

YOU CAN HOST **A**

SERVANT EVENT





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Host a Servant Event



Serving and loving other people in Jesus' name are critical components of our Christian witness, discipleship and life in God's kingdom. Christians serve because they are thankful to God who already has loved and redeemed them. We have nothing to earn or gain; rather, we are simply giving thanks to God for what He has already done for us in Jesus. Service is an opportunity to practice and more deeply understand our vocations. We are eager to share His Word, to represent His love to the world and to grow in the Spirit. We love others because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).

We are so grateful for our Servant Event hosts, and the opportunities they provide for young people to understand their faith more deeply, develop Christian community and serve in Jesus' name. We know the impact that Servant Events can have in the lives of young people. Servant Event hosts make that possible. Hosting a Servant Event not only provides opportunities for God's people, but it also gives opportunities to connect with your community before, during and after your event.

Thank you for considering hosting a servant event.

GETTING STARTED

Before you jump into hosting, consider what it might take for your congregation or organization to accept on this important task. The best place to start is study and prayer about service. John 13:1–17, Matthew 25:31–46, and Philippians 2:1–18 are some places you can begin.

There are also practical considerations. LCMS Servant Events are hosted exclusively by LCMS districts, congregations, schools, camps or Recognized Service Organizations. Congregations and organizations are free to design unique opportunities independently, within the parameters given in this guide. This resource provides guidance and suggestions for a successful event. If you are hosting service opportunities that are not specifically LCMS Servant Events, these resources may still be helpful, but understand some elements will not fit your context.

Consider both your capacity and your resources. Planning an LCMS Servant Event can start more than two years in advance, but it takes a minimum of six months. You will need to develop a leadership team to manage various aspects of the event. Appoint this team early to ensure you have the volunteers needed to successfully host.

The design of your event will need to account for the type of work to be completed, dates, length of time the project will require and number of participants needed. The size of a Servant Event will depend on capacity. Some may open to 20 to 30 participants. Others may have a larger capacity of 60

to 120 (or more), allowing up to 20 to 25 participants from a single congregation.

Servant Events can take on several “looks.” Some can be completed in one day or over a weekend. Others last a week, or ten days or more. (This resource will focus on events that are about a week long, but can be scaled as needed.) Events can include a variety of service, such as construction, mercy work or providing faith-based programming. Servant Events can connect with local agencies, including homeless shelters, food banks or soup kitchens. They can connect with Recognized Service Organizations or work with local individuals.

If you aren't sure about becoming a host, bring key leaders to join you in prayer. Talk and dream about what it might look like, and be realistic about what might prevent that from happening. You aren't planning alone. LCMS Youth Ministry staff, the Servant Events Committee and fellow hosts will help you along the way.

WHAT SHOULD A SERVANT EVENT INCLUDE?

A Servant Event includes the following components:

- › **Bible study, devotions and/or worship** that focus on Christian servanthood and relate to the participants' daily experience.
- › **Meaningful work** which is needed by the community and can be provided by the participants. The service

should be challenging enough to keep youth interested, but within their ability to accomplish with excellence. Servant Events also provide experience with models of service that participants can develop back home in their congregation and community.

- › **Time for discussion and reflection** on the day's happenings. Participants need the chance to relate their experiences of service to daily faith and life.
- › **Dedicated leadership** that includes people with the necessary skills to assist participants in carrying out their work, with competency and sensitivity for leading participants in worship, Bible study and in their understanding of Christian service. These leaders must be committed, and able to work with a variety of people.
- › **Adequate funding** of the event through donations, local resources and grants so registration fees can be affordable for youth.
- › If needed, the ability to provide **housing, meals and materials** for participants.
- › **Cross-cultural experiences** so participants can live and work among people with whom they may not ordinarily work or live. Events with people of different ages, life situations or ethnicities each provide a cross-cultural experience.
- › Opportunities for young people and adults to participate in **Christian community**, and to experience the joy of God's people working, learning and celebrating together.

Don't be overwhelmed if you aren't sure how you will provide these things right now. We have resources that can be helpful in breaking down each of these pieces into achievable steps. However, it is important for you to be realistic about your ability to host an event. Give yourself time to collect the resources, team and service work that can make your event a success.

Your Servant Event might look different than others. But all Servant Events include working with others, learning about a new culture and adapting to new surroundings. This allows us to examine ourselves spiritually, articulate our faith and strengthen our trust in the Lord!

WHAT TYPE OF SERVICE CAN BE DONE?

Servant Events typically fall into one or more of these categories.

- › **Construction Events:** Volunteers help improve the physical living situation of individuals by building new homes or repairing existing homes. Potential projects would include painting, ramp building or repair work. Construction might benefit disaster victims, mission congregations, elderly or disadvantaged families or outdoor ministry sites.

- › **Crisis Events:** These events help with relief efforts after a devastating natural disaster. Disaster recovery often means helping right away in clean-up efforts, as well as months later to complete renovations and repairs.
- › **Environment Events:** These events involve activities that care for the world God gave us, like gleanings, recycling, litter pick-up, cleaning streams or refurbishing public park areas. Work may be sponsored in cooperation with local conservation, forest or park service groups.
- › **Human Care Events:** Participants work directly with people, perhaps helping physically, emotionally, or mentally disabled individuals; working with children who are at-risk; spending time with the elderly in resident homes or reaching out to migrant farm workers and their families.
- › **Multicultural Events:** These provide participants with the opportunity to learn about ethnic or cultural groups while working on projects within the community. This could include leading Native American or Hmong children in day camp activities and learning more about their ethnic group and traditions.
- › **Outreach Events:** Participants have an evangelistic outreach emphasis in the community, such as helping staff a Christian camp or vacation Bible school for neighborhood children, or helping publicize and/or lead a church sponsored community event.

Determining the type of service should start by spending time getting to know the needs of your community. Ask local organizations or community members, and listen to them well. This will help you to determine where service can be of most use. If you have already made connections for service with organizations or individuals in the community, lean into those. If not, looking for opportunities can lead your congregation/organization to long-term connections to help share the Gospel beyond the short-term Servant Event.

WHO WILL ATTEND YOUR SERVANT EVENT?

One of the things to consider as you start planning a Servant Event is whom you would like to join you. This may depend on the type of service you provide, as well as limitations in housing and transportation. The target audience of your Servant Event might be:

- › **Junior High/Middle School youth** are between 5th and 8th grade. These youth need specific instructions for their work, but often have energy to get a lot of physical work done.
- › **Senior High/High School youth** are between 9th and 12th grade. These youth are more responsible and have more skills. This is often the population from which workers for Servant Events are drawn.

- › **Young Adults/College students** are working on undergraduate and graduate degrees and usually top at ages 26–28. This group might be less available for events, but participants can bring lots of skills and impact in their service.
- › **Families of pre-teens and teens** provide a unique experience for teens, parents and younger siblings. Entire families serving together may have powerful faith conversations, and a chance to learn and grow together.

SERVANT EVENT HOST RESOURCES

You are not on your own to plan your Servant Event! LCMS Servant Events has many written resources to walk you through the planning process. This includes documents specifically for:

- › Event Planning
- › Leadership Team Development and Roles
- › Promotion and Registration
- › Risk Management
- › Budgeting and Finances
- › Community Building

When you sign up as a host of an LCMS Servant Event, you will receive support and resources from the staff of LCMS Youth Ministry. This will include:

- › In-person training every fall at low or no cost
- › Access to LCMS Servant Events Host Portal for promotion and management of event
- › Promotion of event on LCMS Servant Event website and LCMS Youth Ministry social media
- › Promotion at LCMS events such as District Youth Gatherings and LCMS worker conferences
- › Support from LCMS Servant Event Committee and LCMS Youth Ministry Staff

SERVANT EVENT DEFINITIONS

The resources provided by LCMS Servant Events use specific vocabulary that will be helpful to define as you start.

LCMS Servant Events: programs staffed and run by LCMS Youth Ministry out of the LCMS Office of National Mission in St. Louis.

LCMS Servant Event Committee: a group of volunteers that works closely with LCMS Servant Events to help promote, support and direct Servant Events for teens across the country.

Leadership team: the Event, Community Life and Service Directors, as well as any other additional leaders who are key to running your event.

Participants: the adults and youth from your congregation or others who are attending the Servant Event.

Youth participants: those attending your Servant Event who are under 18 or not yet out of high school.

Adult leader: the adults who register, prepare, and bring youth participants to Servant Events.

Church groups: participants who attend together from a single congregation.

Service sites: locations around your community where participants will serve.

Service crews: groups who serve at each service site. These are typically smaller groups that include at least one adult leader. Often these groups contain a mix of church groups.

FIRST STEPS TO HOST A SERVANT EVENT

Once you have drafted a basic plan with your team, you will fill out a New Host Form. This will be sent to our office for approval. LCMS Youth Ministry staff will reach out to you with questions and next steps. The information you will need includes:

- › Host entity contact information
- › Year of event
- › Primary leader contact information

Event Planning



Servant Events are exciting, energizing and enjoyable events. But they are far from simple to execute. Combining congregational groups from across the country means even more to organize and plan. A dedicated and faithful group of leaders can make this happen. When Servant Events are done well, they can create a lifetime impact for participants and those they serve.

This section covers some of the big picture pieces of event planning. Detailed descriptions of roles, publicity, registration and timelines are available in other sections.

PLANNING YOUR OBJECTIVES

First, the leadership team (primarily the Event Director, Service Director and Community Life Director) must set the objectives for the event. Once objectives are in place, the team can plan, budget and look for additional volunteers.

Objectives will help you to prioritize your program and choices, as well as your budget items. It will also help you to promote your event to other churches and encourage donations. Setting objectives can start by asking the question: “What personal, spiritual, and interpersonal growth or changes would you like to see occur in the participants’ values, interests and lives as a result of the event?”

Your leadership team may come up with a variety of ways to answer this question. It’s best to limit your event objectives to three or four. Make them concise, specific, achievable, measurable and personal. If you need, consider looking at the Seven Practices of Healthy Youth Ministry, including the 40 End Goals for Youth Ministry. (These are available on YouthESource.com.)

Sample Objectives:

- › Participants will help conduct a day camp experience for children (ages 4–10) involving children with special needs.
- › Participants will build relationships with youth and adults from other congregations so that all will feel less alone in their life of faith.
- › Participants will better understand vocation and service because of Jesus’ love for us so that they engage in service more frequently back home.

Participants will have a safe, joyful, and engaging experience that will encourage them to bring more young people to future servant events.

As you plan your event, return to these often. Put them at the top of every meeting agenda, and share them with participants during the preparation process. It may be helpful to include questions in your evaluation that help you measure these objectives as well.

MAKING A PLAN

Logistics and organization are crucial! Many important components of a Servant Event are directed by volunteers. Everyone must serve together and be prepared. Participants can usually sense within the first hour of the event if you are prepared or “running amuck.” When participants sense disorganization it can lead to all kinds of problems.

This resource will focus on the planning components that are developed as a team. There are many other components to event planning that are dependent on the leader’s role. To help keep the volunteers clear, we will give a planning timeline, checklist and other planning information for each role separately.

SETTING THE SCHEDULE

The leadership team may wonder how to fill an entire week of programming during a Servant Event. However, once you get into planning, you may find there isn’t enough time! Servant Events typically include service, Bible study, devotions, learning, worship, social time, eating, group recreation and cross-cultural activities.

Your schedule will look unique to your event. Things to keep in mind as you plan your schedule include:

- › Make participants feel comfortable and welcome from the moment they arrive. Be aware of and concerned for the comfort of all participants. Lack of concern for the physical well-being of servants will affect their attitude and potential for growth through the event.

- › Develop some daily patterns for your event. It can be difficult for youth in a new place with new activities to keep track of a schedule that changes every day. Stick to your schedule and avoid changing it.
- › Be sure that there is a balance of service, spiritual development and community time.
- › Be sensitive to the group's energy level as it changes during the week. Stretch the participants, but not to the breaking point. You may be very excited about a high energy activity at the end of the week, but be sure participants are excited as well. Above all, be flexible and ready to make adjustments.
- › If your event is focused on junior high students, build your schedule with awareness of their limited focus and high energy. Likewise, if you are focused on young adults, you can make your service longer, but you may want to provide increased personal time for decompression.
- › Be sure to allow for travel time and unexpected delays. Allow enough time to get where you need to be, factoring in how long it takes X number of people to eat, shower,

congregate, etc. The more people, the more time it takes for everything.

- › Plan time each day to meet with the Servant Event leadership team and adult leaders. When you meet, evaluate the day, go over plans for the next day, make program and schedule adjustments and deal with problems. Getting informal feedback and evaluation from the participants each day is also important.
- › Schedules may need to be adjusted due to unexpected weather or service situations. It is always helpful to have a backup plan if these impact your schedule.
- › Provide appropriate and adequate time for Bible study and worship to happen each day. Be sensitive to the physical and social needs of servants. For example, do not schedule core programming like Bible study after lunch or late at night.

The key to a successful event is scheduling an appropriate balance of activities. Too much of any single activity (work or free time) can cause dissatisfaction and possible dissension. Bottom line: have a well thought out schedule, but also be flexible!

POSSIBLE SCHEDULE FOR THE SERVANT EVENT WEEK

SUNDAY

- 2:00 p.m. Registration
- 4:00 Opening/Icebreakers
- 5:00 Adult orientation
- 6:00 Dinner
- 7:00 All Participant Orientation/Community Building
- 8:30 Servant Bible study

MONDAY/TUESDAY/THURSDAY/FRIDAY

- 6:45 a.m. Adult leader meeting
- 7:00 Breakfast
- 8:00 Devotions
- 8:30 Head to service sites
- Noon Lunch
- 4:00 p.m. Return to clean up
- 5:30 Dinner
- 7:30 Servant Event Bible study
- 8:30 Free time/social activity
- 11:00 Lights out

WEDNESDAY

- 6:45 a.m. Adult leader meeting
- 7:00 Breakfast
- 8:00 Devotions
- 8:30 Head to service sites
- Noon Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Servant Bible study

Special cultural, recreational or social event in the afternoon and evening. The meal is a part of this break in the work week.

SATURDAY

- 7:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:00 Devotions
- 8:30 Evaluation of Servant Event
- 9:00 Talking about Servant Events in our own community
- 10:00 Pack up
- 11:00 Closing worship/farewells

EVENT LOCATIONS

Hosting a Servant Event means identifying locations for each part of the programming. These locations may set limitations on your event or schedule that you need to consider as you plan.

Servant events will need a location for:

- › Sleeping
- › Bathrooms and showers
- › Cooking, set up, cleaning, and storing food
- › Eating
- › Service
- › Downtime or free time
- › Social activities, large group games
- › Recreation

Sometimes Servant Event hosts can offer one location for sleep, showers, eating and free time. Other events may need to be more creative. As you plan, account for the limitations of each of these locations. For example, if you have a limited number of showers, you will need to ensure you give ample time for everyone to get a shower every day. This may limit the amount of time you have for evening activities and recreation.

You will also need to consider how to transport participants from each of these locations. Some events utilize generous host homes. However, participants need transportation to meals, back to host homes after service to clean up and at the end of the night. In identifying host homes, you may need to prioritize homes that are within a certain radius in order to ensure everyone can keep to the schedule.

COORDINATING DETAILS

Each member of the leadership team will be responsible for different aspects of the event. It is critical that everyone communicates plans and expectations in advance of the event. While you don't want to duplicate work, you do want everyone to be aware of what the other leaders are planning.

The Event Director should plan regular meetings where everyone relays updates on what they are planning. As they do, it is important to relay:

- › Who is going to be responsible for each part of the event and in the transitions between programs
- › What space and set up will be required
- › How much time will it take
- › What supplies are needed
- › What (if any) advance communication needs to go out to adult leaders or participants
- › What contingency plans are in place
- › How the plan aligns with the objectives of the event and the hoped for outcomes

- › Additional support needed
- › Outstanding questions or decisions

A well balanced team allows individuals to take ownership of their areas, while keeping team members connected to communicate details and make decisions. As you get closer to the event, plan a longer meeting to walk through the entire event step by step to ensure you haven't missed anything.

HELPING YOUTH LEARN FROM THEIR SERVICE

Servant Events can offer powerful learning for both youth and adults. Service learning is a teaching tool that combines service with active learning and ongoing reflection. Through service learning, young people are equipped to respond to needs they see around them, and helped to understand why these needs exist. As a result, they are encouraged to reflect on what they can do through the power of the Holy Spirit, both now and in the future, to respond in faith to needs they have come to know firsthand.

A process for reflection could include:

- › Naming what was done
- › Identifying feelings, lessons and observations
- › Sharing what has been learned and ongoing questions

Discussion isn't the only way to debrief following service. Other ways can include:

- › Journaling. Provide a quiet time for participants to reflect on their service experience each day. Journaling prompts can be reprinted in your Servant Event booklet to assist participants.
- › Story telling
- › Skits/Drama
- › Music
- › Visual arts
- › Small group work

Try various approaches with which you are comfortable. Give the group a few options, and encourage members to share anything they feel comfortable bringing to the group.

