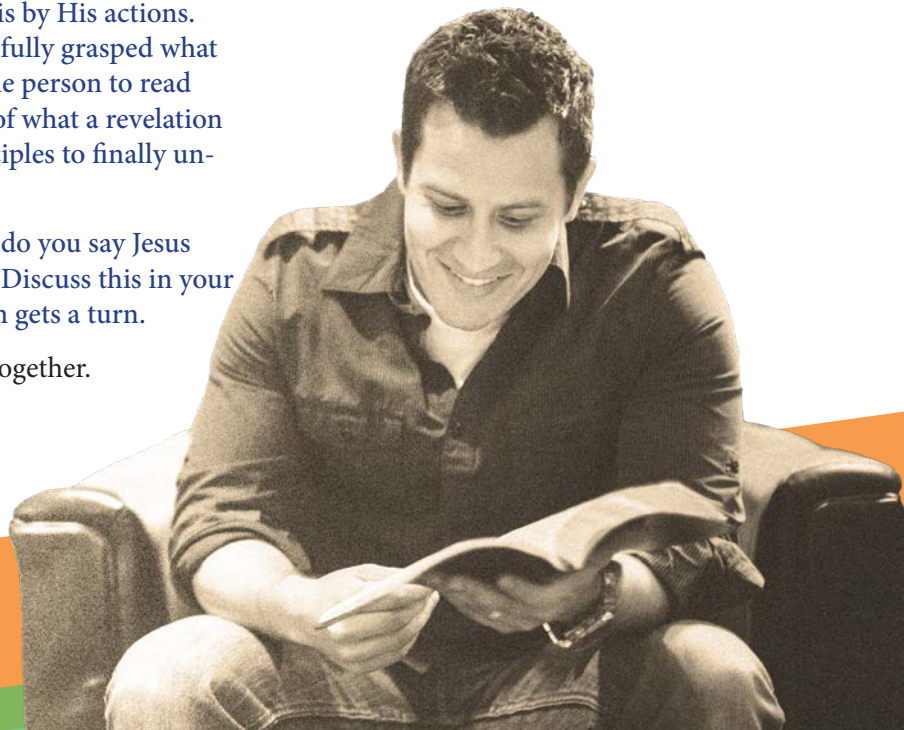
Gather the large group back together.

► **SAY:** If Jesus took great care to show people who He is, imagine the impact His death on the cross must have had! For His entire earthly ministry people saw Jesus give of Himself and care for others. He took care of their physical needs to bring the greater spiritual healing that He offered. His death showed people that they were eternally taken care of; Jesus took the repercussions for their sins so they wouldn't have to. His resurrection showed people that death was no longer something to fear, that faith in Christ meant freedom! It is with that freedom that we seek to do likewise — salvation in Christ is our motivation to serve others so that our actions might point to what Christ has done for us.

Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 10:42–45 out loud. Thank the person after they finish reading.

► **THEN SAY:** Servant leadership doesn't start with us... Jesus is our motivation and our model! In this passage He is using Himself as the ultimate example of servanthood. To close this session, have each small group spend some time in prayer, asking God to help them become people who lead by serving, just as Jesus did.

Allow 5 minutes maximum for this prayer. Make sure to join one of the groups and pray with them!





## SESSION 2

# First Things First

### OPENING:

Begin by welcoming everyone. Lead a name game and ice breaker activity (*examples found on Community Building Pages 25-26*).

### » SESSION 2 PARTICIPANT PAGE *First Things First*

Pass out the “First Things First” participant page and break into small groups of 3–5. Make sure to be a member in a group yourself. Allow participants to form their own groups, but if there is someone without a group ask them to join your small group. Open with prayer, then begin the first discussion starter.

► **SAY:** In your small groups please discuss the first questions on your session 2 participant page. I will gather you back together as a group in a few minutes.

### “MARTHA, MARTHA”

► **SAY:** As we look at planning an Extreme Service Project it is important to put first things first when it comes to serving others. Let’s start by turning to Luke 10:38–42.

Allow time for everyone to find the verses.

► **THEN ASK:** Who would like to read this out loud?

Choose a volunteer and thank him/her when he/she has finished reading.

► **SAY:** Have you ever read this account and been a little confused, maybe upset? Martha is working hard to serve the Lord, just what we all strive to do in response to what He has done for us, and she is told that Mary has chosen what is needed and better. Ouch! We read in numerous other passages that the Lord wants us to work hard serving others and that is just what Martha



is doing! It leaves us to wonder why Jesus told her that Mary had chosen the one thing that was needed. In your small groups discuss this question: Why do you think Jesus said that Mary chose what was better?

Give the small groups about 3 minutes to discuss this question, then gather them back together as a large group. Allow a person from each group to share their answers with the large group. Affirm each reasonable answer.

➡ **SAY:** There are lots of reasons why Jesus said what He did, but we don't know for sure what was going on in His mind. As always, when a passage is confusing or we want to dig deeper, we should look at other passages to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. Let's look at another passage. Martha wasn't the only one who had difficulty allowing Jesus to serve her. Peter wasn't comfortable with it either. Let's look at what happened when Jesus tried to wash Peter's feet.

