



ELCA World Hunger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



DIGGING IN: A LEADER'S GUIDE TO SERVICE LEARNING

GREETINGS!

Thank you for your interest in service learning and in ELCA World Hunger!

Over 800 million people in our world today – that’s 1 in 8 people – are hungry. Working with our congregations in the U.S. and Lutheran churches around the world, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need.

As Lutherans, we believe we are freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. It is in that freedom that God has gifted us with the Spirit to a life where we are called as Jesus instructs in Matthew 25 beginning with verse 31. We are called to give food to those who hunger, give drink to those who thirst, welcome strangers, cloth the naked and provide company in times of illness and imprisonment. We are called to serve. ELCA World Hunger is founded on the call to serve.

ELCA World Hunger works as church in relationship with other churches and partners to eradicate hunger and poverty in the United States and in over 50 countries throughout the world. Through those relationships and our comprehensive approach of relief, education, advocacy and development, we work to break the cycle of hunger and poverty. You are invited to be part of that work and service!

So what does our call to service look like? Service learning is a process to create service activities with deeper and lasting meaning. Service learning is an ongoing process that includes: preparation, action, reflection and celebration. Each opportunity to serve is not an isolated experience but rather part of a journey that leads to deeper and more meaningful relationships, and, therefore, deeper and more meaningful service. By participating in the service learning cycle, we begin to learn, practice and ultimately move from “service learning” to “service living” marked by intentional process and mutuality.

This guide is designed to start you on your way. You may already be an expert on service learning, or this might be your first time. Either way, every act of service makes a difference. When we begin to live this way together, the world will notice the difference made by a generation of people who have hearts and minds tuned into “service living” and the issues of hunger and poverty. You are invited to answer the call to serve, because God is calling us into the world – together.

**May God bless you as you respond to God’s call
and engage in the world through service!**



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INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE LEARNING

Service projects and mission trips are becoming increasingly common in churches and youth ministry programs: Youth groups gather for a couple of hours to tackle a local project, embark on an overseas mission trip, and everything in between. Service activities are also excellent ways to teach young people about issues of food, hunger and poverty that exist in our world today – both locally and globally. At the same time, youth service projects aren't without critics. Even well-planned service activities can unintentionally result in reinforcing poor attitudes, habits and stereotypes. Without adequate preparation and follow-up the “mountain top” feelings of service can quickly fade.

This guide introduces leaders to service learning, an intentional process for facilitating meaningful service and mission experiences with youth. One goal of service learning is seeing service experiences as a process, not a solitary event, meaning that the entire process of preparation, service, reflection and follow-up is as important as the service activity itself. Using the service learning model can inspire youth and adults to engage in experiences that address hunger and poverty in ways that can open eyes, ears, minds and hearts to the realities many people face, often in our own neighborhoods and communities. God bless you as you serve and learn!

What is service learning?

Service learning is defined as:

An intentional experiential learning process that combines hands-on service and reflective thinking to provide richness and deeper meaning to service experiences while fulfilling the biblical invitation to serve in Christ's name.

Service learning is not synonymous with volunteering or community service. While traditional volunteerism emphasizes “just going and serving,” service learning adds the important elements of preparation and reflection in an effort to create a deeper and richer experience.



A closer look

Key words in defining service learning

- **Intentional:** Service learning experiences are carefully planned.
- **Process:** Service learning is a process, not an event, and includes elements beyond the service activity itself including adequate preparation, debriefing and follow-up.
- **Hands-on service:** Service cannot be substituted by books, videos or anecdotes. In service learning, people share a common service experience.
- **Reflective thinking:** Purposeful reflection provides key opportunities to debrief the service experience and to apply the experiences to one's life, including possible changes in attitudes and behaviors.
- **In Christ's name:** Service learning provides an opportunity to serve God's people and God's creation in the name of Jesus. Youth and adults can together explore and deepen their faith, being challenged to live as servant leaders in daily life.

Service learning in four steps

The four-step service learning model used in this resource was created by the Service And Learning Leadership Team (SALLT) Project at Trinity Lutheran College. It provides a simple, easy to remember framework youth leaders can use when planning service and mission experience with youth.

