

What is Service?

The spiritual discipline of Service is a response to the need of the world in the particular manner God has equipped you. It is a way of offering resources, time, influence and spiritual gifts for the care, protection, justice and nurture of others.

Relevant Scripture

“This is the kind of fast day I’m after: to break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts.

What I’m interested in seeing you do is: sharing your food with the hungry, inviting the homeless poor into your homes, putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad, being available to your own families.” Isaiah 58:6-7, *The Message*

“He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”
1 Corinthians 12:7

“Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight, and guard against corruption from the godless world.” James 1:27, *The Message*

Why do we serve?

- To gratefully respond to the great Act of Service of our Lord Jesus Christ, who willingly became nothing to make us the beloved of God.
- To break the hold of self-centeredness, arrogance, possessiveness and resentment on our hearts. To learn how to live for others rather than ourselves.
- To respond to the immensity of need in the world.
- To join God in his mission to restore the world to his Kingdom of wholeness and peace.

How can I serve?

Below are some practical suggestions to establish practices of service, mercy and justice in your life.

- Meditate on Jesus’ service to you. Read and meditate on Luke 10:25-37. Imagine Jesus as the Good Samaritan and yourself as the person lying in the road. Dwell on the mercy and compassion of Jesus until your heart is melted and you are empowered to serve others as he has served you.
- Learn more the work of our church through the newly established **Community Transformation Center** (CTC), which has a special focus on the East End of Richmond. For example,
 - o Volunteer to help with one of the many activities of Church Hill Activities and Tutoring (CHAT). Visit www.chatrichmond.org for more details.

- Serve our East End and West End youth by volunteering to teach Sunday school, or sign up with our Family Partnership program that pairs Third families with East and West End youth for the sake of mentoring and fellowship. Contact Rick Hutton at rickh@thirdpres.org
- Through CTC there are a host of opportunities for service in the areas of education, tutoring, sports ministry, mentoring, housing, jobs training, childcare, and many others. Contact Corey Widmer at coreyw@thirdpres.org for more information.
- Learn more about the efforts of our church in advocating for a defeat of the Pay Day Loan industry in Virginia, an abusive lending practice that takes advantage of many in our city and state through crippling high interest loans. Contact Bob Broxton at bob@cavtel.net for more information.
- Learn about the injustice in the world that we usually ignore. Visit www.ijm.com and sign up for their weekly email update. Or, read the newspaper and pay special attention to issues of injustice, and commit these to prayer and action.
- Pick up a spiritual gifts inventory outside of Beth Nichol's office. Complete it and review it with Beth, a friend or another staff member. Plan a way of using your gifts to benefit others in the next month.
- Plan to go on a short-term mission trip next summer and expose yourself to the needs of the world. Contact Joe Gouverneur at joeg@thirdpres.org.
- Take an assessment of your gifts, money, time, abilities, areas of influence, networks and passions. In view of the immense need in our city and world, consider your responsibility before God with what he has given you. How might you use these gifts for his work?

-Insert Compiled with thoughts from Ann Ahlberg Calhoun, Richard Foster,
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