If your Servant Event is for junior high students, remember that they are developing the ability to think abstractly and to analyze broad situations. Help guide their thinking in a developmentally appropriate way. Adolescents are prone to a self-centered perspective. Service is an opportunity for them to explore and consider current and future vocations that focus them on others, rather than themselves.

Ask open-ended questions for journaling or small group discussion. This enables more extended and thoughtful responses. Encourage youth to consider ways they can continue learning and serving back at home.

PREPARING FOR THE WORST

While we pray that your event goes exactly to plan, we know that there are always hiccups or road bumps along the way. The leadership team should plan for these and be on the same page in case something goes wrong.

As a leadership team, it is important to:

- › Pray that God protects and provides for your team and participants, and gives you wisdom and patience for difficult moments.
- › Calculate the minimum number of participants the event can have. While no one wants to cancel an event for lack of registrations, it is also important that the leadership team be good stewards of their resources. Know the number of participants required to make the event fiscally sound, and have a deadline for securing that number. If you need assistance in promoting your event because you are at risk of canceling, please contact LCMS Youth Ministry.
- › Consider what service can be done if a service site does not go as planned. A site may fall through or become difficult to continue working at for many reasons. Participants may also complete work faster than you expect. Have several backup service options in case you need them.
- › Make sure the leadership team is on the same page when it comes to discipline. There is an important balance between the leadership team and the adult leaders of each group in handling misbehavior. Ideally, all the adults work together for the benefit of each young person. It is important to define hard boundaries the group has for event participants, and to communicate those boundaries clearly to adult leaders.
- › Plan for how service sites will be handled if service isn't completed. While you hope that participants will be able to finish all the service at a site, it might not be possible. As a leadership team, create a procedure to communicate with each site after the event, and for timely completion of any outstanding work.
- › Communicate your guidelines for participants with adult leaders in advance. This includes rules you want participants to follow so that every group can include it in their group covenant. Some suggestions include:
 - Do not leave a location designated for service or social time without an adult, and notify an event leader if you leave.
 - Men and women should not enter each other's sleeping space.

- Participants are expected to engage in all programming.

- › Plan for how you will communicate and make decisions that impact the group during the event. Spur of the moment decisions that are not communicated clearly to other team members can be a problem. Instead, plan to communicate often, and have key leaders make decisions together.

COMMUNICATION DURING EVENT

Since most people text easily, texting may be the best way to get daily information to adult leaders or participants. A number of resources can centralize texting. A Google Voice number gives access to multiple people. You can also use services like GroupMe, Remind or Sendhub.

If texting isn't an option, give the group a list of phone numbers they can call with questions or concerns during the event.

ADULT ORIENTATION AND MEETINGS

Provide an orientation on the first evening of the event for adult leaders. This will help adults to communicate clearly to their youth, and encourage their healthy participation in your event. Take questions that are important for the group, and share changes in the plan for the week with everyone at once.

Topics for this meeting can include:

- › Introducing the leadership team and other key volunteers
- › Reviewing the schedule
- › Reviewing the service sites and those being served (may be done by Service Director)
- › Overview of the local community
- › Assigning specific responsibilities (if any)
- › Providing rules for housing
- › Providing clear information and procedures in the event of an emergency (first contacts, emergency phone, first-aid items, what to do and what not to do with an injured individual, etc.) This information should be shared in writing.
- › Directions to the closest stores for possible last-minute items
- › Answering questions and addressing concerns

Clarify the process on how discipline issues will be handled, specifying the responsibilities of adult participants, and what will be decided by the event leadership. This can include dress code, leaving service or housing sites, broken items, etc. Be upfront about how discipline is to be handled—don't assume anything.

Share your expectations of adult participants. As you plan your orientation, remember that these statements may be true for the adults who are participating with youth:

- › They are on the trip because they were the only adults willing to go.
- › They do not realize what Servant Events are all about, or have not done anything like this before.
- › They did not receive proper equipping and orientation.
- › They may not know the youth they came with.
- › They may come with a variety of experiences with short-term service.
- › They may have other (perceived or real) priorities/responsibilities/expectations on this trip.
- › They may want a role or responsibility which isn't theirs.

Sample Ideas for Adult Leader Expectations

An adult leader is responsible to the congregation and to the group for the care and nurture of group members during the Servant Event. An adult leader is expected to attend all event activities and participate fully throughout the Servant Event. Adults are expected to:

- › Love kids and enjoy being around them. They'll have to live with them for several days, and they will develop relationships that will last long after the event!
- › Reflect the love Jesus has shown them by being forgiving, compassionate, patient and faithful models of servant leadership in Christ. Adults should realize this is a wonderful, faith-building opportunity in the lives of youth and youth leaders.
- › Communicate clearly with participants, volunteers and event leaders.
- › Be team players by supporting and working with other adult leaders, and by following event guidelines.
- › Know how to be THE adult. Leaders must know and

It can also be helpful to have a daily meeting with all the adults, or at least one key adult from every group. This helps you to check in with them and to solve problems before they become bigger. These meetings do not have to take long, and are not the place to deal with conflict. If you have adults who share significant concerns in this meeting that are not about the entire group, meet with that adult and other appropriate parties separately.

As a leadership team, the adult leaders are your partners. Use lots of patience, love and care! When the adults and youth go home, they should feel that they were an integral part of the event. In other words, they should have a sense of ownership of the event, and (hopefully) have become interested in sponsoring an event of their own.

maintain appropriate personal, physical and emotional boundaries and behaviors between adults and youth. Adults should help youth maintain appropriate boundaries with other youth and adults.

- › Be a leader and decision maker when necessary. Handle unexpected or emergency situations calmly, making caring, intelligent decisions.
- › Communicate appropriately with the supporting congregation and parents.. This is true of relaying injuries, illness or emergencies, as well as positive reporting to the congregation at the end of the event.
- › Have a positive, enthusiastic and trusting attitude, even if tired, frustrated or challenged. Leaders need to remember to have fun, laugh, smile and pray daily.
- › Stay organized and handle details and execution of programming without support. Delegate as needed, and be flexible enough to establish a "contingency plan" if things must change.

Sample Adult Leader Orientation Meetings

Thank you for being here!

- › Your role is vital.
- › Review event service activities
- › Information about local community

Leadership team expectations (develop your own list using these suggestions)

- › The participants will grow spiritually and in their understanding of what it means to be a servant of Christ.
- › We will have a safe and meaningful experience.
- › Everyone will participate fully in all the activities.
- › Youth from different churches will be divided into different service crews.
- › Adult expectations for small group Bible studies and service crews

- › Technology policy
- › Smoking policy
- › Youth with illegal drugs or alcohol will be sent home at their expense.
- › Attitude is everything!

Facilities

Food distribution and guidelines

Emergency procedures

Medical forms and releases

Overview of schedule

Other housekeeping items

Sample Daily Adult Leader Meetings Schedule

Prayer

Service Sites/Crews

- › Immediate issues
- › Tools
- › Questions
- › Things you need

Daily Schedule

- › Adjustments from previous days

Community Development

- › Share any celebrations
- › Share positive moments for other groups' youth participants
- › Important moments from devotions or Bible study
- › Housing and food check-in

Tonight's activity

Assignment of other tasks

FULL PARTICIPANT ORIENTATION AND MEETINGS

It is helpful to provide an orientation on the first evening for all participants. This should be less in-depth than the adult orientation, but may include some of the same material.

Topics for this meeting can include:

- › Introducing the leadership team and other key volunteers
- › Reviewing the schedule
- › Directions for getting food each day
- › Directions for transportation each day
- › Review of important locations around the facilities
- › Reviewing the service sites and those being served (may be done by service director)
- › Providing rules for housing
- › Providing clear information and procedures in the event of an emergency (whom to contact first, emergency phone, first aid items, what to do and what not to do with an injured individual, etc.)
- › Clarify how non-work time can be spent during your event. Discuss your expectations with the group for both community building time and free personal time.

It is also important to name the expectations you have of youth participants. One of the biggest places of conflict is over missed expectations. Helping teens understand what you want of them helps get everyone onto the right foot. This might include:

- › A commitment to participate in the total Servant Event program.
- › Agree to support the objectives of the Servant Event.
- › Respect the residents, customs and needs of the community where the event takes place.
- › Listen to and follow the directions of event leadership and adult leaders.
- › Respect the housing and ensures that it ends cleaner than it started.
- › Pick up after oneself and be responsible for one's own items.
- › Speak kindly and positively about other participants, volunteers, and others in the community.
- › Have an empathetic and loving heart towards those being served, asking questions of adult leaders when this is difficult.

Sample Daily Orientation for All Participants

Meet with the entire group each day. On the first day, meet to review the weekly schedule, participant expectations, covenant, work and living arrangements, etc. Take time to answer questions and concerns so youth and adults are informed.

Prayer

Work site updates

- › Tools
- › Questions
- › Things you need

Schedule today

Schedule tomorrow

Successes and celebrations

Other issues that need to be discussed

Plans for community building and personal free time

EVALUATIONS

Leadership teams start their process by setting objectives. Evaluations are the measure of objectives and a starting place for future events. While evaluations can be a bit painful, they are necessary for leadership development, learning and growth.

Evaluations should be short, and capture both quantitative and qualitative data. There are many online tools you can use to make this easy. Both Google Forms and Microsoft Forms are free to use and easy to set up. In the evaluation you may want to ask:

- › On a scale of 1–5, how do you rate the housing?
- › On a scale of 1–5, how do you rate the food?
- › On a scale, how valuable was the Bible study time?
- › On a scale, did you connect with youth or adults outside of your group?
- › Put in order your favorite part of the week to the least favorite part of the week.
- › What suggestions would you have for next event?

It is important to separate adult leader and youth participant evaluations. These are going to give two different perspectives. You can give the option of an email to follow up if you want honest and open feedback.

You may also get helpful feedback by giving evaluations to those you served, or the leaders of the local organizations you served. It is also helpful to evaluate with all your volunteers. This can be formal or informal, but it helps to see where you can better engage and support them in the future.

Once all the evaluations are in, have a follow up meeting with the leadership team and other congregational leaders to review it.

SENDING SERVANTS FOR SERVICE BACK HOME

A commissioning, litany, special devotional or worship service can help servants celebrate the servant event that is ending and look forward to carrying on service at home. It can also be a reminder that serving and living out their vocations is the lifelong work of a Christian.

The sample given may be a part of the last morning's devotion, or a simple litany in the parking lot before the participants go home. At the end of this time, a sign of servanthood may be shared with participants, such as a certificate, a cross or a towel. Perhaps a hug or foot washing may be the special sign you choose. If you choose a cross, the style or colors could reflect the unique culture in which these young people served.

Provide youth with contact information if they need paperwork filled out for school or other verification. Focus on servants as growing Christians who return home to continue the practice of service in obedience to and imitation of Jesus.

POST-EVENT COMMUNICATION

As the Servant Event draws to its close, many young people take home the special meaning of being a servant and the joy of serving.

These young people return to their congregations with the challenge to look at their community a little harder for opportunities to serve and the challenge to share with their families, friends, and congregations the excitement and joy of being a servant. Before they leave the Servant Event, help prepare them for their transition by discussing and sharing ideas.

A post-event mailing to participants could provide additional support, sharing of ideas, and encouragement. (You might even be able to track down the owner of that beach towel left behind.)

In your post-event mailing, you can reflect on the event, thank participants for their involvement and accomplishments, and encourage them again to continue serving at home. Direct them to check with their local congregation, their pastor, other church or school staff, local social service agencies or their district office for opportunities to serve near their homes.

Worship services offer another opportunity to communicate with people at home. Servants may share during announcements in worship, or host a special Sunday School hour or a thank you lunch. Perhaps the servants can brainstorm about congregational engagement before they leave the Servant Event, and take these ideas home.

If you can help provide encouragement or ideas, servants can more easily sustain their energy and excitement to continue serving for Jesus' sake.

COMMISSIONING FOR SERVICE BACK HOME

Opening Song

L: As our week comes to a close, it is time to say goodbye, and to welcome the chance to put our life of service into practice back home.

P: We have been changed this week in big and small ways. The Master Builder has touched all of us. We take with us these changes and experiences to touch the lives of those at home.

L: You have been called to build up the household of God. Strengthen one another with love and encouragement. Trust that His Spirit goes with you as you go forth and serve.

P: The Holy Spirit is with us; His presence strengthens us for service. We trust in the Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

L: Will you now go forth in His name as transformed servants of the Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and will you follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and serve one another?

P: Yes, we go forth in His name and in His footsteps. Jesus goes with us.

L: Will you continue to grow in your faith and seek ways to witness to Jesus' power?

P: With the help of the Holy Spirit, we will continue to grow in Christ, and reflect His love to the people who surround us.

L: Now as you go your way, may God go with you. May He go before you to show you the way. May He go behind you to encourage you, beside you to befriend you, above you to watch over you, and within you to give you peace. May the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be and abide with you always.

P: Amen. Let it be so. Amen.

Closing Song

Go In Peace - Serve the Lord!

Leadership Team Roles and Responsibilities

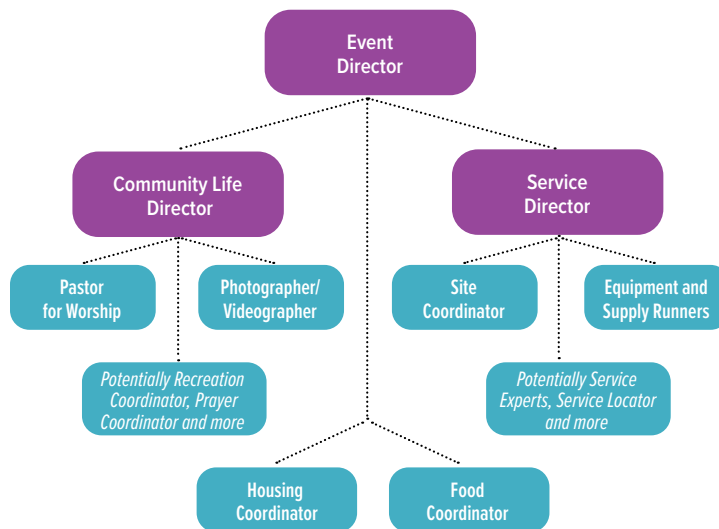


BUILDING A LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team is an important component for hosting a successful Servant Event. The typical Servant Event model calls for a minimum of three positions on the primary leadership team:

- › Event Director
- › Service Director
- › Community Life Director

From there, you will probably have several additional roles. Your leadership team may look something like the diagram on the right.



The Event Director, Community Life Director, or Service Director can cover some or all of the roles below them. However, be sure the director roles don't become too large. The more support and additional volunteers you get involved, the healthier leaders will be before, during and after the event.

There is a position description for each of the key three roles. These descriptions show how responsibilities are distributed so you can consider who might be a good fit for your team. The descriptions are flexible and not absolute. For example, in some events there are a variety of other volunteer roles, including music leaders, treasurer, publicity and communications coordinator and more. Other events have the Community Life Director in charge of housing and food coordination. You can divide these roles based on the gifts and skills of your leaders.

The Event Director

The Event Director oversees the event and the leadership team. In this role, the Event Director:

- › Is the primary communicator to LCMS Youth Ministry.
- › Assists with the selection of the rest of the team.
- › Publicizes the event.
- › Prepares registration materials and registers participants.

- › Develops and administers an event budget including all projected income and expenses.
- › Communicates with registered participants and assists them in their upcoming tasks.
- › Secures liability insurance coverage for the site.
- › Prepares and sends pre-event correspondence to participants and others involved, including registration, cover letters, directions to site, orientation information, etc.
- › Supports the arranging of participant and volunteer meals.
- › Supports the arranging of participant housing, including showers and bathrooms.
- › Works and communicates with local community leaders where the work is to be performed.
- › Coordinates scheduling of daily activities with the leadership team.
- › Meets with the Servant Event team prior to the event for final planning.

- › Arranges for first-aid supplies, determines emergency medical procedures and staffing and shares appropriate information with event and adult leaders.
- › Provides an orientation for all adult leaders on the first day which includes an overview, expectations and emergency procedures for the Servant Event.
- › Is present at the site for the entire event.
- › Is accessible to the Community Life Director and the Service Director throughout the event.
- › Completes evaluation and shares appropriate reports (forms provided) with the following:
 - Entity board of directors or other leadership
 - LCMS district office
 - LCMS Youth Ministry/LCMS Servant Events
- › Prepares and sends post-event correspondence to participants and others involved, including evaluations, thank-you notes, etc.

The Community Life Director

The Community Life Director is responsible for developing the community life of the participants through social and recreational activities to enable a richer understanding of what it means to be servants for Jesus' sake.