STEP

1

PREPARATION

While preparation does include the logistics of gathering supplies, raising money and making travel arrangements, there's more to be done in order to set the stage for a positive service experience. The preparation step should include intentional efforts to build community with time dedicated to sharing expectation, acquiring skills needed for the service experience, and learning about the organization or community where you will serve. Don't forget to include listening to the organization or communities' expressed needs and expectations.

STEP

2

ACTION

The service learning process includes an actual service experience. Leaders should choose service activities that are meaningful and engaging, are realistic for the group's resources (including time available), and address expressed community needs (versus imposing your own expectations).

STEP

3

REFLECTION

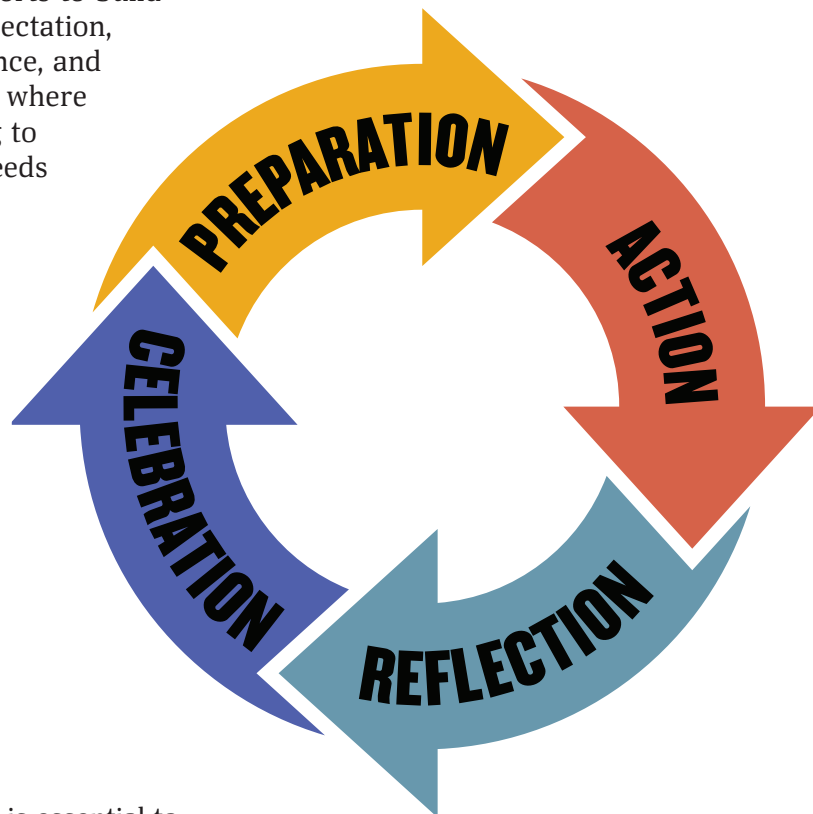
Often overlooked or delayed, the reflection stage is essential to the service learning process, because it is through critical reflection that individuals learn and grow from their experiences. Debriefing activities provide youth with opportunities to consider thoughts or feelings that have emerged and the potential impact on their attitudes or behaviors. Reflection can happen in a variety of creative ways, including small-group discussions, art, dance, journaling, storytelling, Bible study, devotions and more.

STEP

4

CELEBRATION

This final step ties together the other three steps, as youth find ways to celebrate what was accomplished and share their experience with others. It's a time of worship, as you recognize and rejoice in the ways God has called you to serve and challenges you to continue to live as servant leaders.





A closer look

Imagine you are leading a trip to Mexico to build homes for migrant worker families. The following examples illustrate the value of using the service learning model in your planning process.

Traditional “service project” mentality:

- Rent a van. Buy tools. Get medical release forms.
- Go to Mexico to build houses.
- Show the congregation a slide show. Serve tacos.