### **"YOU SHALL NEVER WASH MY FEET!"**

➡ **SAY:** Let's all turn to John 13:1-8.

Allow time for everyone to find the verses.

➡ **ASK:** Who would like to read this out loud?

Choose a volunteer and thank them when they have finished reading.

➡ **SAY:** Peter didn't like the idea of Jesus washing his feet. Why?

Discuss this question from the participant sheet in small groups: Why do you think Peter didn't want Jesus to wash his feet?

Give the small groups about 3 minutes to discuss this question, then gather them back together as a large group. Allow a person from each group to share their answers with the large group. Affirm each reasonable answer.

➡ **THEN SAY:** Washing dirty feet was the job of the lowest servant, yet Jesus, who is ALL MAN and ALL GOD, was willing to wash the feet of His followers. Why? Let's see what more we can learn from this passage. Who will read John 13:8-17?

Choose a volunteer and thank him/her when he/she has finished reading.

➡ **SAY:** Peter changes his mind and allows Jesus to serve him after all. Discuss this question from the participant sheet in your small groups: What was Jesus' goal in washing their feet? Was it only to make their feet clean or did He have more in mind?

Give the small groups about 5 minutes to discuss this question, then gather them back together as a large group.

➡ **SAY:** Jesus wanted the disciples to have more than clean feet; He wanted them to have clean hearts as well. Jesus points out to a busy servant the need to sit back down and receive from the Lord's hand. Just like Martha, Peter needed to be served by Christ before he could serve others. Only by receiving God's gifts can His servants have anything to give others. This isn't just for Martha and Peter. This is for you too. Jesus serves you too!

➡ **SAY:** In your small groups discuss this question: How does God serve you? How can you invest yourself into His service daily?

Give the small groups about 5 minutes to discuss this question, then gather them back together as a large group. Allow a person from each group to share their answers with the large group. Affirm each correct answer and redirect any wrong answers.

➡ **SAY:** The Lord offers His gifts to you through Word and Sacrament. When you were baptized, God served you. You didn't do a thing. Many of us were babies when we were baptized. All we could do was cry and fill our diapers. God came to you; He washed you, gave you faith and blessed you with the Holy Spirit to help you grow in understanding of that faith.

Through Holy Communion Jesus serves you. He offers you His very self to nourish your soul; to give you complete assurance of His absolute forgiveness, and His sure promise of our home in heaven.

By spending time studying the Bible we allow the Lord to serve us. Like Mary, we sit at His feet, listening and learning. The Holy Spirit works through the Scriptures to guide us, point us to



Christ, and enable our acts of service. Just like Martha and Peter, we are faced with opportunities to be served by our Lord. When Peter refused Christ's service, our Lord told Peter, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me" (John 13:8). That is a big deal! Loving God first means creating time in our schedules to put Him first, to allow Him to serve us, to feed us, to wash us.

### **"THIS IS THE FIRST..."**

➡ **SAY:** Perhaps Peter and Martha had the right idea, but the wrong order. They were busy servants who were working for their Lord, yet Jesus stopped them and pointed them to something that should come first — being served by Him. Jesus talks about the order of our service elsewhere in Scripture; let's look.

Let's all turn to Matthew 22:34–40. Who will read?

Choose a volunteer and thank him/her when he/she has finished reading.

➤ **SAY:** Instead of pretending our fabulous acts of service come from ourselves, we see our acts of service flow from God and we must be served by Him before we can fully serve others. The greatest commandment is to love God with our heart, soul and mind. Our focus is on Him, our eyes fixed on Him. When we experience the how He serves and feeds us, we are ready, equipped and enabled to more fully live out the second greatest commandment: to love our neighbors.

In your small groups discuss this question: Jesus said FIRST we are to love the Lord with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind. What could we do to intentionally invest ourselves in the ways God serves us? What would that look like in your daily life?

Give the small groups about 5 minutes to discuss this question, then gather them back together as a large group. Allow a person from each group to share their answers with the large group. Affirm each reasonable answer.

➤ **SAY:** We are here to learn how to serve others, and yet we have just spent all this time talking about how the Lord serves us and how to invest ourselves in His service. What does all that have to do with serving others?

Every time you fly on a commercial airline you hear the same speech: “If oxygen levels are low, masks will drop from the overhead. Secure your own mask before assisting others.” Think through the reasoning behind that. Why do they encourage us to not help ourselves first?

Pause long enough to allow the group to think about this, but not long enough for them to answer.

**BECAUSE YOU CAN’T HELP ANYONE IF YOU ARE DEAD!** If you can’t breathe, you can’t help others. The healthier you are, the better you can serve others. That’s true spiritually as well. God’s Word and Sacrament are like oxygen for

our soul. We need them to live, we need them to serve. Prayer, works of service and acts of love are very, very important, but they are spiritual exercise. You need spiritual oxygen first!! You can’t run if you can’t breathe.

God serves us the oxygen we need to live and the food we need to thrive. He fills our arms with the blessings of His Word and Sacrament. If we don’t allow Him to fill us up, we have nothing to give. How can we serve others with our hands empty? We would have nothing to offer them.