In this role, the Community Life Director:

- › Assists the Event Director in developing the program, activities and detailed schedule for the event.
- › Involves participants in planning, leading, or assisting with community building activities.
- › Is responsible for the Bible study, devotions, and worship and helps participants integrate their faith and work experiences as a functioning Christian community.
- › If not a pastor, arranges for pastoral involvement as needed for worship, etc.
- › Involves participants in planning or assisting with worship, Bible studies and devotional times.
- › Arranges for times of music alongside worship and Bible study.
- › Is available to listen to and pray with participants as necessary.
- › Creates opportunities for participants to encourage and affirm one another as they serve.
- › Serves as a model to participants in shaping their understanding of a Christian servant.
- › Is present at the site for the entire event.
- › Is an active participant in the daily activities.
- › Works closely with the Service Director to integrate service projects into the total community life and learning experiences of the participants.
- › Provides opportunities to see local attractions or visit local restaurants as schedules allow.

- › Helps participants reflect on and assess their learning throughout the event.
- › Completes an evaluation of the event and shares appropriate reports of the event with the Event Director.
- › Helps participants apply what they have learned to ministry opportunities back home in their congregation and community.

The Service Director

The Service Director is responsible for providing tools, materials and training so participants can perform the work needed at the event. Every Servant Event needs someone to coordinate the work projects or activities (such as appropriate care for disabled campers, proper use of power tools, etc.) at the site.

In this role, the Service Director:

- › Identifies kinds of service that can be done as a part of the Servant Event, and how service sites will be evaluated.
- › Works with individuals and organizations in the community to identify potential service sites, and selects final options.
- › Checks for local, county and state statues or necessary permits needed for the identified service opportunities.
- › Plans service projects in cooperation with the Event Director and local community residents and leaders.
- › Meets with residents or leaders at every service site and creates a signed agreement about what work will be done by participants.
- › Is on-site for all the service projects, or rotates among them.
- › Coordinates with organizational leaders or representatives where the participants will be serving.
- › Determines the number of people and skills required for each task, and assigns people to tasks.
- › Arranges for tools, equipment and materials required for the tasks.
- › Provides the training and instruction to perform the tasks.
- › Arranges the supervision for each work detail or activity.
- › Provides for and enforces all necessary safety measures.
- › Offers positive support and encouragement for all participants.
- › Arranges for the completion of any task committed to but not finished by the participants.
- › Completes an evaluation of the event and shares appropriate reports of the event.

Other roles

Servant Events can provide the opportunity for many other people to be involved. If you plan to have host families, cooks or local adults help, arrange a time to go over the schedule

and program components with them. People providing meals, transportation or housing need to be included in your daily communication, especially if there are any last-minute changes.

For significant roles below this leadership team, you can also create your own position descriptions to help with recruitment and clarity. Here are two examples:

Housing Coordinator

The Housing Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the housing of youth and adult participants. A Housing Coordinator serves under and is supported by the Event Director. The Housing Coordinator:

- › Prays for the event and participants.
- › Arranges for housing, including showers and space for air mattresses, in a local school or church including:
 - Identifying appropriate space for participants including separation of sexes.
 - Providing a list of items that participants should bring to be comfortable during their stay.
 - Arranging for appropriate custodial support.
 - Providing rules and guidelines for facility use.
- › OR Recruits host home volunteers for the event including:
 - Assigning participants to host homes.
 - Communicating hosting descriptions, event schedule and other important information with host homes.
 - Checking in with participants and hosts during the event to ensure that things are running smoothly and to address any problems.
 - Reminding hosts of their invitation to activities
- › Offers positive support and encouragement to participants.
- › Works closely with the Servant Event team.

Food Coordinator

The Food Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the food for youth and adult participants. A Food Coordinator serves under and is supported by the Event Director. The Food Coordinator:

- › Prays for the event and participants.
- › Plans all meals.
- › Facilitates the participants' lunch packing process each day.
- › Ensures necessary food supplies, coolers, water, etc. are available for work teams each day.
- › Enlists and coordinates necessary kitchen volunteers and directs participants assisting.

- › Secures necessary food supplies (purchased and/or donated).
- › Offers positive support and encouragement for participants.
- › Works closely with the Servant Event team.

FOR THE EVENT DIRECTORS

The Event Director is the person who supports all the other event volunteers. The Event Director is the first person to contact participants. The Event Director is ultimately responsible for pieces like the publicity, budget, housing, and food. While this may seem like a lot, the role is far more about equipping and empowering the leaders delegated for specific tasks.

Managing Event Registration

An important aspect of a well-managed event is a smooth registration process. It is recommended that you open registration as soon as you confirm your dates and promote your event. If registration cannot open immediately, consider having a process that allows an interested adult leader to reserve spots at your event. (You don't want an interested group to slip away because you had no way to confirm their attendance or engage them in further conversation.)

Every event manages their own registration and communication to participants. This allows each congregation and organization to directly connect and build relationships with every participant from the start. Personalize your registration and pre-event communication toward exactly what you need and want to encourage in your participants.

We strongly recommend you use an online registration program. If you do not have a standard program for your camp, school, or ministry, inexpensive digital tools are available to help set up an online registration. You can use Google Forms or Microsoft Forms, which are both free and provide links that you can send to adult leaders looking to register.

The following are several suggestions for preparing registration:

- › Know exactly how many total registrations you can take.
- › Make sure your response time to inquiries and questions is quick and courteous. Often groups will initially speak to several events at once. Being prompt will show you are planning for an effective event.
- › Establish a final date (i.e. March 1, April 1, etc.) when registrations, paperwork and payments are due. This is usually 6-8 weeks before the beginning of your event.
- › Choose how to take payments. Plan to take a non-refundable deposit amount per person (at least \$50 minimum) to be paid with registration. Establish a final payment deadline (6-8 weeks prior to the event) to discourage cancellations.

- › Develop a registration form that fits your event. Camps should create a distinct registration form for their Servant Event, and not use forms designed for other camp programming.
- › Consider whether to limit registrations from any one congregation. For smaller events (fewer than 30 total participants), six to eight individuals is a *suggested* maximum. Limiting participants from each congregation allows more congregations and individuals to participate, defuses the possibility of “group dominance” when a large group comes from one congregation and provides the opportunity for a greater mix of individuals. This broadens the concept of “church.”
- › Send an email acknowledging registrations. Include the necessary forms including Medical Information, Event Release Forms, and Consent Forms. (See the chapter on Risk Management for more information.) Give a deadline for returning signed forms. Verify that all registrants have personal/family health insurance coverage.
- › Keep a list of all inquiries and contacts in case a registered group cancels. Follow up with interested groups about openings from cancellations. As the final date for registration approaches, contact LCMS Youth Ministry if you need additional help with publicity.

Participant registration forms

You can design your registration form however best serves your event. Publish your congregation/organization name with the date and location of the Servant Event at the top of the registration form. It can be difficult to gather information after registration, so ask for all information you need from participants in advance of the event. Sample forms are provided on pages 16–18. This can include:

- › Participant’s name, address, city, state, and zip code
- › Home phone number and area code, preferred parent number (if a minor) and participant cell
- › Home congregation name, address, phone number, and youth leader’s name
- › Birthdate, sex, and grade level in school
- › Parent or legal guardian’s name and contact information
- › Special needs (diet, medical, etc.)
- › Have participants ever attended a Servant Event before? Where?
- › Specific skills (carpentry, music, language, etc)
- › How to pay the deposit and registration fee

In addition to your registration form, you will also want everyone to fill out and sign an

- › Event release form (sample included under Risk Management)
- › Medical information form (sample included under Risk Management)
- › Photo release form (sample included under Risk Management)

Suggested Ratios:

# of Youth	# of Adults
2–6	2–4
7–13	3–4
14–20	4–5
21–27	5–6
28–34	6–7
35–41	7–8
42–48	8–9

- › If using a paper registration, allow sufficient space on the form for easy completion.
- › An international event will require more detailed information (passports and consulate requests)

As groups register, assess their youth-to-adult ratio. Every group should have at least two adult leaders, one of each sex if their group has both men and women. The box shows the preferred ratio used by the LCMS Youth Gathering.

SAMPLE SERVANT EVENT REGISTRATION

Please print neatly • Copy this form for all participants.

Participant:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Parent Cell Phone: (____) _____

Participant Cell Phone: (____) _____ Can we text the participant cell? __yes __no

Participant Email: _____

Current Grade Level: _____ Birth date: ____/____/____ Sex: _____

Please Check All That Apply:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Participant | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Participant | <input type="checkbox"/> Group Leader (Adult) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned Worker |

Shirt Size: XS S M L XL XXL XXXL

Congregation Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Adult Leader Name: _____

Personal Profile:

Previous Servant Event experience:

Other abilities, experiences, or interests that may be helpful for this Servant Event:

Special Needs: (medical, diet, etc.)

(continued on next page)

SAMPLE SERVANT EVENT GROUP TRAVEL PLANS FORM

Name of Church: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Contact Person: _____

Daytime phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Group transportation plans:

Complete all that apply.

Number of Participants _____

Driving

Personal vehicle Rental vehicle

Arrival – Date: _____ Est. Arrival Time: _____

Departure – Date: _____ Est. Departure Time: _____

Flying

Airline: _____ Flight #: _____

Arrival – Date: _____ Time: _____

Departing Airport: _____ Arrival Airport: _____

Departure – Date: _____ Time: _____

Other

Train Bus

If you are using other forms of transportation, please contact us with further details.

Will your group need airport transportation? Yes No

Do you plan to rent a vehicle? Yes No

If yes, would you be willing to drive Servant Event participants to work sites and other activities? Yes No

If yes, how many can your vehicle safely fit? _____

Sightseeing Plans. Do you plan to come early or stay later? If so, what housing arrangements have you made?

PRE-EVENT COMMUNICATION WITH CHURCH GROUPS

Once groups are registered, keep them engaged. Typically, pre-event communications are sent to group leaders, though rarely it can include participants as well. By contacting group leaders, you support them in developing their group and sense of anticipation before the event. Communication generates excitement, shares information and familiarizes participants with the event theme, schedule and expectations.

Have one person (typically the Event Director) communicate directly with adult leaders and participants. This streamlines and clarifies communication. Other volunteers who have information to share with adult leaders and participants should ask in advance for that to be communicated, especially if a response is required.

Send a registration confirmation to the adult leader if your online program doesn't do so automatically.

Post-registration communication is more than passing on logistical information. It helps adult leaders, parents and participants to be ready in every way for the Servant Event experience.

Send regular communication to the adult leader. If you update information on your landing page, it is good to include that information in an email to adult leaders as more details become available. With the increased use of Zoom and other online meeting tools, you might consider hosting a 30-minute meeting with adult leaders to share information and build community.

Do not assume that groups have participated in a Servant Event unless otherwise stated. Be sure to communicate the expectations of participants and adult leaders, the nature of the event (including those being served), general schedule, housing, meals, shower arrangements, weather conditions, clothing and extra expenses. It is best at this point to over-communicate the details of your event. It is more difficult to have this conversation closer to or at the event.

You may choose to put together pre-event meeting materials for groups to use before leaving for the Servant Event. This can include specific information about your location and service, as well as pre-event devotions. Examples of these are available at *YouthESource.com*. Encourage groups to view these meetings as an opportunity for growth, preparation and community development. During the meetings, groups should:

- › Create a group covenant that gives clear expectations to youth and adults. There is a specific piece for developing this on YouthESource. However, it is also important that you give each group specific guidelines you want them to include. This can include housing and food rules unique to your site.

- › Discuss arrangements such as transportation, sightseeing, budgeting and leadership.
- › Discuss practical items, such as what to pack, safety concerns, special equipment or materials to bring.
- › Include a time for devotion and spiritual reflection as participants consider service in Jesus' name.

Your pre-event communication should verify that every participant is healthy during your event. Be sure every participant has the appropriate signed forms. Also, remind every participant to do the following before attending your event.

- › Participants should write out an accurate medical summary listing medical conditions, operations, allergies, etc.
- › Prior to foreign or domestic travel, check with your doctor or public health department for specific required immunization/documentation for you and your area.
- › Remind participants who wear corrective lenses to bring an extra pair on the trip, and to carry a copy of their lens prescription.
- › Both adults and youth should have a list of any medications they are taking, using both generic and brand names. They should carry a copy of this list, and include it in their forms. It may be helpful for them to include this list on their emergency health listing on their phone.
- › Remind participants to pack enough medication for the trip.
- › Check your medical insurance policy and health plan for coverage of illnesses or accidents outside the US.
- › Assemble a traveler's first-aid kit for every congregational group.

Aside from medical and risk management information, you could include some of the following items with pre-event resource materials:

- › Information about the event activities/schedule updates
- › Pre-event devotions/Bible studies on servanthood
- › Event expectations for youth and adult leaders (see list included in this chapter)
- › Trip planning
- › What to bring and what to leave behind
- › How to build a group covenant
- › Commissioning and welcome home litanies
- › Songs
- › Skills survey
- › Cultural orientation to community
- › Background on community needs, history, demographics, etc.
- › Getting acquainted or group-building activities and games
- › Directions to site

PLANNING TIMETABLE FOR EVENT DIRECTORS

Continue personal study on servanthood. Servant Event leaders are encouraged to become familiar with the Christian concept of servanthood. This happens as you involve yourself with the Servant Event study, materials, resources and personal study.

Assemble Leadership Team. The Event, Community Life, and Service Directors typically make up the major roles of the team, but this will be different for every event. Distribute roles and responsibilities among volunteers in the way that works best for your congregation/organization.

Help team set Servant Event objectives. Decide on three or four event objectives. Make them concise, specific, achievable, measurable and personal. Work with the leadership team to pass along these objectives to participants, other volunteers and those in the community.

Register your event with LCMS Servant Events. You can do this by emailing basic information about your event to servantevents@lcms.org. More information for registering your event on our Galaxy Digital site will be provided to you.

Develop a landing page. Give good information on the provided webpage for your event. You might also link to a webpage tied to your camp, church or organization that provides additional information. Providing information about the event's goals and objectives, how participants will serve, housing accommodations and other important expectations will increase interest in your event.

Develop registration information and forms. Once your event is posted with LCMS Servant Events you might start to get inquiries. Have your registration and form ready when congregational groups show interest. Also, be ready to answer questions via email or phone to questions such as: "What kind of clothing do I need?" "What should I bring?" "What is the weather like?" "What can I expect?"

Provide publicity for the event. Communicate with LCMS Servant Events so they can send out social media and other promotional materials. Share about the event in a variety of local and district-wide communications.

Record and respond to inquiries with registration materials as soon as possible. Keep a "will call list" in case of cancellations.

Meet with Servant Event team (Community Life Director and Service Director) to share expectations, develop the Servant Event schedule, review tasks, clarify budget needs, discuss risk management issues and check the progress of planning.

Respond to registrations with emails or calls to acknowledge receipt of participant registrations. Collect registration money. Contact LCMS Youth Ministry when the event fills, and update your event information on the website.

Secure liability insurance. See the Risk Management information section for more assistance.

Seek sources of funding and manage budget including registration money. For more information about funding and budgets, refer to that part of the training.

Set the schedule and communicate it to potential participants, those who register and volunteers.

Arrange for housing and meals. It can be helpful to find volunteers to handle these areas specifically.

Review emergency procedures and insurance in advance and communicate anything of note to key leaders.

Review risk management for your event and ensure volunteers understand and follow guidelines for keeping the event as safe as possible.

Send pre-event materials to all adult leaders/group leaders to build enthusiasm and to set the tone before their arrival. Send the commissioning and worship resources to the participants' pastor.

Two months prior to event

- › Confirm arrangements for housing, meals, local transportation and work/activity sites.
- › Send final information to participants including directions, expected time of arrival, where to meet, etc. Coordinate sending (mail/email) of pre-event materials with the Community Life Director.
- › Check with leadership team members to make sure tasks are completed or in progress.

One – two weeks prior to event

- › Contact local media. Contact newspaper, radio, and television for possible coverage.
- › Gather supplies, including first-aid kits and other emergency supplies.
- › Double-check everything!

During the event

- › Check in every group and lead orientation.
- › Enjoy the experience. Be flexible. Be aware of the growth, service, and community emerging during the Servant Event.
- › Help the Community Life Director and Service Director troubleshoot issues, and help them communicate to participants as needed.

- › Distribute evaluations to participants. Assist your Community Life Director to secure evaluations of the event from participants. Make sure your Community Life Director and Service Director fill out and give you a copy of their forms.

As soon as possible after the event

- › Write thank you letters to servants, local community leaders and individuals involved in the event program.
- › Review the evaluations. Evaluations can improve future Servant Events, so reviewing with the leadership team is helpful.



PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR EVENT DIRECTORS

Date	Activity	✓ Completed
_____	Personal study of servanthood	_____
_____	Set event objectives.	_____
_____	Assemble Servant Event leadership team.	_____
_____	Prepare registration forms and info.	_____
_____	Prepare publicity and promote event (district, region, etc.).	_____
_____	Seek sources of funding.	_____
_____	Record and respond to inquiries.	_____
_____	Meet with Servant Event leadership team to plan details.	_____
_____	Determine daily schedule.	_____
_____	Send registration confirmation email/mailling to adult leaders.	_____
_____	Communicate with registered groups including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving signed event consent and release forms, medical forms, and media release forms. • Materials to prepare including pre-event Bible studies, devotions, participant and adult leader expectations and other ideas for how to prepare. • Links to commissioning service and group covenant design on <i>YouthESource.com</i> • Basic information including schedules, updates schedules, emergency contact information, what to pack, site address, transportation and area information. 	_____
_____	Arrange for housing and meals and local transportation.	_____
_____	Review emergency procedures, insurance.	_____
_____	Meet with team to consider risk management for event.	_____
_____	Acknowledge receipt of registrations.	_____
_____	Update Galaxy Digital Webpage or contact LCMS Youth Ministry when event fills.	_____
_____	Secure liability and other necessary insurance coverage.	_____
_____	_____	_____
Two months before event		
_____	Confirm arrangements for housing, transportation, etc.	_____
_____	Send (email/mail) pre-event materials to participants.	_____
_____	Review sites, tools, materials and tasks with leadership team.	_____
_____	_____	_____

(continued on next page)

Date	Activity	✓ Completed
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One – two weeks before event

_____	Contact local media.	_____
_____	Gather supplies.	_____
_____	Review responsibilities, arrangements and tasks.	_____
_____	_____	_____

During the Servant Event

_____	Check in every group and lead orientation.	_____
_____	Enjoy the experience.	_____
_____	Distribute and collect evaluations.	_____

As soon as possible after event

_____	Review evaluations.	_____
_____	Send out post-event correspondence and thank-you letters.	_____

FOR THE COMMUNITY LIFE DIRECTORS

A handful of games on the first day of your event are not enough to build a supportive functioning group. Community is built from the moment servants arrive until long after they leave. Community building permeates everything from worship to free time to work details. It must be a part of your game plan in everything that you do.

The Community Life Director's job is not over when the Service Director's begins. The job of building the community must extend beyond off-times into every part of the event. A strong, supportive and functioning community can also be a highly efficient and productive group on the service site. As a matter of fact, a "sick" group will be less productive and will express greater dissatisfaction about the task than a "healthy" group.

Community life at a Servant Event is comprised by many different elements:

- › Devotional and worship life
- › Fellowship
- › Social activity
- › Recreation
- › Service activities
- › Bible study

Community Life Directors should strive to bring warmth, challenge and grace into your event. Warmth is characterized by displaying Christ's love for all people and a personal invitation to be a part of the community of believers. Challenge is characterized by a willingness to share the truth in love, so all may know and remain in the saving faith of Jesus Christ. Grace is characterized by echoing God's love and forgiveness of us to others.

This can look like:

- › Having a strong leadership team that understands the priorities for the event.
- › Building community from the moment participants arrive.
- › Modeling welcome, trust and respect. Participants will model what they see key adults demonstrate.
- › Make each individual feel that their contribution is valued and necessary to the success of the group.
- › Be willing to sacrifice the task/schedule for the sake of the group if the circumstances warrant.

Do not allow conflict and dissension to be ignored or pushed aside. A group will not grow if dissatisfaction is repressed, or if discipline isn't enforced.

Do not publicly tease or put down participants, even adults. While it might seem funny at the time, be sure to model loving, empathetic behavior.

Cross Cultural Experiences

Build cross-cultural experiences into your event, especially if it does not have a cross-cultural service focus. Design an experience that is distinct to your area. Visit a local festival. Provide a picnic for older adults in the community. Visit local historical spots or museums. It is important for youth to experience things that are outside of their norm, and it is helpful for them to see value and joy in your community.

Music Resources

Singing is an important and enjoyable part of the Servant Event and of our Lutheran heritage. Singing brings people together, builds community, communicates servanthood, and brings fun to the opening and closing of the day

As you plan the music for the event, consider the following:

- › Identify one or two songs that can be shared before the event so servants will be familiar with them before arriving.
- › Christian Copyright Licensing Inc. (CCLI) is a wonderful resource for if you would like to publish your own song sheets. Call 800-234-2446, x 313.
- › Do not copy songs, hymns, or liturgies without first obtaining appropriate copyright permission. This includes reprinting hymns, even if you own hymnals. If you subscribe to CCLI you may use this for music covered under their license (not all music is covered, so check first). To obtain copyright permission, call or write to the copyright holder. Provide them with the number of copies requested, how the song will be used and when it will be used.
- › When you teach a new song, plan to use that song several times during the Servant Event. Perhaps have the group listen, and then repeat it. You may choose to sing the stanzas the first time and have the group join in on the chorus. The next time you use the song, help them learn the stanzas and sing along with you.
- › Participants may already be familiar with some excellent hymns from *Lutheran Service Book* to use during the event. These could include "Christ Be My Leader," "Lift High the Cross," "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light," and "Lord of Glory, You have Bought Us." You can also use songbooks from Concordia Publishing House (CPH) like *All God's People Sing* and *Hymnal Supplement '98*.
- › When choosing appropriate music, there are many factors to account for. Consider the theology of the song, your setting, theme of the Bible study, tempo, message of the song, mood of the song, etc. Music is a powerful communicator of message and creator of mood.
- › Check what type of accompaniment is available: piano, keyboard, guitar, rhythm instruments, etc. If you lack musical ability, consider identifying servants who can help (ask before the event, and share the music with them early). Or you can forge ahead a cappella.

- › Music can be another way for servants to experience and learn about the culture in which they are serving. Music reflects the faith and spirit of the people. Check with local resources to identify ethnic or cultural songs that can be used during your particular Servant Event.

PLANNING TIMETABLE FOR COMMUNITY LIFE DIRECTOR

Continue personal study on servanthood. Servant Event leaders are encouraged to become familiar with the Christian concept of servanthood. This happens as you involve yourself with the Servant Event study, materials, resources and personal study.

Help your team set Servant Event objectives. Decide on three or four event objectives. Make them concise, specific, achievable, measurable and personal. Work with the leadership team to pass along these objectives to participants, other volunteers and those in the community.

Meet with the Servant Event Team to share expectations, and to develop a schedule that integrates the work experiences into the total worship and community life of the participants.

Establish a budget for community life and pass that information to the Event Director. Expenses incurred by the Community Life Director should be included in the budget.

Help prepare information to go to adult leaders/ group leaders including songs, items to bring along for games, and commissioning and pre-event Bible studies for all group leaders and participants. This builds enthusiasm and sets the tone before their arrival.

Identify pastor(s) who can lead any worship service included in your event.

Identify musicians who can assist with your event.

Identify a number of local attractions, restaurants, and other recreational activities that could be included during the event. Bring them to the team for consideration.

Two months Prior to event

Review the Bible study and devotions provided by LCMS Youth Ministry. Plan how you will use these, including the size of your small groups, supplies needed and edits that will be needed for your group.

Check details with the leadership team to coordinate additional information that should be communicated with Servant Event participants.

Finalize numbers, transportation and costs for local attractions, restaurants and recreation.

Line up your own travel and other personal arrangements for the Servant Event.

Identify someone to take pictures or videos of people in action during the event, and get brief interviews concerning the event both from youth and adults. (Make sure you collect appropriate permissions to take photographs of participants.)

One month prior to event

Plan daily activities and prepare Bible study materials.

Prepare event booklet. Identify the resources (schedule, worship, Bible study, participant list, songs, etc.) participants will use during the Servant Event. Arrange to have necessary copies made and gathered in one booklet, folder, or binder. These materials can be distributed to participants when they arrive at the event.

Select games that will be most helpful for icebreakers and group gatherings.

One – two weeks prior to event

Gather and pack supplies necessary for the Servant Event.

Check in with Servant Event leadership team. Contact the Service Director regarding information needed about work teams, and the Event Director regarding local supplies and arrangements.

During the event

Enjoy the experience! Be flexible. Be aware of the growth, service and community emerging during the event.

Identify participants who may not be connecting or who may be struggling. Reach out to them or to their adult leaders to see if you can help them engage with others.

Distribute participant evaluations. Have each participant fill out an event evaluation form.

As soon as possible after the event

Encourage participants to take the Servant Event back home by sharing addresses, post-event Bible study, worship materials and ideas for servicing at home. Ask them to let you know what happens when they return to their congregations and communities.

PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNITY LIFE DIRECTORS

Date	Activity	✓ Completed
_____	Personal Bible study of servanthood	_____
_____	Help set community life objectives.	_____
_____	Review Servant Event materials.	_____
_____	Meet with Servant Event team.	_____
_____	Establish budget needs.	_____
_____	Help prepare information for adult leaders.	_____
_____	Identify pastors for worship.	_____
_____	Identify musicians.	_____
<hr/>		
Two Months Before Event		
_____	Review Bible study and devotions.	_____
_____	Check details with Servant Event team.	_____
_____	Finalize numbers, transportation and cost for recreation.	_____
_____	Identify photographer/videographer.	_____
_____	Make personal arrangements.	_____
<hr/>		
One Month Before Event		
_____	Plan activities and prepare Bible study materials.	_____
_____	Prepare event booklet for participants.	_____
_____	Select games for icebreakers.	_____
<hr/>		
One – Two Weeks Before Event		
_____	Gather supplies.	_____
_____	Touch base with Servant Event leadership team.	_____
<hr/>		
During The Servant Event		
_____	Enjoy the experience.	_____
_____	Execute the icebreakers, community building and other activities.	_____
_____	Support pastor(s), participants and other leaders who help with community life activities.	_____
_____	Distribute evaluations to event participants.	_____
<hr/>		
Two Weeks After Event		
_____	Support participants in taking service home.	_____
_____	Review evaluations.	_____
<hr/>		

CONTENT IDEAS SERVANT EVENT BOOKLET

Consider compiling Bible study, worship, songs, schedules and other resource materials into one booklet that can be given to participants to use throughout the event. Use this checklist of suggestions for items to add to your Servant Event booklet.

Preparation Checklist

- › Decide on materials to include in booklet.
- › Decide on format (3-hole binder, folded booklet)
- › Develop and reproduce materials.
- › Secure copyright permissions.

Possible Items to Include:

✓ Yes		✓ Ready
_____	Welcome letter from event leaders	_____
_____	Schedule of daily activities	_____
_____	Event objectives	_____
_____	Daily devotions	_____
_____	Bible studies	_____
_____	Selected songs	_____
_____	Worship liturgy and hymns	_____
_____	Evaluation form (or QR code)	_____
_____	Local map	_____
_____	Multicultural information	_____
_____	Daily journal or blank pages for notes	_____
_____	Site history/information	_____
_____	Special site policies	_____
_____	Back home ideas	_____

FOR SERVICE DIRECTORS

Service Directors are responsible for identifying, planning, and supporting the service during the Servant Event.

When you are developing your service opportunities, be careful how you look at your community. It can be easy to focus only on the needs you find, or the lack of physical or monetary resources. This lens can lead to a focus on deficiencies, and a view of the people you serve as impersonal objects. Instead, focus on what you love about your community. Identify assets you possess already and build on those.

One way you can do this is to examine service sites with great care and consideration. Treat potential sites as partners, rather than consumers of service or issues to be addressed. Choose vocabulary that reflects the value and partnership of those you serve (neighbors, residents, partners) rather than terms that devalue and objectify them (poor, homeless, needy).

As you assess and plan for service, do not do for someone what they have the capacity to do for themselves. Be realistic about what your participants can do. It is worse in the long run for them to do a job which feels productive to them, but must be redone later. Put the interests of those experiencing material poverty above those of your participants. This may mean that you have to be creative, commit to longer term support or come away with less exciting stories. Listen carefully to those you talk to about service, and try to discern unspoken needs. Find service that is healthy for everyone, not just your participants.

As you study opportunities for service in your community, consider what parameters or limitations you want to give to your service. For example, you can choose to prioritize those who are elderly, veterans, people with disabilities, or those who are struggling fiscally. Make these decisions early and with the input of the whole leadership team.

Be realistic as you consider your service sites:

- › Choose service that can be done well with the skills of your participants. Middle school, senior high and young adults are capable of and enjoy different kinds of service. Work like putting up fences can seem simple, but requires focus, patience and strategy to do well. It might not be the best work for high energy teens.
- › Service should not require additional permitting from your local government unless you have qualified participants.
- › Service should engage everyone on the crew throughout the day. Middle school participants in particular can cause more trouble than help if they are spending too much time waiting. A service site should have enough work for everyone to stay busy.
- › Prioritize the service on each site so that the most important things are done first. Those on the site may be

inclined to add additional tasks. It is important that the crew knows their focus and limitations from the start.

CREATING SERVICE CREWS

Service Directors must separate participants into service crews. As you do, assess how many adults you will need on each site. For safety, there should always be at least two adults with minors. As the crew size goes up, so should the number of adults. You can consider this as a starting point:

# of Youth	# of Adults
2–6	2–4
7–13	3–4
14–20	4–5
21–27	5–6
28–34	6–7
35–41	7–8
42–48	8–9

If the service is more intense or potentially risky, add additional adults, either from your pool of adult leaders or site supervisors who are local volunteers. If service is being done at various points in a single location, be sure that an adult can be seen and heard at every spot where minors will serve. Do not allow adults to be alone with minors at any time except in a public area.

PLANNING TIMETABLE FOR SERVICE DIRECTORS

Continue personal study on servanthood. Servant Event leaders are encouraged to become familiar with the Christian concept of servanthood. This happens as you involve yourself with the Servant Event study, materials, resources and personal study.

Help the team set Servant Event objectives. Decide on three or four event objectives. Make them concise, specific, achievable, measurable and personal. Work with the leadership team to pass along these objectives to participants, other volunteers and those in the community.

Meet with the Servant Event team to share expectations and develop a schedule that integrates work experiences into the total worship and community life of the participants.

Develop criteria for service sites. Consider the number of participants, their expected skill sets and local laws and guidelines to ensure you know what service will work well for your event.

Visit potential service sites. Communicate with the residents or leaders to identify what service might fit well into the event.

Create a list of projects for each site. Prioritize these projects in order of importance and include directions for those who are new to this type of service. Identify service sites that need special skills or assistance.

List all tools, equipment and supplies for each site.

Determine what special skills or assistance are needed.

Meet with Leadership Team (Community Life Director and Service Director) to share expectations, develop the Servant Event schedule, review tasks, clarify budget needs, discuss risk management issues and check the progress of planning.

Check with Event Director about needed insurance.

Two months prior to event

Outline special orientation and training to be done with participants.

One month prior to event

Determine how participants will be divided among tasks.

Locate hardware/building supply stores near service site.

Write out a description of the tasks at each service site with a priority listing of each activity.

One – two weeks prior to event

Gather tools, equipment and supplies.

During the event

Enjoy the experience! Be flexible. Be aware of the growth, service and community emerging during the event.

As soon as possible after the event

Evaluate all of the service sites. Assess whether additional service is needed to complete projects, and find long-term connections to service.



SERVICE DIRECTOR PLANNING CALENDAR

Date	Activity	✓ Completed
_____	Meet to discuss needs and projects with Event Director and community leaders.	_____
_____	Develop criteria for service sites.	_____
_____	Visit service site(s) with Event Director.	_____
_____	Evaluate potential projects and sign agreements with chosen sites.	_____
_____	List projects to be completed during event.	_____
_____	Determine what special skills or assistance are needed (e.g., electrical, masonry, etc.)	_____
Two months before event		
_____	List tools, equipment and supplies for event.	_____
_____	Outline special orientation and training to be done with participants (e.g., how to use tools).	_____
_____	Go over schedule, service projects, needs and budgets with event leadership team.	_____
_____	Make personal Servant Event arrangements.	_____
One month before event		
_____	Gather tools, equipment, and supplies.	_____
_____	Locate hardware/building supply stores near service site.	_____
_____	Determine how participants will be divided among tasks (e.g., how many people).	_____
_____	Recruit volunteers with special skills, if needed.	_____
_____	Determine how adult supervision will be provided for each task.	_____
During the servant event		
_____	Organize and inventory tools, equipment and supplies at site.	_____
_____	Check in with every site and service crew daily to troubleshoot issues.	_____
Two weeks after event		
_____	Check inventory of tools, equipment and supplies at end of event.	_____
_____	Arrange for unfinished work to be completed.	_____
_____	Submit remaining expense reports and receipts to Event Director.	_____
_____	Submit evaluation to Event Director.	_____

SAMPLE SERVANT EVENT SERVICE PLAN

Event Title: _____

Service Site: _____

Date or Time	Task Description	Materials/Tools Needed	Special Skills Training/Needed	Team # Assigned
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

SAMPLE SERVANT EVENT SERVICE ORDER

Service Site:

Date:

Service Crew:

Task:

Procedure:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
-

Task:

Procedure:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
-

Task:

Procedure:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
-

Task:

Procedure:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

SAMPLE HOMEOWNER AGREEMENT

I give permission for (Event Name), which is a ministry of (Church Name and Address) and its volunteers to perform repairs and improvements on my home located at: _____.

I understand that (Event Name) is a volunteer initiative and that promises cannot be made as to the specific work that will be done. The general plan for the repairs and improvements has been explained to me, but I give (Event Name) and its volunteers full authority to determine the extent and types of repairs and improvements to be performed.