Using the service learning model:

- **Preparation:** Understand the specific needs and requests of the host community. Learn about the local Mexican culture, including some Spanish phrases. Engage in meaningful community building with people going on the trip.
- **Action:** Build houses. Interact with area residents. Study God’s word about serving others.
- **Reflection:** On the trip and once home, discuss poverty, racism, housing issues and how we are called to advocate for the poor. Write a song, paint a picture, produce a video or write poetry about the experience.
- **Celebration:** Plan a worship service for the congregation. Show a video, share pictures or tell stories. Find ways to continue using young people’s gifts of leadership and service. Talk about what it means to serve others in daily life.

Outcomes of service learning

What happens when young people serve? How are our lives transformed? The Service And Learning Leadership Team Project has identified six areas of impact that service experiences can have on young people when the service learning process is used.

✓ Compassion

Service learning seeks to develop young people who hold a deep sense of compassion for the world and God’s people. Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) provides a great example of one person’s deep concern for another, even when crossing social barriers. Service learning often involves walking alongside others and in that relationship youth begin to see, sense, feel and engage with “the other.” Or, a significant encounter in God’s creation leads to a deeper sense of caring for the world God made.

Biblical references:

- Luke 10:25-37: Parable of the Good Samaritan
- Luke 15:11-32: Parable of the Prodigal Son
- Colossians 3:12-14: A call to care for each other

LEADER TIP: Use the parable of the Good Samaritan as a way to start a discussion about service, servant leadership and not missing opportunities to care for others.

✓ Community

Service in Jesus' name has the ability to draw people into community, break down existing barriers, and forge new relationships where acquaintances or strangers can become valuable friends and partners. Service learning provides a context for community as participants. While working together, it is discovered that the Christian community is not formed because of similar physical traits, abilities or lifestyles, but that we are all children of God (Galatians 3:26-28). Service experiences also open possibilities for youth to see themselves as part of the global community of God's people and active participants in the collective response to hunger and poverty.

Biblical references:

- Mark 3:20-35: Christ's family are those who do his will
- Mark 12:28-34: The greatest commandments
- Acts 2:44-47a: The actions of the newest Christians
- Galatians 3:25-28: We are all God's children through faith

✓ Advocacy

Through service learning, youth can begin to ask the deeper, tougher questions, probing the root causes of issues such as homelessness, hunger, poverty, housing or environmental destruction. While addressing such issues is not always easy, young people can begin to challenge systems, policies, and societal values and norms that create oppressive structures. As young people wrestle with these questions, an opportunity emerges to move beyond one-time relief efforts to consider long-term systemic change, sustainable development and advocating with and on behalf of others for the urgent needs of God's people.

Biblical references:

- Exodus 5:1-2; 6:10-13, 28-29: Moses seeks freedom for the Hebrew people
- Matthew 5:1-12: The Beatitudes
- John 4:5-26: Jesus meets the Samaritan woman

✓ Lifelong servanthood

Service is a spiritual practice that calls us to repeated and frequent acts of service, no matter the size of the task, context, amount of preparation or recognition received. The Christian life involves a call to servanthood (Micah 6:8, Matthew 25:31-46) and the more young people "practice" service, the more it becomes a regular and natural part of their daily life. Engagement with issues of hunger and poverty can shape the ways youth think and act as they become increasingly aware of, and seek to respond to, the needs of others.

Biblical references:

- Micah 6:8: Do justice, love kindness
- Matthew 4:18-22: Jesus calling the disciples
- Matthew 25:31-46: Serving "the least of these" is serving Jesus

✓ Leadership

Through service learning, young people can become empowered to make contributions to the world in which they live and discover ways they can be leaders among peers – in their congregations and within communities. Paul encourages the young Timothy to embrace his youth and to teach what has been entrusted to him (1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:1-2). Adults play an important role in promoting leadership development by inviting youth to share the gifts God has entrusted to them.

Biblical references:

- 1 Timothy 4:7b-16: Don't be despised because of your youth
- 2 Timothy 2:1-7: Teach others and the Lord will provide understanding
- 1 Peter 4:10-11: Serve one another based on your unique gifts

✓ Exploration of vocation

Meaningful experiences in service can provide a vocational “learning laboratory” where young people experiment with how their gifts, passions and values intersect with the world’s most pressing needs. It’s not uncommon for a service experience to shape a young person’s sense of identity, vocational call or future career. As youth live out their faith in daily life, they see opportunities to apply their Christian beliefs and values in homes, families, communities, congregations and the workplace.