Our servant-hearted Creator comes to us in Word and Sacrament in order to give us life and enable us to thrive! We follow His example, empowered by His gifts and guided by His Spirit. First things first!

### “... AND THE SECOND IS LIKE IT.”

➤ **SAY:** In your small groups discuss this question: What have you learned from this study? How do you plan to apply it in your life? After about 5 minutes I will call you back together as a group and we will go around and give EVERY PERSON a chance to answer one of these questions. What have you learned from this study? How do you plan to apply it in your life?

Give the small groups about 5 minutes to discuss this question, then gather them back together as a large group. Go around and allow each person to share their answer. It is helpful to go in order around the circle rather than a random order. If someone is uncomfortable sharing their answer, encourage them to share but never force them; just go on to the next person. Don’t present “not sharing” as an option ahead of time, but if it comes up, ask once, “Are you sure you don’t want to share?” and if they don’t, just pleasantly say, “Alright, who’s next?”

After you have gone around the room, close your time together with a prayer. Offer thanksgiving for the amazing ways God serves us!





## SESSION 3

# In Their Face or in Their Place

### OPENING:

► **SAY:** In the first session we talked about following the example of Jesus, the ultimate Servant. In the second session we discussed the importance of being equipped for service by first being served by God. All these things prepare us for Session Three, where we are brought into the process of serving and learn how we can live out our personal witness in that service.

### » SESSION 3 PARTICIPANT PAGES *In Their Face or in Their Place*

Pass out the “In Their Face or in Their Place” hand-out and break the group into small groups of 3–5. Make sure to be a member of a group yourself.

### HOW TO HAVE ‘BEAUTIFUL FEET’

► **SAY:** As always, the best place to start is in God’s Word. Let’s look at these passages to find out more about the why and how of witnessing. In

small groups, read the passages assigned to your group and answer the questions. You will be asked to read your passage out loud and share your answers to the first two questions, so choose who will read and who will share your group’s answer.

Give each group one or two of the passages, depending on how many groups you have.

Give the small groups about 10 minutes, and then gather them back together as a large group. Have each group read their passage out loud and share their answers. Make sure the listed “Points to Share” are a part of the discussion.

### Questions on the Participant Page:

- ☐ What does the passage say about why you should reach out to others with the message of Christ?
- ☐ What could you learn from this passage about how you should share your faith?

- ☐ What part of the passage was the most meaningful to you? Why?

Scriptural insights and points to share which you will find helpful to pass on to your participants:

### 1 Peter 2:9–12

- We see here that God chooses us, not the other way around. We don't choose to have faith; it is given to us by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament.
- We can't argue people into faith or make them believe. Rather, we can show them the faith God has given us by our acts of service, we can share the powerful Word of God with others in ways they can understand, and we can point them to the source of our faith by the love we show to them. We follow Christ's example and show them love that serves.
- We have received mercy and have become people of God by Christ's death on the cross; that is our motivation! We have been blessed to be blessing.

### 1 Peter 3:14–17

- As we live our faith in our daily lives we may be "uncool," be made fun of, and suffer for doing what is right. As a "set apart" people of God, we must expect this.
- People should be able to notice that we are different from the rest of the world, and when they do, they will ask us why — and we need to be prepared to answer.
- When we share our faith with others we are called to do so with gentleness and respect. What should that look like in our lives? (Allow two or three people to share their answer.)

### Acts 8:27–38

- Philip assessed where the Ethiopian man was in his understanding of God and started from that point.
- Philip was put in the right situation at the right time to share his faith. When he saw the opportunity, he didn't hesitate to speak up and be-

friend someone who was different from himself. Who are people that you might think of as "different" than yourself that you could befriend with the love of Christ?

Allow two or three people to share their answer.

### Romans 10:8–15

- There are people around us who are not saved. As Christians we are all sent to share the love of Christ with our families, communities and the world around us.
- How can we have "beautiful feet" and bring good news to the people in our life?

Allow two or three people to share their answer.

## HIGH-PRESSURE SALES

➡ **SAY:** In your small groups discuss the questions on your handout.

### Questions on the Participant Page:

- ☐ Have you even been approached by a high-pressure telemarketer or salesperson? How did it make you feel?
- ☐ Describe the characteristics associated with a high-pressure salesperson.
- ☐ What happens when someone feels threatened or attacked?

Give groups about 5 minutes to discuss and then call them back together as a group. Compile a master list of characteristics of a salesperson on newsprint, overhead, projected laptop or chalk board. Add these to the list yourself if they aren't already mentioned:

### High-Pressure Sales –

- Cares more about the sale than the person
- The person will use any means to pressure
- Is gone after the sale — doesn't invest themselves, no relationship
- May disregard privacy, intellect and time
- Motivated by commission and/or personal gain

## A GOOD TEACHER

► **SAY:** In your small groups discuss the “teacher” questions on your participant page.

### Questions on the Participant Page:

- ☐ Share a time when a good teacher changed your mind on a topic or a time when you learned something important from a good teacher
- ☐ Describe the characteristics of the best teacher you have ever had. What qualities made that person a good teacher?
- ☐ How does a good teacher make you feel while you are with them?