I understand that the repairs and improvements will be performed free of charge, and (Event Name) and its volunteers disclaim all warranties, expressed or implied concerning the repairs. The repairs and improvements will be performed by volunteers, some or all of whom may be unskilled.

I understand that the repairs and improvements will be made during the week of (Dates), but that some preparation may be necessary prior to those dates and some follow up may need to be done after those dates.

In consideration of the repairs and improvements, I further hold (Event Name), its officers, directors, donors, volunteers, and other affiliates, collectively and individually, harmless from any claims and liabilities arising at any time as a result of the repairs, including, without limitation, any rights or causes of action resulting from personal injury or death, or damage to my property, directly or indirectly arising from any improperly performed repairs or improvements or defects in material or workmanship.

I also grant (Event Name) permission to take or have taken, still and moving photographs and films including television pictures of my home. I consent and authorize (Event Name), its advertising agencies, news media and any other persons interested in (Event Name) and its works, to use and reproduce the photographs, films, and pictures and to circulate and publicize the same by all means including without limiting the generality of the foregoing, newspapers, television media, brochures, pamphlets, instructional materials, books and clinical material.

No inducements or promises have been made to me to secure my signature to this release other than the intention of (Event Name) to perform the repairs and improvements and to use such photographs, films and pictures for the primary purpose of promoting and aiding it program and its works.

Homeowner Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Budget and Fundraising



Hosting a Servant Event requires a variety of resources, but it is well worth the investment. As you build your volunteer team and support, you will begin to consider the budget of your event. With some time and effort, it is possible to host a Servant Event at little or no financial cost to the hosting congregation or organization, while youth live out their God-given vocations and share the Gospel.

Budgeting requires event leaders to be good stewards without cutting what is necessary for the event. Participants need a healthy, Christ-centered experience. This means spending appropriate amounts of money on food, housing, and service project materials. But those who come to Servant Events are not usually expecting luxury accommodations or high-end equipment. A budget should be both realistic and balanced to make the event successful.

SERVANT EVENT BUDGETING

Address budgeting regularly as you plan, carry out and follow up on your Servant Event. Event leaders should start with a brief outline of how much they think the event is going to cost before a congregation or organization commits. A general budget from past events, or from other LCMS Servant Events like yours might be helpful.

Once that commitment is made, take time early to develop a plan for funding and managing the budget. Typically, the Event Director will handle the money and budget management, but everyone who is leading the event needs to understand the budget.

As you meet to set the budget, be sure to begin with PRAYER! God will guide and provide for your planning and your event. This meeting should accomplish the following:

- › Discuss the purpose of the Servant Event that you are hosting. What are your goals and hoped for outcomes? Which of these goals is the priority? How will the Servant Event make a difference in the community? Answering these questions will clarify your priorities for spending.
- › Have the leader of each part of the event share a list of the materials needed. Bring estimated amounts of how much things cost. With these numbers, begin to fill out your budget. If possible, do this in a way that allows everyone to see calculations in real time.
- › Create a list of businesses, organizations and individuals who may be able to support your event through monetary donations, or supplies or grants. Church leadership, your LCMS district, or your chamber of commerce can help you find more supporters. When you identify someone who might be able to help offset costs, approach them

first with the vision of your event. Raise friends before raising funds. Put together a letter or flyer that says:

- What you are doing in the community
- What you need
- How the organization/business can help
- How you will publicize the donation/support to others

A sample letter is attached at the end of this resource. Be sure to send thank-you letters to businesses and funding agencies, and include their names in print media coverage of your event.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

Developing and administering a budget for the Servant Event is one of the major responsibilities of the leadership team. Careful planning will allow you to host the event without overtaxing either your congregation/organization, or your participants. It is important to keep the event affordable for participants, while providing a full experience that completes the service tasks you have planned.

Income

Registration fees are what you collect from each group for every participant. You can determine the registration fee in a few ways, but usually this is the primary source of funding for the event. Be clear when explaining what event expenses your registration fee does and doesn't cover. Let participants know how much additional money they will need to cover the cost of attending (for example, meals on the road).

Revenue from other sources may be available through local LCMS districts, congregations, local and district LWML, local businesses, organizations, individuals, community agencies, grants from foundations and Thrivent

Financial. Looking for revenue from other places is time consuming, but it can result in additional funds. It can also increase connections and support for your group in the community. In addition to requesting funds, consider asking for donations of food, materials, or other important components of the event.

Fundraisers can be helpful in increasing funds for your event. Fundraising takes time, but it also invests the entire congregation/organization in the Servant Event, even if they cannot commit to further support. Ideas for fundraisers are endless. Keep it simple, and look for a fundraiser that will give you the best return on your investment.

If surplus revenue remains when the event is completed, it could be earmarked for another Servant Event the following year, used for similar service after the event, or sent to event participants as a refund. Money collected for registration fees, fundraising, and for many directed donations **cannot** be reallocated for other programs. It must be used in line with how it was collected.

Expenses

Service Project Materials are going to differ depending on the projects included in your servant event. Think comprehensively about the supplies you will need early in your budget process. If you haven't done a similar project before, consult an expert to ensure an accurate estimate of the project materials needed.

- › Construction events may need paint, wood, ladders, flooring, and other building materials. Participants may bring tools, but remember that they are bulky and can be hard to transport. If tools are borrowed, have a plan for returning them to their owner. You may need to budget for tool rental or purchase.
- › Cleaning projects need items like trash bags, gloves, dumpster rental, and cleaning supplies.
- › Human care may require fewer or lighter materials. They may still need items like crafting supplies, paper products, snacks, decorations, etc.
- › Christian education programming may require the purchase of curriculum materials, craft supplies, items for games and more.

Program Materials are the supplies you need for Servant Event activities outside of your service. This could include decorations, signage, paper goods, snacks and drinks, game supplies, items for Bible study crafts, and the like. These items can be borrowed or donated, but this is a line in the budget that can get underestimated. Walk through your proposed event as a team, and keep a list of things that would fall into this category. Then estimate how much these items cost early in your budget process.

Local Transportation is the cost of transportation to and around work sites, housing, and programming during your event. In some cases, participants will be able to provide

their own transportation, but please check with them before making that decision. You will need to reimburse local volunteer drivers who are providing support and supplies. Also consider any need to rent trucks or other large vehicles to transport materials and tools throughout the week.

Recreation is usually specified as bigger activities or off-site events for entertainment during your event. There may be cases where this budget is small, because recreation is decided by each group individually, or because you are limited by location. However, if you plan on an evening outing or a trip to a local attraction for the whole group, it is far easier to put it in the budget and slightly raise the registration fee than it is to have adult participants pay on their own. For example, if you plan to take the whole group bowling one night, have one person on your team make the reservations and payment. Roll the cost of bowling into the registration fee, rather than having multiple adults responsible for costs and arrangements.

Housing and Meal costs depend on the type of housing. The costs of staying at a camp, for example, are different from the costs of staying at a church or school where meals are prepared on-site. Having participants stay with host families is not necessarily free. Determine if host families will be reimbursed, and the number of meals the family will provide.

- › If participants are expected to cover any of their meals or housing, let them know that alongside the registration fee.
- › While simple meals are often best, do not skimp on the amount or quality of the food provided to participants. Participants will not give their best on the service site if they are not adequately fed or don't have access to healthy options.
- › Ensure that there are sufficient bathroom and shower facilities where you will house your participants. This is especially true if you are doing dirty cleaning or construction service.

Administrative Materials are the internal budget items that support the event. These can include:

- › Leadership Team reimbursements include transportation, meals, and lodging expenses incurred by the key members of the team, including the Event Director, Service Director, and Community Life Director. If these leaders are driving personal cars, paying to stay close to the event or covering additional food costs, it is appropriate to reimburse their expenses. Receipts should be kept and submitted. You may also want to consider reimbursing those pastors or musicians on your leadership team who miss worship during the event and who must reimburse a substitute.
- › Postage and printing may be small, but should be accounted for, and considered for reimbursement.

- › Additional Liability Insurance may need to be added to an existing policy to cover any current limitations.
- › Participant shirts or gifts are great mementos for the participants. If you plan to make shirts specific to the event, you have lots of local and online options to get them done relatively inexpensively.
- › Honoraria may include a small stipend for additional special guest speakers or musicians. Leadership team members are volunteers; therefore, honoraria or salaries are not appropriate.
- › Miscellaneous expenses are items that are not accounted for above. When you are starting your budget, it may be helpful to leave some money here for unexpected costs that are not covered by other budget line items.



SAMPLE SERVANT EVENT BUDGET WORKSHEET

Income		Estimated	Actual
_____ Participants @ \$ _____		\$ _____	\$ _____
Fundraisers		_____	_____
Grant		_____	_____
Donations		_____	_____
Other		_____	_____
	Total Income	\$ _____	_____

Expenses		Estimated	Actual
Service project materials		_____	_____
Program materials		_____	_____
Local transportation		_____	_____
Recreation		_____	_____
Other		_____	_____
Housing and Meal Expenses			
Housing (\$ per person per night)		_____	_____
Meals (\$ per person per day)		_____	_____
Administrative Expenses			
Leadership Team reimbursements		_____	_____
Postage		_____	_____
Printing		_____	_____
Additional insurance		_____	_____
Participant shirts or gifts		_____	_____
Honoraria for special guests/speakers		_____	_____
Other _____		_____	_____
Miscellaneous		_____	_____
	Total Expenses	\$ _____	\$ _____
	Balance	\$ _____	\$ _____

SAMPLE SUPPORT REQUEST

February 6, 2023
Mr. Christian Douglas
1212 South Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55417

Dear Christian,

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me on the phone and for your willingness to consider our request for assistance. Here is additional information about the Youth Servant Event that will be held at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, June 17–25, 2024.

Servant Events are opportunities for Christian service by young people and adults. They provide a way to take people out of their daily routines, encourage them to practice Christ's unconditional love, serve people in ways that enrich their lives, and share their faith in practical ways.

Youth attending the Servant Event at Christ the Servant will staff a weeklong, half day Vacation Bible School for children in the neighborhood. In the afternoons, the youth will do special work projects with local community agencies. Projects will include painting, landscaping and cleanup around the buildings in the community. The emphasis of the week is on serving others; in this case, the low-income children and families of the Phillips Neighborhood. The youth (a maximum of 20) and supervising adults will be housed at Christ the Servant. The youth pay a registration fee that covers the costs of some meals, special evening events, insurance, and staffing, but there are other expenses for the week of ministry for which we need help.

Listed below are the major items that require outside help to fund, in their order of importance.

- › VBS materials \$500
- › Snack and lunch for VBS children \$300
- › Paint and supplies \$400
- › Shrubs and gardening supplies \$300

Your donation of cash or supplies would assist us in this ministry to the children in the community and the young people and adults serving, and we would greatly appreciate it. If you have additional questions, please call me. I will contact you in early March if I have not heard from you before then. Again, thank you for considering this request.

Together in Christ's service,
Carol Taylor
Director of Youth Ministry

Publicity



Every Servant Event needs participants. Publicity will help you to connect with congregations who may bring their youth to your Servant Event. It will also help spread the word to your local community to garner additional support. Publicity might seem like a small piece compared to the program planning, but it's critical to a successful event.

While LCMS Servant Events will help get the word out about your event, there are lots of other ways you can publicize it too. Your leadership team can work together to help find groups to join you or share the event with your community. You can get creative here. Some avenues of communication may be easier to use than you realize!

STARTING WITH A WEBSITE/EVENT LANDING PAGE

As you begin planning your event, it is important to have a central location where you can communicate and update information for potential participants. This location should be an online “landing page” for the event. This may be the page provided by LCMS Youth Ministry on the LCMS Servant Event site, or a page on your website that is linked from the LCMS Servant Event page.

LCMS congregations and participants have a lot of options for youth ministry programs and activities. Your landing page is important to communicate information that engages adult leaders, and helps them find events that meet their schedule, budget and preferred program options.

Your landing page is a great location to point people to basic information about your event. This is why it is important to include as much information as you feel confident sharing on that page and keep it up to date. Suggested information to include:

- › Event date with arrival and departure times
- › Location/Address
- › Cost per person
- › Deposit amount
- › What's included/not included in registration fee
- › Registration process (group size restrictions, first come/first serve, youth to adult ratio)
- › Cancellation policy
- › Tentative schedule
- › Service overview (Be clear about suggested age and skill level.)
- › Accommodations
- › Recreation options (en route to event or during)

If you are including photos, stay away from stock photos. Use real photos of your event, even if they aren't perfect. People will notice it is a genuine look at your event. If you have a theme or logo for your event, this is the best place to highlight it.

Be ready to hear from people who find your event online and may ask for more information or clarification. Be prepared to respond quickly with additional information. Individuals and groups should be provided with as much information as necessary to make an informed decision about participating in your Servant Event.

Putting your event on LCMS Servant Event website

LCMS Youth Ministry provides publicity for your Servant Event through their website (lcms-servantevents.org). After completing the necessary paperwork or connection with LCMS Youth Ministry, Event Directors (or a designated person) are given access to the site as a “Program Host Manager.” This site (on the Galaxy Digital platform) provides a one-stop location for participants to find LCMS Servant Events that match their desired location, dates, and type of service. Through the site, Event Directors can manage their event's page to provide timely updates and interact with interested participants. The site also allows LCMS Youth Ministry to share your event more effectively on social media.

On the site, your event's Program Host Manager creates new events, updates pertinent information and closes your events when it fills. When setting up an event for a new service year, Program Host Managers simply “clone” the previous event, which copies it for the new year. Hosts only need to update dates and other specific information. LCMS Youth Ministry staff is there to help you administer your event and website.

On the site, potential participants can “fan” your site, which means they will automatically receive updates via email when you set new events, etc. Potential participants can also “Respond” to your specific event. This provides you contact information for potential adult leaders, and provides hosts with information on potential participants from the congregation.

Note that registration does not happen through the Galaxy Digital web tool. (See information on registration under the Event Director information in the *Team Leadership Roles and Responsibilities* section.)

GETTING THE WORD OUT

You will need more than a landing page to get the attention of potential participants, church groups, and your community. Get the word out about your event as widely as possible, in whatever ways you can. Your publicity plan can be as creative as you like, but will probably include:

- › social media
- › congregational newsletters
- › communication to local Lutheran schools
- › emails
- › local newspaper or television networks
- › LCMS district social media and newsletters

Start by identifying the networks that can be used locally or through your district. Connecting with local congregations, schools and your LCMS district will bring in participants and encourage additional support. Your pastor may be a big help in identifying some of these networks. If you have hosted an event in the past, don't forget to reach out to previous participants. Encourage them not only to join you again, but to bring another congregational group with them.

Highlight what is unique about your Servant Event. Perhaps it's the population you will serve, your local community or a part of your programming. There are several Servant Events offered for youth ministries each week. You want the best feature of your event to be what people see and hear about.

Here are a few keys to all your publicity plans:

- › Recruit volunteers with specific skills in your congregation, or use free software like Canva to create images, colors and tag lines to associate with your event. Once you have a basic idea, create flyers, social media posts, emails and other promotional pieces to get the word out about the event. Use these images on your landing page or the LCMS Servant Event page.
- › Be sure that articles, posts, and other publicity pieces include key information. It's not helpful to get someone interested in your event if they don't have the dates, location, or contact information.
- › As you choose photos or talk about your event, balance information about participants working and having fun.

If you use more of one or the other, it may misrepresent what your event is about.

- › Always get permission from adults or parents/guardians of minors before you use photos or quotes in print or on social media. Even minors should give approval for photos and quotes if possible. Have adult leaders or the parents/guardians of minors sign a release for use of photos. Include another release statement for publication of written responses on evaluations, and verbal comments. Be sure that local residents have been asked for permission before using photos or quotations that involve their story.

Sharing publicity in your community

While you want to encourage LCMS congregations from your area, district and across the country to join your event, they are not the only people to whom you will publicize. You may find many ways to get information about your event in local news, social media, community businesses, and more. Publicizing Servant Events provides an outstanding vehicle for communicating the Gospel message of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Servant Events typically involve members of the community from a variety of backgrounds and areas working together to improve the conditions of people they did not even know. Servant Events provide unique and vibrant examples of the love of Jesus at work in the lives of His people. What a message to spread!

Effective publicity to your local community may be more powerful than you think. Publicity:

- › Communicates the love of Jesus Christ in the form of service to others.
- › Invites the larger community to share in the work of serving, and may encourage acts of service far beyond the time of a single event.
- › Heightens awareness of the event for community members, allowing for increased support of the event through prayers and resource donations.
- › Affirms and encourages participants and volunteers in their service, and helps them feel support from the Church at large.

Participants have chosen to spend their time serving the community, which might be outside cultural expectations. While this is not the only reason to highlight a Servant Event in the news, it almost always encourages the local press to provide coverage. Use the information below to develop a publicity strategy that tells the Good News of Jesus and His work in the lives of people in your community.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can be overwhelming to some and exciting for others. You do not have to start multiple social media

accounts or platforms to publicize your event effectively. However, actively using existing channels can get your event out to a whole new audience, and even help participants prepare and share their experience.