Biblical references:

- Romans 12:3-13: All have been given gifts to share
- 1 Corinthians 12:1-31: The body is made of many parts
- Ephesians 4:1-13: God gives a variety of gifts

THE WORK OF ELCA WORLD HUNGER

ELCA World Hunger is a comprehensive and sustainable program that focuses on four areas of relief, education, advocacy and sustainable development. ELCA World Hunger provides opportunities for both ELCA international companions and ELCA domestic ministries and partners to address complex issues related to both global and domestic hunger and poverty in their own contexts. Specific categories include food, water, income, health and education, which are carried out through relationships with partner organizations and companion churches domestically and in more than 50 countries around the world.

ELCA World Hunger has a holistic approach, which assists in creating lasting change within vulnerable communities. This approach provides a framework to encourage youth groups to engage in service activities that alleviate symptoms of poverty and address root causes of hunger – whether in their own neighborhood, the surrounding community or around the globe.

✓ Relief

Through relief efforts, ELCA World Hunger responds to the immediate needs of people who are homeless, living in poverty or who otherwise do not have the means to provide adequate nutrition for themselves or their families. This involves recognizing urgent needs and providing immediate access to food, clothing, shelter, medical supplies, medical care and other basic essentials.

Examples of relief efforts your group might consider:

- Prepare and serve a meal at a local shelter
- Organize a food drive
- Sponsor a refugee family
- Join a house building project in your community
- Create healthy food baskets for emergency shelters
- Collect clothing for a local clothing bank
- Gather school supplies for low-income families (at home or across the globe)
- Make health kits for an international relief agency
- Organize a group to take part in a project through Lutheran Disaster Response
- Sort food at a food bank distribution warehouse
- Collect socks or gloves for homeless people
- Provide help with household chores for elderly people

LEADER TIP: Learn more about ELCA World Hunger's work and access resources at www.ELCA.org/hunger. Learn more about the global work of the ELCA at www.ELCA.org/globalmission.

✓ Education

Education is the tool ELCA World Hunger uses to help raise the church's awareness of the root causes of and solutions to both domestic and global hunger and poverty. Education-related service activities often involve researching an issue or educating others about local, regional, national or global issues, including an invitation to respond in concrete ways.

Examples of education activities your group might consider:

- Hold an educational event utilizing ELCA World Hunger resource “Hunger Education Toolkits” to explore issues related to hunger and poverty
- Organize and lead a Bible study series at your church related to food, hunger, poverty or justice
- Share insights from your group's service experience with members of the congregation or community
- Participate in an educational/immersion trip to another country, such as an ELCA companion synod
- Attend a community forum related to hunger, poverty, homelessness, public health or the environment
- Commit to making a change in personal behavior, such as using public transportation or taking shorter showers
- Learn more about issues related to racism and cultural competence by participating in a training, then organize your own to share what you've learned with others
- Use ELCA World Hunger's overnight lock-in curriculum to explore hunger and poverty issues

✓ Advocacy

Advocacy is how the ELCA works to overcome the effects and root causes of hunger and poverty through administrative, legislative and judicial actions in the public sphere, as well as through corporate actions in the private sphere. Service activities focused on advocacy involve working with and on behalf of others or empowering others to use their voice, such as proposing laws, challenging policies and shaping public opinion around critical human-needs and environmental issues. Efforts in advocacy often are directed at root causes and attempt to address long-term, complex issues.