Give groups about 5 minutes to discuss and then call them back together as a group. Compile a master list of characteristics of a good teacher on newsprint, overhead, projected laptop or chalk board. Add these to the list yourself if they aren’t already mentioned:

#### Teacher –

- Makes learning fun
- Respects students’ time, privacy and intellect
- Removes stumbling blocks to learning
- Shows students that they care about them
- Builds positive relationships with students
- Motivated by the well-being of the student

► **SAY:** As a large group, let’s discuss the core value that separates a good teacher from a high pressure sales person. What is the defining characteristic that distinguishes a good teacher from a high-pressure sales person?

Facilitate a discussion around the question.

► **SAY:** Too often we may share out faith like a high-pressure sales person — with out gentleness or respect. We close in to “make the sale” and try to argue our “opponent” down. In the passages we just read, we see a very different approach. Like good teachers, we are called to use winsome means and genuine interaction to share the hope we have. Like good teachers, we care more about the good of the person we are interacting with than earning points by proving our own talents in persuasion. This isn’t a sale or an argument; sharing our faith is much more involved than that! We are called to invest ourselves in the lives of others — to show them God’s love through our actions, to befriend the lonely and care for those who are hurting. That is a lot more work than handing them a track or knocking on their door for a 3-minute sales pitch! We are talking about a lifetime of service, care and personal investment. We can follow the example Jesus set by eating with those who are not the “in” crowd, making time for those with disabilities, showing compassion to the elderly, and investing ourselves in the lives of others.





## BE READY, BE INTENTIONAL, BE REAL

➤ **SAY:** Now it's time to make it personal. Take some time on your own to think through this issue. Find a spot in the room where you can be alone and read the passages and answer the questions listed on the final portion of your participant page. Be honest with yourself as you do — this is a time for you and God.

Give the group 10 minutes to work through the questions on their own. Make sure the environment remains quiet and conducive for personal reflection.

### Questions on the Participant Page:

- ☐ What things hinder your personal witness to the people in your sphere of influence? What stops you from investing yourself in their lives, sharing your faith and making a difference?

## BE READY

### Read 1 Peter 3:15

- ☐ Do you feel ready to verbalize your faith to someone else? What could you do to become more prepared?

## BE INTENTIONAL

### Read 1 Peter 2:12

- ☐ Are you in regular prayer for specific people who aren't Christians?
- ☐ Write a prayer that the Lord would help you create situations where you can verbalize your faith with "gentleness and respect." Ask Him to lead you to situations where you can share what God has done for you in Christ.
- ☐ List people you know who are hurting and could use a Christian friend. Spend time in prayer asking God to help you foster a relationship with them and care for them.

## BE REAL

It has been said that "People don't care what you know until they know that you care."

- ☐ How could you show others you care? How could you invest yourself in the lives of others and share your faith like a good teacher?

Call the group back together. Have them form a circle.

➤ **SAY:** Investing ourselves in the lives of others isn't easy. It can seem impossible and imposing. On our own we could never do it, but YOU ARE NOT ALONE. When Jesus ascended into heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to guide and lead our acts of service and witness. The Holy Spirit helps you do the impossible. After all, nothing is impossible with God; with Him all things are possible! The Holy Spirit works through the Word to soften the hearts of those you speak to and to point them to Christ. The Holy Spirit has gathered us into congregations where we can learn how to spread the Word and be supported by other Christians. You are not alone! As we pray together ask that God will help us be ready, intentional and real in our witnessing and acts of service. We will go around the circle to give each person the chance to pray out loud. When you are done praying say, "Lord in Your mercy" with the responding "Hear our prayers" The person to your right will know it's their turn. If you don't want to pray out loud, you may take time for your own silent prayer and end by saying aloud "Lord in Your mercy." Let's pray!



## SESSION 4

# Planning an Extreme Service Project (ESP)

### IN PREPARATION:

There are some listing activities and group times that would benefit greatly from having a chalk/white board or paper and easel in the front of the room. You should also provide enough pens and "Planning an ESP" Participant Page for the participants.

**Begin the session with prayer.**

### IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED

These service ideas focus on the needs of your church, school and/or community and can help you get started. They can be done at any time as a family or in a group setting. Consider sharing these ideas with your youth and their families and inviting them to join together in service.

### Homebound Hellos

Every church has homebound members. Get a list of these people from your pastor or church office. Gather your group to design and make a collection of seasonal greeting cards for each one. Provide construction paper, makers, crayons, scissors, sequins, ribbons and other items for decorating the cards. Include favorite Scripture verses. Each youth member may wish to adopt one of these members and become a once-a-month pen pal with that person, sending reminders of Jesus' love throughout the year.

### Building Maintenance

Contact the person(s) who coordinate the maintenance of your church and/or school facilities. Create a list of areas in the building(s) or grounds which could use extra attention. Plan a service

day to complete the items on the list. If your church already sponsors a work day, provide refreshment stations or lunch for those workers who participate.

### **Play Dough for Preschoolers**

Anyone who works with young children in your church, school or community can benefit from this servant activity. Gather the following supplies and your group in the church kitchen to make several batches of play dough to give to those in your church who share Jesus' love with young children. A collection of Christian-shaped cookie cutters (such as crosses and hearts) can be included.