Have a conversation with your congregation's or organization's social media coordinator. Let them help you make a plan for using existing channels, or creating new ones specifically to publicize your Servant Event. Use images, quotations and stories about the event, rather than repeating basic information.

Many successful posts are going to encourage you to "Find more information here" with a link.

You may also be able to create a landing page on your church's website to share information. If not, you can use your Galaxy Digital page. Having a landing page with full information gives you a link to include with all your social media posts.

There are some easy things you can do to get the word out about your event.

- › Have a volunteer who plans and creates posts on social media. This might be the person who is taking photos, or someone different, like the Community Life Director. Having one person do this helps with timing and consistency.
- › Use photos to capture attention. Photos and videos from previous events are helpful. If you haven't had an event in the past, draw images from around your community. You can create images using verses highlighted in your Bible studies, or take photos of your congregation/organization's youth serving.
- › Create an event on Facebook with key information and a link to register. This gives participants or those considering your event a place to leave comments and questions.
- › Use posts to highlight deadlines. Many groups will wait until the last minute to register. Social media can be a good reminder to submit information to event leadership.
- › If you are on a platform, use all the features to share your event. This means not just posting on Instagram but using Reels and other features as well.
- › Create different kinds of posts. It might be easy to come up with simple content that has dates and deadlines. If you can, be creative in highlighting what is unique about your event. Use quotes or play games. You can even connect with your participants before they join you by including them in polls or questions before the event.
- › When possible, use social media trends. Youth may be able to help you identify which ones would work for your event. This increases the chance the platform will highlight your post.
- › Encourage parents and congregations sending groups to follow social media to see how groups are serving throughout the event. Be sure to tag congregations back

home, as well as RSOs or non-profits you are serving in your posts.

All social media should help tell the story of your event. In addition to sharing information, use what is unique and compelling about your event to garner excitement. Share about the impact (or the hoped for outcome) of the event. Use quotes from past events. If you haven't had an event in the past, ask leaders who are helping plan the event what they are most excited about, and quote their responses.

Let LCMS Youth Ministry know if you have a particularly important post to share. We can amplify your event through our channels. At the yearly training, there will be a form to further connect you to our team for publicity.

SHARING MORE IN-DEPTH INFORMATION

Longform pieces can tell more of your event's story. This can be helpful both as you look for registrations, and after your event to highlight what God has done through your service.

Develop Servant Event news releases or short articles for:

- › Your community: Local television stations, radio stations and newspapers are important places to share your new release.
- › Your district: Most districts have a physical or email newsletter where you can publicize your registration and your event.
- › Local Newsletters: Share valuable information in your congregation, day school or homeschool co-op news. Local Lutheran and public high schools are often interested in sharing Servant Event information in their newsletters as well, especially if the news highlights enrolled students.

When writing a longer article or press release it is important to remember these tips.

- › Always answer: WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, and HOW, but be concise. Use familiar and concrete action words. Grammar checkers can help you use active, not passive, voice, and improve clarity. Avoid using clichés.
- › DO NOT extend a news release beyond one, double-spaced page. Display contact information (phone number and email) prominently across the top of a news release. A news release is NOT an article. Writing the article is the job of the reporter assigned to your event. The news release is designed to catch attention and provide relevant facts. If the media source wants more information, they will contact you for a follow-up.
- › Edit, edit, edit! Have several individuals edit your article. This ensures everything is correct, and tightens your text.

When writing something after the event, include quotes from participants in your news release or article. Allow the quotations to serve as the meat of the article, while the basic facts are the skeleton.

When interviewing, avoid broad WHY questions. Ask participants to summarize their experience, or to share a specific moment that touched and changed them. This can include questions like:

- › What were the highlights or surprises for you?
- › What challenges or unexpected events occurred?
- › What affected you the most during this event? Why?
- › What would you say to someone considering an LCMS Servant Event?

Be sure to share these interviews with the report sent to LCMS Youth Ministry!

PUBLICITY DURING YOUR EVENT

Invite local media to witness a part of the event. Event Directors might take an hour to escort media personnel through servant sites, invite reporters to hear testimonies of participants at concluding services or activities, ask service recipients to share comments with the press, etc.

Post pictures, quotes, and stories of your event on social media while it is happening. This lets youth to share what they have done with people at home without having to be on their phones creating content themselves. Work with your volunteer photographer/videographer to help create posts about all aspects of the event: service, Bible studies and fun during downtime.

Tag support congregations' social media in your posts. This will help them to share what is happening as well.

Let the community know what is happening DURING the actual event. Post placards along roadsides where participants are in action, welcome participants with banners hung near your organization, encourage local restaurants or local LCMS congregations to hang posters welcoming servant groups.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOS

Have someone who can spend time every day during your event taking pictures and videos. If possible, make it that person's primary role. They can tour all the service sites, be involved in community building, and be present throughout the event.

When they are serving, the participants' focus should be on the task at hand, and not on their phones or cameras. Participants may not know or think about having media releases for those in the photos. Having an appointed photographer, particularly on service sites, frees participants and leadership from worry about missing key moments.

However, participants might have unique opportunities to take pictures. When it is appropriate, you can encourage participants to take photos. This may be where you get the best candid shots of your youth interacting with one another and having fun.

At the end of the event, give them all a link to a Google Drive or Dropbox where they can post their own photos to share. Have your photographer/videographer upload their photos there as well, so groups can use them in talking about the event and have them for families back home. These photos will also help you publicize your next event.

Software programs (such as iMovie) make it relatively easy to create a professional-looking video of your event. If you can, recruit a tech savvy youth or adult from your community to serve the event with this talent. Share your video with local congregations, agencies and individuals who participated in your event.

A few words about photos and videos—

- › Always have signed media release forms for everyone in the photos or videos you take.
- › Be sure to keep a record of WHO is being photographed and to WHAT congregation they belong (when possible).
- › Have a list of all participants so that you know whom you have photographed, and whom you might still need to capture.
- › Watch for interesting combinations of people working together. Different ages, sexes, and ethnicities make for compelling photographs.
- › Look for engagement. Keep an eye open for energy, laughter and moments that extend beyond simply painting a wall. Capture the holistic nature of service in the name of Jesus.
- › As you select photos to publish, make sure subjects' eyes are open and expressions are positive. Check for clothing or background that could be problematic.

Leaders often think they can take photos on top of their other responsibilities, but then get distracted. There is nothing worse than getting to the end of your week and finding you have few photos of the event or participants.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Headline)

CONTACT: (your name)

PHONE:

HOME TOWN, STATE (abbreviation)—**DATE**—(Name of Group) from (Name of Church), (City), (State), made a difference in someone's life this (Season-Summer). (Number of Youth) young people and their adult leaders from (Name of Congregation) traveled to (Location) on (Date) joining other teens from (Other States) to (Type of Work). "(Quote #1 from adult coordinator)," said (name of adult counselor).

LCMS Servant Events provide teens an opportunity to grow in servanthood by doing service for others.

"(Quote #2 from youth)," said (name and age of youth). "(finish quote)."

The opportunity to serve had a price. In addition to volunteering their time, the group raised funds to attend the event by (list ways the group raised funds).

Not only did the event have a lasting impact on the (people served), each youth brought home lasting memories. "(Quote #3)," said (name of youth). "(Quote #4)."

(Event host) hosts an annual Servant Event. The next event is scheduled to take place (dates). For more information about (servant event) visit (website).

Risk Management



WHAT RESPONSIBILITY DO WE BEAR?

Youth ministry is a risky business. Think of what can go wrong when you are with youth at an event. The possibilities for injuries, accidents or crises, big or small, are endless. The good news is that thinking ahead and following basic risk management guidelines can help manage and minimize some of the risks. Risk management is more than looking for trouble. It's looking for solutions that can make ministry more effective.

Risk management can seem like it takes the fun and spontaneity out of your plans. Leaders might be tempted to ignore risk management conversations or guidelines out of overconfidence, excitement or even frustration. Shifting your mindset about risk management can be helpful. Consider risk management as a way we show love and care to the young people and adults in our ministry and at our Servant Event. Good risk management does not just help ensure health and safety, but it builds trust. It shows that we want the best for youth and adults, not only what is fun or convenient.

Risk management is an integrated approach for dealing with uncertainty. Risk management includes protection against harm or loss to participants, staff, property, and financial resources, and procedures for handling emergencies. Risk management is designed to provide a safe experience for participants and staff, and to prevent or reduce legal and public relations problems. Risk management puts you, not the risk, in charge.

STEPS OF RISK MANAGEMENT

Step one is **Risk Identification**. This includes looking for the risks in each activity, and identifying who or what is at risk. People and things that could be at risk are:

- › People (youth, staff, volunteers)
- › Finances (personal, congregational)
- › Property (personal, congregational, borrowed)
- › Reputation (youth, youth leaders, church)

Look through the following list of risk types. Which might be included in your Servant Event?

- › Equipment operation (power tools, vehicles, scaffolding, ladders, etc.)
- › Program activities (swimming, sports & games, service projects, etc.)
- › Human behavior (drugs & alcohol, runaways, sexual abuse, improper training of staff, fights, lost person, etc.)
- › High stress, exhaustion, and mental health (travel away from home, new activities, unusual sleeping arrangements, etc.)
- › Transportation (moving participants off-site and back, movement of volunteers, etc.)
- › Natural hazards (cliffs, bodies of water, rough terrain, etc.)
- › Natural disasters (lightning, tornadoes, earthquakes, storms, flood, fire, heat, etc.)
- › Medical conditions (asthma, diabetes, allergies, heart attacks, etc.)

Step two is **Risk Assessment**, or sizing up the risks of a certain activity. Ask the following questions as you assess potential risks:

- › How likely is it that a risky incident will occur?
- › What are the consequences if a risky incident occurs?
- › Which risks can you tolerate?
- › Which risks require the purchase of insurance?
- › Which risks can be reduced or controlled?
- › Which risks are simply too great to bear?

Step three is **Risk Management**, or deciding how to control your risks. The level of risk that you take can be controlled by:

- › Avoiding the risk: Do not offer a program you consider too risky. Certain activities simply should not be offered.
- › Modifying the risk: Change the activity so the chance of harm occurring and the impact of potential damage are acceptable.
- › Transferring responsibility for the risk: Shift at least part of the risk through a contract, insurance or waivers.
- › Retaining the risk: Accept the risk and prepare for the consequences.

Step four is **Implementation**: putting your plan to work, reviewing and revising as needed.

HOW DO I GET AHEAD OF POTENTIAL RISK?

- › Put on your “worst case scenario” glasses and take time to think through planned activities. Use them as you prepare, but also keep them on during your Servant Event when plans change.
- › Protect minors in your ministry. This includes training adult leaders in spotting abuse, and using background checks. Adults who are interested in youth ministry leadership should be in your congregation for a minimum of six months prior to taking part. Train adults to not put themselves in situations which might be seen as suspect. Never leave one adult alone with one child.
- › Know local laws that impact your situation, as well as what your insurance covers. There will always be things you cannot control, but the more information you have, the better equipped you are to prevent problems.
- › Have enough on-site adult group leaders to provide appropriate and safe supervision. Refer to the ratio suggestions under Registration.
- › Plan ahead by including safety issues in your covenants. Have plans for adverse weather, fire, etc.
- › If you are doing something where you may incur risk, increase the amount of adult supervision. Listen when other adults spot risk. Use all the eyes and insight you have to help you catch situations before they escalate.

UNDERSTANDING INSURANCE

Proper insurance coverage is an important part of a well-planned Servant Event. Without it you may be placing your organization, yourself, volunteers and participants in legal and financial jeopardy. You need to know exactly what your insurance coverage is. Do not assume anything! You may be shocked to discover how limited your coverage is. Review your policies and coverage before an incident occurs.

Seek the assistance of your local insurance representative, or a person in your organization who understands the policies. Determine if additional coverage is needed for your Servant Event, and what is the most cost-effective avenue of securing liability coverage. Ask them to show you what limitations on coverage are contained in the definitions and exclusions of the policy.

Verify that all drivers for the Servant Event (both participants and volunteers) are properly insured for their vehicles and occupants. Make sure they carry valid driver's licenses and have a safe driving record.

Request that individual church groups outside your own have insurance coverage for their participants. Ask every participant to present a copy of their insurance card.

Verify indemnification (who is liable for what), especially when personal injury could be involved.

Many organizations purchase insurance policies without reading the policies or fully understanding the coverage provided. Review your policies and coverage before an incident occurs. Ask the insurance representative or the person in your organization who collaborates with them to interpret the current coverage of your insurance. Limitations on coverage are often contained in the definitions and exclusions of the policy. It is critical to understand the time frames and methods for reporting claims.

Insurance coverage is comprised of many elements. To assist you, we are providing an outline of the minimum requirements for insurance coverage that must be to hold a Servant Event. For more information on insurance, contact your insurance agency, LCMS district office or an attorney.

Check the level of insurance coverage your policy provides for the following:

Commercial General Liability: Commercial General Liability protects you in case of certain lawsuits charging negligence. This coverage would ordinarily pay damages ordered by a court and pay for legal defense for the event site and any individuals named in the lawsuit. It may pay for medical expenses for injured persons. General liability policies generally exclude coverage for certain types of incidents. They may limit the categories of damages and expenses covered. For Commercial General Liability, a reasonable minimum limit is \$1,000,000 single / \$2,000,000 aggregate (more is better).

Many liability policies specifically exclude sexual misconduct. If your policy appears to exclude sexual misconduct (or if it is ambiguous on this point) you may want to clarify the coverage available with the insurance carrier. You may be able to purchase this coverage by paying an additional premium.

Automotive Liability: Automotive Liability insurance covers vehicles that the Servant Event site owns, rents, or hires. It may or may not cover personal vehicles on Servant Event business. \$1,000,000 is a reasonable minimum (more is better). Drivers of personal vehicles for ministry purposes should be required to carry \$150,000. Hired and Non-Owned Automobile Liability is required if using volunteers' vehicles.

Worker's Compensation and Volunteer Insurance: Worker's Compensation insurance covers injuries suffered by employees in the course of their employment. These policies usually do not cover volunteers. Medical and other expenses incurred by volunteers injured “on the job” can be covered by a volunteer insurance policy.

Activity Medical: Activity Medical insurance covers medical bills of youth (workers may be covered in some policies) who are injured or sick during ministry activities. Activity medical insurance can be purchased for a specific Servant Event (day, weekend, or week) or purchased for an entire year. The cost can be as reasonable as \$1 per person. The maximum coverage per person may be only several thousand dollars because this is not major medical insurance. Its purpose is to enable the church or family to address short-term medical needs. This may also be known as short term or travel insurance. This is necessary for youth or adults who have no health insurance and wish to attend a Servant Event.

Property Insurance: Property insurance protects buildings and their contents. Fire, tornado, vandalism, and theft are typically covered. It usually includes theft of equipment even if it is not stolen from church property (for example, if a digital camera is stolen from a volunteer's car).

Insurance Riders: An Insurance Rider is an additional type of insurance, additional amount of insurance, or additional coverage that may be added to an existing policy for an additional premium. Riders allow you to add special coverage without the red tape and expense of purchasing a completely new policy.

Secondary Insurance: If you host a registered LCMS Servant Event, limited-liability secondary insurance is provided for participants of your event. This insurance covers some medical expenses that are above and beyond what the participant's personal insurance covers.

Trip/Travel Insurance: If participants do not have regular medical insurance, they may be able to purchase trip or travel insurance that will provide coverage for their time of travel and serving at your event.

Contractors

Most events will not hire contractors or vendors. However, if you do, request an Additional Insured Endorsement on the Auto and General Liability policies. Auto coverage would only be needed if the contractor or vendor will be driving company owned vehicles. This protects you if the contractor or vendor causes liability during the Servant Event.

WAIVERS, CONSENT, AND MEDICAL INFORMATION FORMS

Even though waivers and consent forms do not provide complete protection, they should remain an important part of your risk management plan for the following reasons:

- › Waivers encourage parents and churches to think seriously about the potential hazards involved in special events and precautions necessary in participating.
- › Waivers and consent forms inform parents about their kids' activities, preempting unhappy surprises in the case of accidents or injuries.

- › Permission waivers and medical information forms are the best and easiest way to get information *from* parents.

Remember, the more narrowly focused the waiver and release, the more likely it will be enforceable. You should get specific activity waivers for the following:

- › High adventure activities (cycling, camping, water sports, rope courses, etc.)
- › Servant Events that involve extra risk (serving in remote locations or places with limited medical resources, building off the ground, etc.)
- › Out of town travel or overnight activities

Examples of each of these forms are at the end of the section.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES AND PLAN

An emergency is an unforeseen combination of circumstances, or the resulting state that can threaten to destroy people and/or property.

