

Serving Outside of Disaster

DRC Guide #5



Churches of Greater Austin
Bringing Hope into Crisis™

Big Idea:

Serving our churches and communities outside of disaster is absolutely essential to our effectiveness when a catastrophic event actually occurs! It is through our love for Christ that He gives us a mandate to love and serve people. In return, we believe he is equipping us to develop trust, favor and relational authority while demonstrating and declaring His goodness in our churches and in our communities. Remember - When it comes down to it, all we have to do is follow His lead... LOVE GOD and LOVE PEOPLE... the rest will fall in place!

Scriptural Basis -

"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matthew 20:25-28

Jesus did not come to be served, but to SERVE!

Explanation:

As Jesus demonstrated time and again how to love and serve people He became our perfect example! He served God, His disciples and He served everyday people. Through his actions, Jesus also demonstrates to us that there is a requirement of effort as Christ followers sharing His love in our communities...

SERVING = PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE!

Serving our Churches, Congregations and Communities is how we demonstrate and declare the love of Christ and build relationships inside and outside of our church!

It's not easy... Stop and Think!

Olympic athletes are not made on the day of the opening ceremony. In order to walk with the team, they have already walked through years of hard work, competitions and dedication to their development and submission to the goal they have set. In the same way, a serving culture does not just happen... it has to be developed before a disaster strikes!

Discuss:

Does our church have an existing culture of serving? **Yes / No** (discuss answer)

Serving produces _____

Examples: Gratitude, humility, blessings, joy, appreciation, peace, change, love, respect, kindness, picture of Jesus, relationships, fulfillment, grace, hope, patience, purpose, **favor** compassion, selflessness, life, glory to God, ways to make the world go round, a better me, growth, satisfaction, refreshing, leaders, community, happiness, restoration, humility, gratefulness, clarity, healing, friendships, rewards, grounding, empathy, self-esteem, good fruit, perspective, unity, opportunity, honor, good feeling inside

Why is SERVING preparation for the future?

Let's get to the point! At the end of the day...The success of THE CHURCH as it seeks to prepare for times of disaster is based on its ability to build relationships and earn **favor** in each community it serves. Taking authentic ownership by serving the community in which we have been called will significantly impact our ability to connect with people, share resources and minister to the life of an individual or family. In the event of a major disaster, we (the Church) will bring the hope of Jesus to a potentially devastated community through previously developed relationships!

Serve with purpose!

The idea of serving is the most basic yet profound principle in the Bible. Jesus walked the earth with one mission... TO SERVE! Through His actions He built trust, respect and developed relationships with his disciples (close to him) and those He encountered daily (in the community) – not to mention the everlasting impact He has on the world! In John 13:15, Jesus sets an example for us to follow. After washing His disciple's feet – an act of love, humility, and service... he states:

*"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you,"
John 13:15*

HOW we SERVE! 3Cs → Church - Congregation - Community

1. SERVE your **C Church Leadership**

- PRAY for your pastors and church staff daily
- PROTECT your pastors and staff
 - Squelch gossip! (Ephesians 4:29)
 - Be the solution - not the problem (Titus 3:1-2, 3:10)
 - If you hear a negative comment, respond with a positive comment
 - Commit to finding solutions appropriately
 - Leaders NEVER complain down or sideways. Challenges should be brought to those who make decisions in the church – pastors and staff leadership.
- ALLOW your pastors to lead. If you have a disagreement, talk directly to your pastors or use the process in place through your staff leadership to voice your concerns
- LEAD in a position of blessing and appointed authority. As you need help, call on staff leadership. Lead 10s even 50s – it may not be your place to lead 100s or thousands unless asked to do so! (Exodus 18:1-27)
- SERVE on a weekend serve team and encourage others to join!
 - By actively serving your pastors and church leadership, we ensure the health and integrity of our churches are intact
- BE the eyes and ears of your pastors and church staff
 - Does your pastor have a line of people standing and waiting for him/her after service? Assist by saying HELLO... who knows, maybe they wanted to know where the bathroom is or they just need someone to connect with that is familiar with the church. Or better yet, maybe they are wanting to know if we have a disaster relief small group they could get involved with 😊

List ways you can begin SERVING your Church Leadership:

2. SERVE your **CONGREGATION**

- **PRAY** for those in your church
 - Most churches have a prayer team or pastoral care list of prayer needs. Find it and lift up the needs of your congregation
- **LOOK** for the people standing alone in the foyer and say HELLO!
 - Strike up a conversation asking questions like... “How long have you attended _____ church?”, “What do you do for a living?”, “Are you involved on a wknd serve team?”
- **KNOW** what’s happening in the life of your church and be ready to answer questions for visitors or other members
 - Check website frequently
 - Talk with staff and other leaders
 - Keep track of the flow of events – Baptism weekends, serve days, conferences, when new members class is ect...
- **TAKE A PLACE** in the life of your church using your gifts to serve
 - Welcome team, parking lot team, host team, prayer team ect...
 - Serving on weekend teams offers support to your pastors, church staff and your congregation
 - Encourage others to join you – Relationships are built while serving
- **LEAD** a small group or bible study
 - People come to church to connect to Christ and to connect with people.
- **FIND** the needs of your congregation & support where you can
 - Communicate with pastoral care department to identify needs and find ways to help them offer solutions
 - Identify Single Moms, widows and elderly in your church that could use an extra hand from time to time - (James 1:27)
 - Offer to lead a group to mow a yard, paint a room, host a baby shower, rake leaves, throw a Birthday Party! The lists are endless to serve your congregation
 - Bear each other’s burdens and fulfill the law of Christ! (Gal 6:2)

List ways you can begin SERVING your Church Congregation:

3. SERVE your **C**ommunity

- **Personally - START** with your Neighbors
 - Have you met them? If not, it's a great place to start
 - Communicate with neighbors frequently and let them know you are there for them. Leaving on a weekend? Offer to keep eye on their home, water plants, feed a cat, get the mail, take out trash, etc...
 - Is there a simple need you can help meet?
- **ASK Staff** – Do you have an outreach pastor/director leading efforts?
 - If so, dive in and support whatever they are doing
 - If not, ask if you and DR Core Team can help initiate efforts
- **CONNECT** to your community
 - Are you connected to city leaders, council members, passionate involved leaders in the community? If not, who in your church is?
 - Local non-profits or organizations already serving great needs
 - Ask the simple question - How can we serve you?
 - Identify the process to sign up and serve with existing organizations and meet with their leadership
 - Examples: Community food pantries, serving centers, schools, assisted living centers, housing authorities,
- **CREATE** a list of simple serve opportunities and share with small groups and ministry leaders in your church.
 - Use your research from pastoral care leadership at the church
 - List projects from local non-profits and how to sign up a group
 - Give simple examples of do it yourself projects for small groups – Ex... Free Car Wash, rake leaves for elderly, hand out free water at the park, bring cookies to a fire station, etc...
- **IDENTIFY** consistent Serve opportunities and invite others to join!
 - Annual Citywide events like LOVE Gtown, LOVE the ROCK, SERVE Day, LOVE LEANDER are great to join in on!
 - Lots of free resources at www.serveday.com
(Free serve App that we highly recommend on this site!)
 - This year Serve Day is July 11th – see link above for details
 - Many churches host a reoccurring Serve Saturday opportunity
 - Times are typically short – 3 hours max (9am-12pm)
 - Remember it's about the connection as much as the project

List ways you can begin SERVING your Church Community:

Practice makes perfect!

In the event of a major disaster I would submit to you - a church who pre-plans and practices is a READY CHURCH! As a Core Team, you should be prepared to lead in your church to serve the **3Cs**:

- 1. Church Pastors/Staff** – Ensuring leadership is intact and cared for
- 2. Congregation** – Taking care of your people first
- 3. Community** – Combining efforts with THE CHURCH of our communities

Sound Familiar?

As we lead by example and help our pastors develop a plan for disaster preparedness, the #1 thing that we can do is help develop a heart to serve in our congregation!

If we want to follow the example set by Jesus... we should be a people of **ACTION!**

Next Steps:

- Check out the Resources section at the bottom of the 'Serving Outside of Disaster' guideline to discover some practical ideas to serve
 - o Art of Neighboring
 - o Serve Your City resources
 - o Serve App
- Encourage your core team to be intentional about serving your pastors and congregation!
- Connect with the missions / outreach leader in your church and identify existing serve opportunities in your community
 - o If your church does not have a leader in place, connect with church leadership to discuss this guideline and their thoughts
- Pray for your community and ask God to open doors of relationship inside and outside of the your church