#### *Traditional Play Dough Recipe:*

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup warm water
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon oil
- ¼ cup salt
- food coloring

Mix all ingredients, adding food coloring last. Stir over medium heat until smooth. Remove from pan and knead until blended smooth. Place in plastic bag or airtight container when cooled. Dough will last for a long time.

### **College Student Care Packages**

Develop a list of college students from your church. Some may be at college out of town and others may be living at home or in your community. Once you have gathered the addresses, collect items for care packages to share with the students. These can be small packages of snacks, microwave popcorn, gum, gift cards and other treats. Include a recent copy of your local newspaper, church bulletin and/or newsletter. Write short notes to the students. Carefully package the items and address the boxes. Packages for local students may be personally delivered. Involve members of the congregation by asking them to mail one of the boxes at the post office.

### **Just Say Thanks**

Use candy and snack treats to create thank you messages for essential workers who serve in your

church, school and/or community. Example: "Thanks for your KING-SIZED help" (include a king-size candy bar). "You were MINT to serve our church/school/community" (include mint candies). Google "candy bar messages" for other ideas.

### **Tray Cards for Nursing Homes**

Fold blank 5" x 7" index cards lengthwise to create a tray card. Look for Scripture verses that provide words of encouragement and thanksgiving. Print the verses onto the cards using a fine tip marker. Add other decorations to the cards using crayons, markers, sequins, ribbons, etc. Deliver the cards to the staff of a local nursing home to place on meal trays being delivered to residents' rooms.

### **Food Pantry Collection**

Food pantries often experience low inventory during certain times of the year. Plan a food drive within your congregation for a local food pantry. Gather an assortment of empty plastic grocery bags to distribute with a suggested shopping list attached. Give these to members two Sundays prior to the official close of your food drive. Arrange your collected food in a high-traffic area of your church with a large thank you note printed on poster board and a tally of what has been collected. If appropriate, the group could deliver the items to the food pantry and volunteer to stay and help stock the shelves with the food items you have donated.

### **School Supplies**

Invite youth group members to collect a variety of school supplies including notebooks, pencils, pens, crayons, etc. You may want to contact a local school to determine what school supplies they might need and provide them with your school supply donation once your project is completed.

## **DECIDE ON A PROJECT**

➡ **SAY:** When deciding on an ESP the ultimate question is "Which people in the church or community could benefit from an ESP?" We are each going to think through an ESP of our own choosing as we go. First think through the people



or organizations in your church or community that could benefit from service.

➡ **SAY:** There is no limit to the possibilities for service. Think specifically about needs in our church and community. Are there elderly people who could use help with shopping, housekeeping or yard work? Is there an area group home where we could spend time with residents? Are there young families in our church that might benefit from babysitting so that parents can attend week-night Bible studies? Are there a lot of youth in our community that need a safe and fun place to gather for a coffee house night or open gym?

Take a few minutes to write down some possibilities on your ESP participant page. Don't be afraid to quietly discuss with others as you do this. Share good ideas you have or ask for some help. Allow about 10 minutes. Now narrow it down to one ESP that you're going to think through to completion today. Allow about 1 minute.

Go around the room and have each person share the ESP they chose.

## PLAN YOUR WITNESS

Ultimately your ESP should point people to Christ. We've talked about our motivation for service and the need to be intentional in our witness. A church-based service project helps the church teach and equip its members. A community-based service project helps meet the physical needs of people in order to create a relationship in which we can share Christ.

➡ **SAY:** Take a moment and write out your answer to this question: How can this service project help point people to Christ? If you cannot identify the witness of your ESP, don't be afraid to go back and revisit the choice you made.

Have each person share the way in which their project points people to Christ.

## CREATE A LEADERSHIP TEAM

➡ **SAY:** A project like this is best when we use the resources and gifts in our own congregations. Doing so involves more people and helps people discover how their time and gifts can be used to share Christ with others. We are going to make a list of youth and adults that could be members of the leadership team for the ESP that you choose. The leadership team will be the group that makes the leg-work happen.

What things do you think would be important to look for in leadership team members?

Compile a group list. Make sure you include:

- Willingness
- Variety (youth, adults, different skills)
- Leadership ability (pastor, DCE, parents)
- Another youth who is enthusiastic & outgoing (for promotion)
- People with servant hearts
- Abilities to lead trade-specific skills (varies by ESP)

Now make a list of people that you would like to be on the leadership team. Allow 3 minutes maximum.

The next step would be to contact your leadership team candidates. You will want to talk to each one in person or on the phone. Describe the project and tell them why you think they would be great on the team. (Invite them to the leadership team meeting, have the date and time picked ahead of time).

## HAVE A PLANNING MEETING

Your planning meeting is the time for the leadership team to get involved. At the meeting, share your vision for the ESP. Then work out the following details with your team.

- ☐ When is the ESP?
- ☐ How long is the ESP?
- ☐ Do we need to plan with the organization we want to serve?

- ☐ How will we help our servants focus on Christ? (Bible study?)
- ☐ How many people do we need to make it work?
- ☐ Do we need transportation?
- ☐ Will it cost anything? If so, how much? How will we pay for it?
- ☐ How will we let people at church know about it?
- ☐ What kind of sign-up will we use?
- ☐ Who will do what at the event?