In order not to be caught off guard by an emergency, develop written emergency plans with step-by-step procedures for handling emergencies. Emergency response plans should include:

- › Response procedures in the event of personal injuries, medical emergencies, severe weather, fire, missing person in water, mental health crisis, etc.
- › Ensure there are signs and building layouts with paths for fire, tornado or other evacuations that are easy for participants to read in rooms they will use for programming or where they sleep.
- › People identified on-site who are responsible for administering first aid, arranging for emergency assistance, and to stay with the group if adults must leave the site with a sick or injured person. Ensure these people know where AEDs, fire extinguishers, and other important items are.
- › Emergency phone numbers (hospital, paramedics, fire department, utility company, etc.)
- › Location and maps to nearest hospital, clinics or medical facility.
- › Procedure for contacting youth group leaders, parents or guardian, pastor, etc., in an emergency.
- › Incident report forms and process for reporting to other authorities.
- › Procedure for notifying insurance companies and filing insurance forms.

Provide all leaders with detailed emergency plans and to share emergency information with participants as well.

Guidelines for ALL emergency situations (to be incorporated into your emergency response procedures and plans)

1. Stay calm. A life may depend on your clear thinking and prompt, correct action. You can help no one if you panic. Panic leads to contagious fear and incorrect actions. Help those around you to remain calm as well.
2. Ensure the safety of the group for whom you are responsible.
3. Notify a Servant Event leader as quickly as possible. Provide information on the location of the incident, the nature of any injuries, the extent of any damage and the age of those involved. Ask for someone to bring you first-aid kits, AED or other equipment as needed.
4. If calling 911, be sure to:
 - Tell them your name.
 - Tell them the location, address, and phone number.
 - Describe the situation. For cases of injury, provide the victim's name, age and symptoms or cause.
 - Give them directions to the location if requested.
 - Hang up **LAST**.
5. Identify a “spotter” for approaching emergency vehicles. A “spotter” is to direct emergency vehicles to the location of the incident. Other Servant Event leaders should clear participants from that location.
6. If and when anyone arrives on the scene of the incident with more training in handling similar situations, allow them to make the decisions. Cooperate/assist with any decisions they make.

Do not speak to any media personnel, even if you think the remarks are “off the record.” Let the Event Director be the official spokesperson, and steer all questions to that person.

Medical Considerations

- › At least one member of the Servant Event leadership team should have current first aid and CPR training.
 - › Well-equipped first-aid kits need to be available at all program areas and at any off-site service location. The American Red Cross chapter in your community can provide information on first-aid and CPR classes, and guidelines for putting together emergency first aid kits. A list of potential items is also listed at the end of this resource.
 - › Collect information for every adult leader. Prior to the Servant Event, locate clinics, pharmacies, and emergency medical facilities nearby, and provide directions to these locations. Develop an emergency phone numbers list, as well as a listing of every address that is a part of the event to provide quick information to 911 dispatchers.
- › Provide cell phones, phone list and participant medical forms for each off-site work area or activity. If a youth participant has specific medical needs, ensure the appropriate adult is aware of how to best provide care to that person.
 - › If a minor has a medical condition and will not be with the youth leader from their group, provide that critical information to whatever adult will be with the minor. This allows for appropriate care to be provided in the quickest way possible. Encourage all those with medical conditions to have a consistent location with information in case of emergency, like on their phone's emergency health screen.

Personal injuries and medical emergencies

A personal injury emergency is any physical injury that threatens the life or health of an individual. Medical emergencies include medical conditions such as heart attacks, diabetic reactions, strong allergic reactions, epileptic seizures and others.

- › When someone witnesses or is alerted to a severe injury or medical emergency, an event leader should immediately be notified and summoned. Provide information on the location of the accident, age of those involved and the nature of the injury. If necessary, the event leader will make the decision to call 911.
- › Should a personal injury or medical emergency occur in a remote area, one leader should stay with the individual involved, and someone be sent for help. Do not attempt to transport a seriously injured individual.
- › A seriously injured individual should not be moved unless his/her current position presents a further danger to him/her or to others. Attempting to move an injured individual without the proper training or equipment could cause further injury.
- › All injuries must be taken seriously. Do not presume anything. Use factors such as past occurrences, the individual's reaction to the injury, or the individual's mental state only as factors. When in doubt, assume the worst and act accordingly.
- › Whenever possible, first aid should be administered only by those certified to do so. However, if no such person is readily available and the need for assistance is immediate, attempt to help the injured individual as best you can, using whatever knowledge you have and common sense.
- › Participant medical forms must accompany every individual transported to a clinic, hospital, or doctor.
- › An adult leader should accompany any participant to the clinic or hospital. Parents/guardians should be contacted with information as soon as possible.
- › An incident report should be completed in any situation which requires professional medical attention.

- › Serious accidents and the corresponding incident report should be provided to your insurance carrier. Be sure to know the timeline and paperwork they require to ensure the organization is appropriately covered.
- › If LCMS Servant Events is providing secondary medical insurance for your event, report serious accidents and provide an incident report to LCMS Youth Ministry following the Servant Event. The forms should be sent digitally to servantevents@lcms.org within 30 days of the end of your event.

Dealing with the after effects of a tragic accident, incident, or death

While we never expect something tragic to occur at a Servant Event, there is a possibility, even if you manage your risk well. It is also possible that tragedy may occur back home when youth and adults are away attending a Servant Event. If this happens, lean on your emergency plans as well as your full team of adult volunteers. Work together to develop a response plan that helps support not just the people directly affected, but all the participants.

Young people who experience a serious accident or incident will face emotional stress. They need pastoral care and trauma counseling to help them deal with their shock and grief. Youth and their leaders will need short-term support for the first day or two after a crisis. They will need longer term care as well. Do not neglect workers and leaders in this process. Their feelings may be affected by a sense of responsibility for the accident.

Utilize professional counselors to minimize liability on untrained lay people. Call on church workers with counseling experience for immediate short-term assistance. Offer support to the families of the victims and for other families who are deeply affected due to the circumstances of the accident.

Staff misconduct

Staff misconduct is a betrayal of trust. Reports of questionable behavior by youth leaders (paid and volunteer) must be taken seriously and addressed promptly. Types of misconduct include sexual misconduct; money mismanagement; drug, alcohol, and substance abuse; or physical or emotional abuse.

All states have laws requiring reporting of suspected child maltreatment or sexual abuse of minors to child protective services or law enforcement. Find out about the mandatory reporting requirements that apply in your state. If your state mandates reporting for any category of church or ministry worker, this information must be integrated into the guidelines of the Servant Event.

If an incident occurs while youth leaders and youth are traveling in another state, seek legal advice on which state law applies and what the applicable law requires.

Your leadership should consider the facts and circumstances when reporting is not mandated by law. Weigh the relevant scriptural and ethical principles and decide what your duty is in each case. Do not ignore or minimize misconduct and its impact on the victim. Servant Event leaders have a responsibility to consider the rights of all parties in an incident: the victim, the accused offender, the reporter, families and the church itself (including its workers).

SAMPLE FORMS

The following pages include:

- › Sample Agreement to Assume Responsibility and to Indemnify (*This form is used between your event and other organizations and is not for participants.*)
- › Sample Medical Consent and Liability and Activity Release Form
- › Sample Authorization to Consent to Medical and Dental Care
- › Sample Photo/Video Release Form
- › Sample Emergency Medical Information Form
- › Sample Incident Report Form

Servant Event leadership usually sends these forms out with the registration confirmation materials. All participants, youth, and adults should fill out all forms. Ask adult leaders to bring two sets of all forms, one to give to Servant Event leaders, one to always stay with each participant.

Take time to get familiar with these forms so that in the event of an accident you know where to find the information you need quickly. **Know where they are at all times.**

Decide who will be responsible for collecting forms at your Servant Event and keeping forms at the work sites.

SAMPLE FIRST AID CHECKLIST

You should have a first-aid kit in every location where participants will be. Either bring one along with you or have a number of kits that can stay with the supplies on each site.

First-aid kit suggested contents:

- Acetaminophen, ibuprofen and aspirin tablets:** To relieve headaches, pain, fever, and simple sprains or strains of the body. Have at least two aspirin tablets available at all times in case of heart attack, to be used as recommended by your physician. Use appropriate dosages, and make sure medicine is age appropriate. (Aspirin should not be used to relieve flu symptoms, or given to children.)
- Antihistamine:** To relieve allergies and inflammation. Use appropriate dosages, and make sure the medicine is age appropriate.
- Anti-nausea, motion sickness medication**
- Bandages of assorted sizes:** To cover minor cuts and scrapes
- Bandage closures (one-fourth and one-inch sizes):** To tape edges of minor cuts together
- Triangular bandage:** For wrapping injuries and making an arm sling
- Elastic wraps:** For wrapping wrist, ankle, knee, and elbow injuries
- Gauze in rolls and two-inch and four-inch pads:** To dress larger cuts and scrapes
- Adhesive tape:** To keep gauze in place
- Sharp scissors with rounded tips:** To cut tape, gauze, or clothes
- Safety pins:** To fasten splints and bandages
- Antiseptic wipes:** To disinfect wounds or clean hands, tweezers, scissors and thermometer
- Antibiotic ointment:** To prevent infection in burns, cuts, and scrapes
- Hydrogen peroxide:** To disinfect and clean wounds.
- Disposable, instant-activating ice bags:** For cooling injuries and burns
- Tweezers:** To remove small splinters, foreign objects, bee stingers and ticks from skin (see first-aid manual for proper removal of ticks)
- Rubber gloves:** To protect hands and reduce risk of infections when treating open wounds
- Antifungal cream:** Good for athletes' foot or ringworm
- Thermometer with case:** To take temperatures
- Calamine lotion:** To relieve itching and irritation from insect bites and stings and poison ivy
- Hydrocortisone cream:** To relieve irritation from rashes
- Sunscreen:** SPF 15 or higher, broad-spectrum
- Insect repellent:** Repellents appropriate for use on children should contain no more than 0–15 percent DEET (20–30 percent for adults), because the chemical, which is absorbed through the skin, can cause harm. Use as directed.

SAMPLE AGREEMENT TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY AND TO INDEMNIFY

As the Servant Event Partner/Sponsor Entity, the undersigned acknowledges that it is solely responsible for the planning, conduct, control, management, operation, and all other aspects of the Servant Event which it has undertaken to sponsor and has agreed to assume all risks of loss, damage, or injury which may result from the conduct of that Servant Event. Therefore, the Servant Event Partner/Sponsor Entity agrees to release, discharge, indemnify and forever hold harmless any other agency or entity involved in the Servant Event together with the officers, directors, agents, servants, employees, and volunteers of each such entity (all such entities and their officers, directors, agents, servants, employees, and volunteers being hereinafter both collectively and individually referred to as the "Indemnified Parties") from any and all claims for loss, damage, or injury or any other cause of action which may at any time, arise as a direct or indirect result of the planning, conduct, control, management, operation, or any other aspect of the Servant Event. In the event that any such claim or other cause of action should be brought against the Indemnified Parties, the Servant Event Partner/Sponsor Entity, at its own expense, to investigate all such claims and/or causes of action, accomplish their settlement or other disposition, defend all actions based thereon, and pay all charges of attorneys and all other costs and expenses arising from all such claims or causes of action.

Servant Event Title: _____

Partner/Sponsor Entity: _____

Project Coordinator: _____

Today's Date: _____

SAMPLE MEDICAL CONSENT AND LIABILITY AND ACTIVITY RELEASE FORM

Must be completed and carried by all participants. Copy must be given to group leader.

Must be signed by parent or guardian of participants under 18.

Please type or print legibly in ink.

Participant Name: (Last) _____ (First) _____

Birth Date: ___/___/___ Male Female

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Custodial Parent/Guardian: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Home Address (If Different) _____

Health Plan Carrier: _____

Name of Insured: _____

Relationship To Participant: _____

Policy Holder or Insurance Id Number: _____

Family Doctor: _____ Office Phone: (____) _____

Family Dentist: _____ Office Phone: (____) _____

Second Parent or Emergency Contact Person: _____

Relationship to Participant: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Day Phone: (____) _____

Please specify if any health insurance pre-certification, notification or other requirements exist for the participant:

Medical Card Copy Front

Medical Card Copy Back

(continued on next page)

SAMPLE PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE FORM

Participants: Name of Adult: _____
Name of Minor(s): _____

Grant of Permission: In consideration of the mutual covenants herein, including the opportunity to have photos and/or videos of Participant(s) considered for use by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (“LCMS”), I, _____, hereby grant the right and permission to LCMS, and its agents, divisions and affiliates, including individual LCMS churches, and all of their legal successors and assigns (“Users”), to take and use photos or videos of the persons named above as Participants (“Participant(s)”).

Covered Content: Photos and/or videos of Participant(s)
Limitations, if any:

- only photos/videos taken at _____ [event/place]
- only photos/videos intended for use in connection with _____
- may not be used in the following ways: _____

Scope of Permission: Users shall have the right and permission to take, use, reuse, reproduce, publish, and republish photos/videos of Participant or photos/videos in which Participant may be included, in whole or in part. User may edit, crop, change, or alter the photos/videos; this includes changes or alterations as to color, size, shape, perspective, context, foreground or background. User may combine the photos/videos with, or use them in conjunction with, other visual, graphic, text, audio, and electronic or other digital materials. User may, in its sole discretion, use the photos/videos with the Participant’s own name, with an abbreviated or fictitious name, or without any name, and additionally may use the photos/videos with Participant’s voice, words, actions, personal attributes, and/or biography. User may reproduce such photos/videos in any and all media now or hereafter known, including use on television, radio, or motion pictures, or on any computer network, including the worldwide computer network known as the Internet. Unless Participant has specifically checked a limitation above, User may use the photos/videos for any lawful purpose or purposes whatsoever, including news, art, advertising, promotional, religious, or trade. Participant waives any right that he or she may have to inspect or approve any finished products in which such photos/videos may be used. Participant understands that Users have the right to copyright the photos/videos and all works derived therefrom and to control use of such copyrighted material.

Legal Effect of Permission: This release shall be binding upon the Participant and his or her respective heirs, legal representatives, and assigns. Participant states that he or she has read the above authorization, release, and agreement, prior to its execution, and is fully familiar with the contents of it.

Adult Participant sign here: _____
Participant’s _____
Address (line 1) _____
Address (line 2) _____
Date _____

If one or more Participants is a minor, the following section must be completed:

Name of Authorizing Parent or Legal Guardian: _____
Parent or Legal Guardian Signature: _____

I agree to the terms above on behalf of the minors identified above. I hereby warrant that I am a legally competent adult and a parent or legally appointed guardian of the minor(s) identified above, and that I have every right to contract for each such minor in the above regard.

Name _____
Address (line 1) _____
Address (line 2) _____
Date _____

SAMPLE EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM

Please complete so that health providers can be aware of your personal health needs.

Must be completed by all Event participants.

Name of Participant: _____

Does participant have: (if “yes” explain)

Yes No ALLERGIES? _____

Yes No HEART CONDITION? _____

Yes No OTHER? _____

Is participant subject to: (If “yes” explain)

Yes No HEADACHES? _____

Yes No SEIZURES? _____

Yes No MOTION SICKNESS? _____

Yes No FAINTING? _____

Yes No SLEEP WALKING? _____

Yes No UPSET STOMACH? _____

Yes No OTHER? _____

Does participant have reaction to: (If “yes” explain)

Yes No BEE STING? _____

Yes No PENICILLIN? _____

Yes No OTHER DRUGS? _____

Yes No POISON IVY, OAK, SUMAC?

Yes No OTHER? _____

Yes No Has the participant had any serious illness or surgery within the past ten years?

Please list: _____

Yes No Does the participant have any condition that would prevent him/her from participating in any Servant Event activities?

Please list: _____

Yes No Does the participant take any prescription medication?

Please list: _____

Yes No Are any drugs ineffective in treatment? _____

Yes No Is the participant diabetic? Medication? _____

Yes No Does the participant have any sight or hearing impairment? _____

Yes No Does the participant wear contact lenses? _____

Yes No Does the participant wear hearing aids? _____

Blood type: _____ Date of last tetanus shot: _____

A current tetanus shot is required. After 5 years, another tetanus shot is recommended.

Please indicate ANYTHING else that leaders should know to help avoid or deal with any medical situation that might arise:

SAMPLE INCIDENT REPORT

Date: _____

Time: _____

Name of Youth/Adults Involved: _____

Location of Incident: _____

Person in charge of activity/event: _____

Adult Leader and Church of youth involved: _____

People who reported/witnessed the incident: _____

Please describe the incident as seen/heard as accurately as possible:

Please describe actions taken:

Was Parent/Guardian Contacted? Yes No Time: _____ How? _____

Describe medical treatment/first aid:

SAMPLE RISK MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

- Review liability insurance policy
- Review vehicle insurance coverage
- Secure regulatory agency requirements (U.S. Forest Service, tribal council, foreign consulate, etc.) if necessary
- Secure building permits for building structures or providing repairs required by your city or other municipality
- Provide medical forms, activity waivers and photo release for participants
- Gather emergency contact information
- Establish emergency response procedures for Servant Event
- Assemble first-aid kits for work sites
- Locate fire extinguishers and AEDs in accessible areas
- Share emergency procedures with Servant Event and youth leadership
- Provide training for staff (First Aid/CPR, conflict resolution skills, emergency procedures, crisis management, sexual ethics)
- Arrange for adequate participant supervision (adult to youth ratio appropriate to activity)
- Determine access to emergency services (fire, police, ambulance, clinics, hospitals, 24-hour emergency rooms)
- Practice emergency procedures (drills)
- Provide contact information to parents/guardians
- Make contingency plans in case of severe weather
- Make Incident Report copies
- Arrange for on-site participant health supervision (first aid/nurse/first response person)
- Provide training and supervision in the use of equipment for work activities
- Have legal counsel available
- Include safety considerations in group covenants
- Screen, background check and train all event leaders before they work with youth

Community Building



The primary focus of Servant Events is, obviously, service and spiritual development. However, good community building assists in both of those goals. When strong relational ties are built, participants serve more effectively, be more willing to engage in Bible study and prayer and encourage one another along the way. Whether your group is under 10 people or over 100, it is important to help participants build a supportive and Christ-centered community during your event.