Examples of advocacy efforts your group might consider:

- Distribute flyers calling for action on a current political or social issue
- Organize a meeting of community leaders and residents to address an issue related to hunger, food, poverty or housing
- Write letters to state and/or federal legislators concerning an international issue
- Organize a peace march or rally
- Act on justice issues that emerged during your group's service experience
- Plan a visit to meet with government leaders or legislators concerning a local, national or global issue
- Create a website or blog that provides links to legislators and policymakers
- Attend a city council meeting and speak with and on behalf of residents in your community
- Write a “letter to the editor” of a local newspaper
- Host a prayer gathering to lift up global concerns
- Create an advocacy group at your church or in your youth group to continually address community issues as they emerge
- Organize opportunities to empower individuals or groups to do any of the above

✓ Sustainable development

Sustainable development is the critical element of work done during and after relief efforts to ensure long-term viability of a community experiencing hunger, poverty or widespread health issues. Development leads to increased access to food and sustainable livelihoods through means such as agriculture, care for the environment, appropriate technology, adequate housing, jobs, primary health care and disease prevention, job training, child care, elder care, nutrition education, literacy training, sanitation, safe water supplies, below-market loans, and just land use and distribution. Service activities focused on sustainable development might provide participants with limited interaction with the people affected, but the lasting impact on individuals and communities can be significant.

Examples of activities your group might consider to promote sustainable development:

- Organize, plant and tend a community garden
- Develop an after-school tutoring program for local children
- Restore a wetland habitat by planting new vegetation
- Organize a medical clinic for low-income children and families
- Create a recycling program for your church or neighborhood
- Be a part of helping install fresh-water wells in Africa
- Visit an ELCA companion church to learn how ELCA World Hunger funds are being used to make a difference
- Write letters of encouragement to ELCA missionaries or Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers
- Organize a fundraiser to support ELCA World Hunger

LEADER TIP: Any endeavor your group takes to promote sustainable development should only be carried out after a relationship has been developed with local community partners. In this way, you can be assured your efforts will respond to expressed priorities of that community, not your group's assumption of what is wanted or needed. Going about it in this way improves the chances for long-term success and can help to deepen existing relationships.

DID YOU KNOW?

Contributions to ELCA World Hunger support long-standing companions as they respond to human needs, including The Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Church World Service and global companion churches as they respond to human needs through food security and agriculture, water access and health care, education, training and income generation.

The preparation stage is a crucial start to the service learning process, as it provides the opportunity to determine objectives, choose a service experience and create an action plan for carrying out the service experience. This step often gets left behind or only involves paying attention to logistics, such as gathering supplies, raising money and arranging transportation, but it is much more than that.

Adequate preparation involves carefully listening to the needs of a community, determining the service activity, building community within your group, sharing expectations and acquiring needed skills and resources. This stage provides a solid foundation for the entire service learning experience and, therefore, shouldn't be rushed. It is important to take the time to establish a strong relationship with the community or organization who will be hosting you during your service.

A closer look

Accompaniment: A lens for mission

Accompaniment is a way of “walking together in solidarity that practices interdependence and mutuality.” It's both a lens for seeing the world and a perspective for engaging in service and mission. Accompaniment honors mutual relationships and models an understanding of the way in which God walks with us and, therefore, the way our church walks with and works among Christian communities around the globe.

The Emmaus road story (Luke 24:13-35) illuminates this understanding of accompaniment as a theology for mission and service. Just as the resurrected Jesus joins others on the journey down the road, we, too, accompany each other as members of the body of Christ. The shared journey is steeped in relationships, mutual respect, honesty, trust, forgiveness and a yearning for reconciliation among God's people. Such relationships with individuals, organizations and/or communities take time, as attention is given to listening, dialogue and decision making. A number of practical suggestions in this resource are based on the values of accompaniment.

Accompaniment values

- **Mutuality.** Working together to build capacities to proclaim and live out the gospel, recognizing that all have gifts to offer God's mission.
- **Inclusivity.** The call to include everyone in the mission of reconciliation. Seeking to build honest relationships across boundaries present in our communities.
- **Vulnerability.** Understanding vulnerability not as weakness, but as Christ's invitation to be open to new relationships and to be willing to give up the power we hold in certain situations.
- **Empowerment.** Recognizing the imbalance of power and powerlessness within relationships and working to find balance by letting go of power, standing up to power, and empowering ourselves and others.
- **Sustainability.** Acknowledging that relationships are complex and require significant investment of time and attention. Working to embed the project or work in the whole community so it does not depend on just one or two people.