Assign people to specific tasks and deadlines. Make sure you don't saddle one person with too much. Different people can oversee each area, such as promotion, transportation, arrangements and food. Allow people to volunteer for the task they are most excited about or gifted in.

## IDEAS FOR FUNDING

Some ESPs will require a budget, others will not. There are many great ways to raise funds for an ESP. Work with your leadership team to decide how to raise funds.

Ask the group for any funding ideas and compile a group list. You could:

- Contact the Sunday school superintendent and ask about putting Sunday school offerings toward the ESP (a great way to promote serving to younger kids)
- Contact church groups and organizations to see if they would like to support the ESP
- Ask participants to pay a small registration fee to take part in the ESP

## IDEAS FOR PROMOTION

You will want to publicize your ESP within your congregation. Let them know what the youth of their church are doing. People are encouraged when they hear about others serving. Someone who hears about this ESP might just be on the leadership team for a future one!

Ask the group to share promotional ideas and compile a group list. Be sure to include:

### Before the event:

- Tell the Sunday School students about it
- Have pastor announce it before/after church
- Make signs/posters about it
- Use promotional tools your congregation may provide (printed or in web form)
- Have a display in the narthex/fellowship hall before and after church

### During the event:

- Take photos and videos to document the event

### After the event:

- Share pictures, video and stories with the congregation
- Write a summary for the church newsletter
- Include info on your next ESP
- Use your photos and video to help participants remember the experience. Post them online, in your youth room or on a church bulletin board.

### Questions and other ideas on planning an ESP

These can be generated, written down and the answers checked out for reporting back to the next planning meeting.

## AT YOUR ESP

You will learn a lot about yourself by serving and seeing the effects of your planning. Never lose sight of the focus of serving others and pointing them to Christ... and enjoy your ESP!



## After Your Extreme Service Project (ESP)

### IN PREPARATION:

Processing what occurred with your group of servants is something you should schedule. Processing is a powerful way for a group to solidify and enhance their experience through discussion, verbalization and sharing. An event can pass by us without impacting or changing us if we don't take time to reflect on it.

Read through the bullet-pointed list provided for evaluating and processing your ESP. Determine the object you will use for the second bullet point. It may be a tool, or some other object used during your time of service.

Have the group sit in a way that is conducive to processing with a group (like on the floor in a circle or around a table where each person is

visible.) Distribute the Session Five Participant Page. Provide 5–10 minutes for participants to review the processing questions. Pens or pencils may be provided for participants to make notes.

Use the turn-taking technique mentioned in the second bullet point of the processing worksheet as a way for everyone to see the process in action.

Leading a processing session is a learned skill. The processing questions are a way to start learning this skill. Pay attention to what works well and what doesn't as you begin to sharpen the skill of facilitating.



## PROCESSING AND EVALUATING THE EXPERIENCE FOR THE FUTURE

An important part of any group activity is the process of evaluation. It gives you the opportunity to check out what was good and helpful, what could have been improved and what should be planned in the future. There is much to learn from any service project, so you will want to evaluate the experience your participants had.

When processing an experience with a group, it is important that each person is included.

- Tell everyone to think about the ESP they just completed. Distribute the participant page with questions along with pens or pencils for each participant. Allow 5–10 minutes for participants to review the questions and write down their responses.
- Reassemble the group. Give the small object you selected to one person who you know will be willing to talk first. Tell the group the holder of this object is the only person allowed to speak. If you wish to speak, you must raise your hand and have the object passed/handed to you.
- Ask “What was your favorite thing about our ESP?” Tell everyone that they will have the chance to answer as the object is passed around the circle. Make sure you limit everyone to just one thing. If someone does not have an answer,

have them pass the object on but tell them that you will come back to them at the end.

- Be sure to actively listen to each person, and affirm them with words or non-verbals.
- Watch your time — if things start to go long, help the group stay focused.
- Once they have shared, ask them to tell the group one thing that they learned about themselves. Assure them that it is perfectly fine to repeat what another person has said.
- Then ask, “What is one thing that you learned about God through this ESP?” It will be up to you to decide whether to continue passing the object. If you think you will get better answers by simply calling on people, you may switch to that. Don’t feel that you must continue to call on everyone either. At this point it may be better to allow some people to stay quiet and process the experience internally.
- Finally ask, “What will you take from this experience that you can apply to your everyday life?” You will get some fun answers, you will get some very serious faith answers. Affirm insightful answers by repeating what was said.

Close every processing time with prayer. Be sure to include some of the things that were brought up during that time in the prayer. Thank God for Jesus, the ultimate Servant, whose death and resurrection enable us to serve others with joy!



# APPENDIX

## Teaching Tips

This session was created to help walk a group through the teaching/leading process. These tips do not only apply to leading the LYF training, but also to any situation where you might be leading a group. Add these things to your toolbox and use them often!

### GETTING READY

#### Know your stuff!

Go over the material that you are going to be teaching several times so that you are familiar with it. Find an empty room and practice saying parts out loud. Make notes to remind yourself of things you want to say. Highlight key words so you won't have to read it all from the page. Being prepared is a great way to show people that you care about them and what you are teaching them.