Most Servant Events bring together groups from different locations and congregations. These groups might be tightly knit, or new to one another. Some new relationships will develop easily, but our natural inclination is to stay close to the few people we know the best. With so many relational dynamics, it is best to plan how you will develop community across your event. The leadership team can set a strategy to make sure that all participants meet new people, build relational connections and perhaps even develop lifelong friendships.

PROGRAMMATIC WAYS OF BUILDING COMMUNITY

One of the best ways to help youth connect with peers and adult leaders is to **plan for different kinds of small groups in your programming**. Consider the groups that will happen as a part of your programming, like:

- › Bible study groups
- › Service site groups
- › Housing or cabin groups

After registration is completed, these groups can be preset to give participants three or more groups they will interact with regularly throughout their week. As you plan these groups, consider things like skills for service, age and comfort levels for teens. For example, if you are sleeping in a church, school or cabin, you may want to make sure youth participants have at least a few people they know and are comfortable with in their sleeping room. Or your mixture of participants on service sites might be less diverse because of the high skill level needed for the service.

Planning to mix groups in these ways gives participants opportunities to engage with others with a shared purpose. It may seem uncomfortable for some, so be prepared to foster these relationships from the beginning of the event. This might mean doing some of your opening ice breakers in these groups, so they learn names and a bit about each person.

While we highly encourage mixing groups for at least some of these program areas, please be sure to include time when church groups can connect as well. We want to foster

relationship building, but youth and adults also need to connect within their church group. These relationships can be important not just for the week, but into the future. A good balance here is helpful for everyone.

One final group that it is helpful to develop is your adult participants. These leaders may have a variety of experience and will not know youth from the other groups. Be sure to bring this group together throughout your event so they get to know and support each other. We suggest an adult orientation. (Find more information about that in the Event Planning section.) You might also include a daily check-in or an additional text thread that allows them to communicate and care for each other as they support youth participants.

Another way to build community is to plan strategic ways to **celebrate success and to bring joy throughout the event**. Some of these ideas might include:

- › Look at registration forms for any birthdays taking place during your event.
- › Have a person from one or two service sites share a win or a positive story for the day during dinner or before evening programming.
- › Choose a silly song or call and response that you teach the group in order to get their attention.
- › If you have group texting ability, send encouraging texts, gifs, or pictures to participants throughout the week.
- › Plan opportunities for adult leaders to show their silly side. This could be in skits, in leading song actions or in small competitions.

There are a ton of options, but finding places where people can laugh together and share experiences helps to bond the group.

Affirmation Bags are an easy way to encourage all your participants throughout the week and after the event. Every participant, event leader and volunteer should have a bag with their name on it. It can also help to attach a picture of that person, especially if there are duplicate names. Lay these out in a public place. Throughout the week, participants should drop short notes of positive encouragement into the bags of others. Provide a number of blank pieces of paper, as well as printouts with examples of affirmations like those attached at the end of this section. Tell participants to avoid looking in their bag until they are on the way home.

While affirmation bags are fantastic for building community, it can be important to give directions on what should be written on the notes. Let participants know that this is not a place to proclaim their undying love to a crush, nor a sneaky way to bully or leave insults. Adults should be on the lookout for bags that are underfilled to ensure that every participant has something encouraging in their affirmation bag.

Free time allows participants to recharge in the way that suits them best. Each day should include activities where participants can just relax and enjoy each other's company. Some youth will need time alone or in pairs or small groups. Others will gravitate toward group activities. During free time, provide access to board games, a gym or large open space and sports equipment. Finding the right balance of program and free time can be difficult, but is worth figuring out for each group.

It can also be valuable to include **social and recreational activities** in your schedule. This might include a field trip, swimming or some casual recreational activity that is a diversion from the day's work. It may also be possible to leave one afternoon open and plan a trip or activity that could extend into the evening.

Ideas from past events include museums, ethnic festivals, hikes, picnics, river rafting, community potlucks, sporting events, and fellowship. These chances to have fun together give a much-needed break, and help participants explore and understand the local community.

Community building should also include some kind of **closing time** for your event. It can be difficult to have such an intense time together, only to have no or limited time to recognize the relationships God has built in the group. The leadership team can plan an intentional closing worship or devotional time. Afterwards, give space for participants to encourage each other. If possible, you can also encourage them to exchange contact information.

The closing time can also include relationships built with those involved in the service. Consider inviting local community residents and leaders to take an active part in the final evening's activities. Reflect on the total experience and what individuals learned. This would also be a good time to commend the adult leaders for their participation. Don't forget to schedule time for participants to complete and turn in their evaluations.



ICEBREAKERS

As groups come together it is important for them to begin feeling comfortable with and around each other. Involve them in icebreakers and games that get them moving around, bumping into each other and getting acquainted.

These games are most helpful toward the beginning of your event, since they help participants to learn names and get to know each other. Avoid icebreakers early on that require intense personal disclosure or lots of physical touch. These can be more off-putting than helpful.

Here are a few examples of icebreaker games:

Name tags

Supplies: Nametags and pens

Have participants make their own nametags. Ask them to include some basic information to help participants connect (a favorite food, school activity, or favorite show). They could also draw a picture of a funny thing that happened while traveling to the site.

Line ups

Ask participants to line up as quickly as they can by the following:

- › Birth date
- › Alphabetically by first name
- › Numerical order of the last four digits of their phone number
- › Height
- › Shoe size, etc.

This gets people moving around and collaborating. Try it without participants talking to each other.

Collages

Supplies: magazines, construction paper, markers, glue, and scissors

With supplies available, ask participants to create a collage of who they are. The participants then use the collages to introduce themselves to a small group. After individuals introduce themselves to the group, they should pair off in twos. Partners then introduce each other using their collages to the new people they have just met, or they learn as much as they can about one another in a given time period. They can also create a new collage about the person they just met. It can be a gift to that person, as well as a tool to help introduce the partner to others.

Blanket name game

Supplies: A large opaque blanket

Everyone is split into two teams who stand on opposite sides of a blanket. Two adults hold the blanket high so that neither team can see each other. One person from each team is selected to stand on their side of the blanket facing each other with the blanket between them. After a countdown, the

blanket is dropped. Each of the players at the blanket will try to remember and call out the name of the person opposite them first. The person who correctly calls out name of the other person remains with their team. The remaining person must move to the other team.

Clumps

Participants mill about until the leader calls out various numbers. Participants should “clump” into those size groups and sit down. Keep the action moving by calling out new numbers as soon as groups form.

Candy land

Supplies: M&Ms

Pass a large bag of M&Ms, and invite everyone to take a handful, but not to eat them yet. Next, explain that each color corresponds with a personal disclosure by group members. For example, every brown candy is a fact about where they grew up. Every red candy is a story about home. Green candies call for a story of faith, blue an embarrassing moment, and so on. You can adapt your categories to fit your group.

Grab bags

Ask each person to bring a bag with three small items in it. These items should tell something about the person’s life. There are a number of variations on this activity. For example, you could ask members to bring three items that reveal something about where they grew up, then try guessing the locales.

Ultimate Rock Paper Scissors

Have students find a partner to play Rock, Paper, Scissors. The loser steps behind the winner. The winner then finds someone else to play. Again, the loser and any people following them get behind the winner. Continue until one person has the entire group behind them.

Ball and chain

Supplies: yarn and balloons

Each person is given a piece of yarn (about 1 yard) and a balloon. Players tie one end of the yarn to their ankle and the inflated balloon to the other end (creating a ball and chain). Players then try to pop other players’ balloons while protecting their own. The last one with an intact, attached balloon wins!

Three is a crowd

Tell your group that they need to get into groups of three with people with whom they have something in common. However, they cannot use something “easy” like all three are wearing jeans, have the same color hair, etc. After everyone is in a group of three, have each group share what they all have in common. You can give a prize to the most unique each round to add to the challenge.

(continued on next page)

Pterodactyl

Have the group sit in a circle. If you have a large group, split into small groups. Everyone should make a face where they pull their lips around their teeth to hide them. Have one person start. They can either say “Pterodactyl” to pass the turn to their RIGHT or screech like Pterodactyl to pass the turn to their LEFT. Go around the circle using these rules. If someone laughs, shows their teeth, or covers their mouth, they are out and leave the circle. Go until someone wins or your group is done with the game.

People bingo

Make a grid of four squares by four squares on a piece of paper. Put a response (like those listed below) in each box. Participants each receive a copy and pass it to others. Those who receive the cards are to initial the boxes containing statements that describe themselves. They may initial no more than two spaces on another players’ bingo card (none on their own). The first to get four squares in a row is the winner. Variation: complete the entire card in order to win the game.



PEOPLE BINGO

Does Not Eat Cheese	Born in Another Country	Loves Winter	Can Run 2 Miles	Can Touch Their Toes
Likes to Read	Doesn't Drink Coffee	Exercises Daily	Doesn't Like Meat	Is the Oldest Child
Has a Dog	Has Been in a Play or Musical	Free Space	Is a Lefty	Has Traveled Outside the US
Has Worked in Food Service	Is Wearing Blue	Loves Math	Has Been to Summer Camp	Likes Spicy Food
Is Wearing Earrings	Has Been on a Plane	Is Younger than You	Has a Cat	Plays an Instrument

GROUP GAMES

These games are designed to build teamwork in larger groups. They are better played after participants already know each other a bit. Use these games at key times in the middle of or later in the week to help keep participants communicating and energized. It can also keep the environment light and cooperative.

Water balloon volleyball

Supplies: towels, volleyball net, and water balloons

Teams are comprised of partners who work together.

Partners take each end of the towel. To serve, the partners place the water balloon in the middle of the towel and heave the balloon across the net. The partners on the other team try to catch the water balloon “volleyball” in their towel without breaking it! Then they try to return the volleyball. The most it can get passed on one side of the net before going over is three times. This can also be played by teams clutching the edges of a bed sheet. This is a fun, refreshing game at the end of work time in the heat.

Tower Building

Supplies: box of spaghetti, gumdrops, toothpicks or other items to build with

Divide into groups of four. Give each group a box of long spaghetti, gumdrops, and toothpicks. (You can also use crackers and peanut butter or Oreo cookies.) Ask each group to create the tallest structure that will stand without assistance using the items provided.

Afterwards, process what happened. Did a leader emerge? Did everyone contribute? Was anyone left out of the activity? What does this tell us about our work sites or work teams?

Saltshaker

Supplies: a quarter, saltshaker, or other small object

Divide the group into two teams. Players sit cross-legged in two rows facing each other. The players cross their arms then hold hands and close their eyes. At one end of the line, a leader flips a coin that only the first person in each line may watch. If it comes up tails, they do nothing. If it comes up heads, the first person in the line squeezes the next hand and so on until the squeeze reaches the last person in the line. The last person then grabs a saltshaker (or other small object). The winning line sends the end person up and play continues until a whole team has moved through the rotation. If a hand is squeezed and the saltshaker is grabbed on tails, the fouling team must move a player backwards in the rotation.

Do you love your neighbor?

Supplies: chairs

Have players line up and sit in chairs in a circle with one fewer chair than players. The person who is “it” stands in the middle and walks in front of a person who is sitting. The standing person asks the sitting person, “Do you love your

neighbor?” The person who is asked can respond in one of two ways:

“Yes, I love my neighbor, but only if they...” They will end that sentence with a category, such as everyone wearing jeans or people not wearing socks. Players who fall into that category must get up and change chairs while the player who is “it” tries to get into an empty chair.

“No.” Then the players on either side of the person must switch chairs while the person from the center tried to sit down.

The person left without a chair is now “it.”

Wacky kickball

Divide the group into two teams. Have one team out in the field and the other “up to bat.” One player in the field pitches while the others are scattered around the field. The team that is up has 3 chances to kick the ball. This team lines up as close to each other as possible while their kicker us up. Once a kicker kicks a ball, he immediately runs around his teammates’ line. The team in the field must catch the ball, line up, and pass it over their heads to the last person in line, who yells stop. The player who has been running around the line must stop. His team gains a point for each time he ran around the line. After 3 “ups,” players change sides.

Roll of the dice

Provide players with dice. Take turns rolling the dice and answering the following questions.

- › What is 1 achievement of which you are proud?
- › If you could change 2 things about school, what would you change?
- › What are 3 ways to make you laugh?
- › What is your routine be 4 you go to school/work in the morning?
- › What is an item you have more than 5 of?
- › What is your best memory about being 6?

Blind drawing

Supplies: paper and markers

Everyone should get a partner and sit back-to-back. Instruct everyone to draw something simple, giving whatever prompt makes sense. Then everyone gets a blank sheet of paper. Pairs will take turns describing their picture giving colors, shapes, size, etc. without showing or telling what the picture is. The person listening draws what they hear being described. Then the group switches. Afterwards you can talk about how you communicated and what the other person did when you described the picture.

Team auction

Send small groups of 4-6 out to collect a pillowcase full of objects that they brought with them (toothbrush, curling iron, book, etc.). Have a caller and a judge in the front of the area, with the groups seated an equal distance away from the front. After the caller asks for a certain object, one runner from each team comes up with that article or a reasonable facsimile thereof. The first team to bring the actual object, or convince the judge that his article is the next best thing, gets a point. Make sure the objects remain in the bag until called for. Use masking tape on the floor to designate areas that should not be crossed by the players (to save the judge from fatal attacks). Teams cannot switch items once a runner has brought something forward. Things that you could call for:

- › a yellow comb
- › a fly swatter
- › a Bible
- › an umbrella
- › a hat
- › a piece of jewelry
- › a radio
- › an Oreo cookie
- › a t-shirt with words on it
- › a tumbleweed
- › something to eat
- › something you can't live without
- › something sharp
- › something you'd wear to a formal dinner
- › a love note
- › something beautiful
- › the letter j
- › a pair of mittens
- › a musical instrument
- › a dangerous weapon
- › something black
- › Volkswagen Bug
- › something you could sit on
- › a scenic view
- › a spoon/knife/fork
- › something Lutheran
- › a pair of clean socks
- › something out of a garbage can
- › sunscreen lotion
- › a flower
- › pajamas
- › a picture of someone in your family
- › something to blow your nose in

Four square

The leader announces asks a question, indicating a corner of the room for available responses. Each participant moves to the response they choose. Participants much choose at least one response. Leader may ask people why they made their choice.

Then the leader announces a new question and people move to the new location.

Have participants observe who goes where and what their choices are. Any surprises? Any common choices?

After a long day I like to ...

- › watch TV
- › spend time with friends
- › be alone
- › sleep

At the table I ...

- › reach for food
- › ask for food
- › eat one thing at a time
- › eat a little of everything

I wish I had a dollar for every time I ...

- › flunked a test
- › got in trouble at home
- › had a bad dream
- › eat too much

Wild horses couldn't force me to eat ...

- › liver
- › fried snails
- › raw oysters
- › pigs feet

Animal that best describes me ...

- › fox
- › puppy
- › lion
- › chameleon

If I could compare my life right now with a weather report it would be ...

- › sunny & warm
- › cold & wintry
- › overcast
- › stormy

I really get uncomfortable around ...

- › blood
- › praying out loud
- › the opposite sex
- › work

I'm afraid of ...

- › snakes
- › spiders
- › dark places
- › the unknown

If I had to, I could get along without ...

- › indoor toilet
- › TV
- › phone
- › junk food

If I could I would like to ...

- › change jobs
- › quit school
- › travel for a year
- › move to a new place

I can't stand ...

- › knuckles cracking
- › farm smells
- › fingernails on blackboards
- › dripping faucet

I get really impatient with ...

- › bad drivers
- › standing in line
- › people who are late
- › rude people

SAMPLE AFFIRMATION BAG STUFFERS

Dear _____

God has given each of us many gifts. I thank God for the gift of _____
that he has given you!

Thanks for sharing that gift with me!

Me! _____

Dear _____

God has given each of us many gifts. I thank God for the gift of _____
that he has given you!

Thanks for sharing that gift with me!

Me! _____

Dear _____

God has given each of us many gifts. I thank God for the gift of _____
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Thanks for sharing that gift with me!

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