#### Space

The layout of a room is an important part of a presentation. Visit your room ahead of time so that you can make any necessary adjustments. The seating arrangement should be conducive to how you want the group to interact.

For a formal presentation without much interaction, a room can be set up classroom style with everyone facing the front.

A room where each person is facing each other in a hollow circle or square will encourage people to take an active role in the presentation and to communicate with their peers.

A good way to signal a transition from lecture to discussion is to change the room arrangement during a presentation. When breaking into small

groups encourage the participants to be at eye level with each other and able to see each group member.

#### Room checklist:

- Select an appropriate seating arrangement.
- Provide a surface for writing on.
- Prepare A/V equipment as needed.
- Position your materials so that they are available to you when you need them.
- Be sure that you will always be able to be heard.
- When possible, position entrance/exit doors in the back of the room.

#### Materials

Be sure that you have all the materials that you will be using. Make all your photocopies ahead of time. Have enough necessary equipment on hand for each person to use. If someone else is setting up the room for you be sure to contact them ahead of time to let them know what you need.

#### Arrive early

You don't want to arrive five minutes before you are to begin and discover that you need to go find an extension cord! Give yourself plenty of time to set up the room, and check your A/V equipment ahead of time so you can focus on your presentation.

### PRESENTING

#### Begin on time

Unless someone has specifically asked you to wait for them, it is important to start on time. Your punctuality shows how prepared you are, and it validates the participants who made it a priority to arrive on time.

## Open with a prayer

Ask God to bless your time of learning and planning. Ask that the Holy Spirit would guide your interactions with each other and help each participant to grow through this experience. Opening with a prayer does several important things. It invites God to be a part of your gathering. It shows that the focus of the time together is on Christ. It also enables the participants to feel a bit more comfortable discussing their faith and praying with the group because you did it first.

## Learn their names

Welcome the group and share your name and something about you (keep it short!). Then begin with an opportunity for each person to share their name — but don't do it in a boring way! If you plan you can make the introductions memorable and use the time to help break the ice as well. Play a name game like the ones listed on page 25.

## Break the ice

Play an ice breaker like the ones listed on page 26. Ice breakers allow a group to get comfortable with each other. They also allow a group to get comfortable with you! Get the group's attention, explain the ice breaker to them quickly and clearly, then get it started. Participate with the group in the ice breakers when possible. Each ice breaker you lead should never last more than 3 or 4 minutes. It is best to stop the ice breaker right at the height of excitement and move on to the next one. Once you feel that the group has loosened up and is in a communicative mood, tell them to move to where you want them for your presentation.

## GROUP MANAGEMENT

As a group loosens up it can become a challenge to get them to stop and listen to you for their next instructions. Here are two ways to regain their attention quickly and without resorting to yelling.

- Within earshot of one or more participants, say, "If you can hear me clap once." Then say, "If you can hear me clap twice." Then "If you can hear me clap three times." Soon everyone will be following your commands and you will have the group's attention.

- Before beginning name games and ice breakers, tell the group that whenever you raise your hand you need them to raise their hands and close their mouths. Practice with them by telling them to start making noise. Then raise your hand and watch how quickly they do likewise. As soon as you have their attention, continue with what you were doing.

## BEGINNING PRESENTATION

Things to remember while presenting:

- Know your material well enough that you don't need to read every word from your notes.
- Look at your participants and talk to them.
- Don't let small distractions throw you off. Different people listen differently. If someone is not looking at you or is writing while you speak it does not necessarily mean that they aren't listening.
- Be conscious of time. Sometimes it is better to skip some material than to lose your audience (but don't skip the essentials!).
- Remember to leave a little time at the end for questions.
- Use your participants: Find ways to engage them in your presentation (ask them questions, have them read, etc.).

## DISCUSSION TIME

A good presentation will take care to involve the participants. Breaking into small discussion groups is a good way to keep people actively involved in what they are learning. It gives them a chance to verbalize what they are thinking and to learn from those around them. Try to recognize groups that might always want to clump together. Decide whether you are going to assign groups for them or let them choose their own. Watch out for someone who might be excluded by others. If you've identified a person who feels excluded during name games and ice breakers, it would be a good idea to choose the groups yourself.

## ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking questions involves your participants and lets you gauge their understanding of the material. But it can also be difficult with a group that is not comfortable with each other. Be sure to follow these guidelines:

- Allow silence after a question. It is easy to move on or let a group off the hook by answering yourself if they don't immediately volunteer something. Give them some time to digest the question and build up the courage to answer. Be comfortable with silence.
- Be kind but not misleading to wrong answers. Sometimes answers are just plain wrong! We aren't doing a good job if we let our participants believe something that is false, but we don't want to make people feel afraid about offering ideas either. Always affirm someone for volunteering and encourage them to consider the question further. For example: "Thank you for answering, Rita, but that isn't quite what I'm looking for. Do you have any other thoughts on the matter?"



- As best you can, try to avoid asking questions that can be answered with just a "yes" or "no." Open-ended questions are the best way to get a group talking. Bad example: "So do you think Jesus meant it when He said...?" Good example: "What do you think Jesus meant when He said...?" This is a difficult skill for many people to develop. Practice asking open-ended questions to friends and family in everyday conversation to get the hang of it.

## CLOSING

When you are finished, take time to answer any questions your participants might have. If you get questions that don't apply or don't need to be answered right away, politely invite that person to talk to you once everyone else has gone. If you don't know the answer to a question, that's okay! Let the group know that you don't have an answer, but that you will work on getting an answer for them by the next session. Close in prayer, possibly by asking a participant to pray or leading the prayer yourself. Thank everyone for being attentive (even if they weren't... it will send a message!) and make yourself available to people who might want to talk with you further.

## AFTER

In order to grow and develop as a group leader it is important to assess the job that you did. Use these questions to think through what just happened and to help you continue to learn:

- What did I do that worked?
- What did I do that didn't work?
- What things will I try to do again?
- What can I do to improve about the things that didn't work?

Leading a group is a learned skill. No one is born a great leader. It takes work and patience. Keep praying that God will help you develop as a leader and thank Him for using you, even if things didn't go just as you planned.



# Name Games

## NAME CIRCLE

Form a circle.

Go around the circle and have each person answer each of these questions:

- What is your name?
- What school do you go to?
- If you have a job, where do you work?
- Youth: What is the first thing you do when you get to school in the morning?
- Adult: What is the first thing you do when you get to work in the morning?

## GROUP JUGGLE: ROUND 1

- Arrange participants in a circle, not too close, not too far apart.
- Include yourself in the circle.
- Explain that you are going to throw a ball to someone. Tell them to be sure and remember the person they threw it to. Pick someone out and ask their name, then say:
  - "Hi (Clark), my name is (Hedda)" (underarm throw a ball to Clark)
- Clark then says, "Thank you Hedda," picks someone else, and says, "Hi Ava, my name is Clark... here you go!" (throw) Ava says, "Thank you, Clark."
- The challenge from here is simply to get the ball thrown around to everyone in the circle, and finally back to you.

## GROUP JUGGLE: ROUND 2

- Tell the group good job! Now tell them to remember to say the name of the person they are throwing to, and thank the person, by name, for throwing it.

- On the second round, most people will be challenged to remember who to throw it to and the two names. Take it slow, help the group out, so that each person has a successful second round.

## Other ideas for group juggling ...

- Add another ball
- Add a bunch of other balls
- Send one forward and one backward simultaneously
- Time the group
- Challenge them to not let any balls hit the ground
- Add your shoe

## PANTOMIME NAME

Have participants stand in a circle. Ask each person to think of an action which starts with the same letter as the person's first name, like "Jumping James." Each person does the action and yells out their action-name. Everyone then repeats the action and the action-name. This requires a pretty high level of instructor energy and drama; people are shy to start with. Really encourage everyone to join in and say the name and action of everyone else.

## INTERVIEW INTRODUCTIONS

Split the group up into pairs. Give them a few minutes to interview each other and then have them introduce one another to the group. This allows two people to get to know each other quickly and form a friendship. It's often easier for people to talk about others than themselves.

# Ice Breakers

## WHO AM I?

You will need one sticky note per person. Before leading this with the group, write down the name of a celebrity, political figure, cartoon character, Bible character, etc., on each one. You can choose one category or mix them up.

Put a sticky note on each person's back. Each person must figure out who they are by asking 'yes' or 'no' questions. No one can ask the same person more than one question until they've asked everyone a question. The room will become chaos for a while. As people figure out their identity, have them sit down until everyone is sitting and ready to move on to whatever you have planned next.

## EGG, CHICKEN, RAPTOR

Introduce the three stages:

1. First, the Egg (knees bent, squat to floor, move with a waddling kind of walk)
2. Second, the Chicken (thumbs in armpits with elbows as flapping wings, knees bent to a slight squat)
3. Finally, the Raptor (stand straight with arms over your head like a large dinosaur)

Remind the group how to play "Rock, Paper, Scissors."

Each egg will go to other eggs and challenge them to a game of "Rock, Paper, Scissors." The winner becomes a chicken and the loser remains an egg. You can only challenge people in the same stage that you are in: Chickens go on to challenge other chickens, winners becoming raptors, losers reverting to eggs. Raptors only play other raptors: The winner remains a raptor, the loser becomes an egg.

## WHO IS IT?

This one is best for smaller groups. Each student writes down on a small piece of paper a little-known fact about him or herself (the more unusual, the better). These are then read, and everyone tries to guess who it is.

## COMMON TRAITS

This activity is simply a series of questions which require participants to arrange themselves according to various individual and social characteristics. Use between 8–10 questions for a session.

### Find someone who:

- had the same breakfast as you
- has the same shoe size (or has the same size hand)
- has the same favorite season
- has the same favorite sense

### Get in groups according to:

- the place where you were born
- the type of toothpaste you use
- favorite soda
- a place you would most like to visit
- birth month

### Line up according to:

- number of siblings
- thumb size
- number of glasses of water (or cans of soda) you drink per day
- number of different states you've visited
- first letter of middle name, mother's maiden name, name of favorite music/movie/media star, etc.

[illegible]



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