To learn more about accompaniment as a lens for mission and service, go to www.ELCA.org/accompaniment.

Listen to your community

Often service experiences are initiated based on a person's idea ("Hey, we should do this."), a personal agenda ("I've always wanted to go there.") or an assumption ("This would be a good way to help."). There is danger in allowing personal agendas to drive the service experience or assuming solutions and answers without really knowing the community context.

It is very important to discern the expressed priorities, needs, concerns and opportunities of your community (or a global context, as the case might be) before entering into decision making.

Convening conversations with community residents, nonprofit staff, community leaders, lawmakers and/or school personnel provides the opportunity for you to learn more about what's most needed (or not). You and leaders from your congregation (including youth) can participate in ongoing community conversations by participating in neighborhood gatherings, school board meetings, community events, etc.

This approach to discerning your community's priorities models the concept of "accompaniment," a lens for mission and service that emphasizes relationships, partnerships, mutual respect and reconciliation. (See "A closer look" for details.)

LEADER TIP: Not every service opportunity is appropriate for every group. Whatever approach you take in deciding on a service activity, be realistic about what your group can accomplish. If leaders are new to planning service projects, start small or partner with other groups with more experience.

Choose the service activity

When thinking about possible service experiences for your group, what often comes to mind is relief, a project that provides young people with the opportunity to engage directly with others in meeting specific needs. Your group may also consider service opportunities that address one of the other areas of ELCA World Hunger's work (education, advocacy or sustainable development). See previous pages for a description of ELCA World Hunger's holistic approach and ideas for service activities your group might consider.

How do you choose what to do? Consider these approaches for identifying and choosing a potential service activity appropriate for your group:

- Start with learning goals. One way to choose a service activity is to name what you want your group to learn or experience: What do you want participants to feel? How do you want their attitudes or behaviors to be challenged? Whether it is homelessness in your community, malnutrition among African children, or awareness of another culture, first name some learning goals for the group and then determine an appropriate activity.
- Start with existing service activities. One approach is to consider what your group is already involved with and enrich those experiences with the integration of the four-step service learning process. What organizations or cause are you already connected to? In what ways might you give this service greater meaning?
- Start with your group's gifts and passions. Service activities can also be determined based on your group's interests, gifts, passions or resources. What issues are important to your group? What gifts and passions do your youth have that can be utilized in service to others? What resources does your group have to offer?

Creating a global experience

If you're looking to design a global experience, explore ways your group can respond to current and emerging global realities that might be forgotten or aren't often emphasized. Remember to think beyond solely relief efforts to also consider experiences that involve education, advocacy or promote sustainable development.

Global realities you might consider addressing in your service experience:

- Basic human services (food, clothing, safe drinking water, housing, emergency services)
- Disaster response (floods, droughts, fires, earthquakes)
- Education (children's education, sustainable farming, technology, literacy, second language training, sex education)
- Community safety (crime, school safety, disaster preparedness, domestic violence, war and military conflict)
- Environmental issues (pollution, water quality, technological waste, deforestation, garbage disposal, global warming)
- Health and wellness (disease eradication, immunizations, nutrition, fitness, access to health care, mental health care, substance addiction)
- International human rights issues (torture, religious freedoms, treatment of women, labor policies, human trafficking)
- Global support for struggling nations (financial support, trade policy reform, sustainable business development, debt reduction)

If you do engage in service activities in a global setting, remember that many of these issues also exist in your own community or very near. Therefore, it's important to "connect the dots" and think creatively about how you might use what you've learned internationally in your local community, whether through service activities, advocacy efforts or creating relationships between the two contexts.

Determine learning goals

The concept of service learning is distinct from community service and volunteerism because it utilizes intentional learning goals. Leaders should determine upfront what they hope the group will learn or accomplish through the service experience.

Questions to consider:

- What do we hope to accomplish with this experience?
- What impact do we anticipate on the individuals or communities we serve?
- What impact do we anticipate for our participants? In what areas do we hope to see growth among participants? Which attitudes and behaviors do we wish to challenge? What skills do we hope to develop?
- How can participants' faith be challenged or strengthened by this service experience?

LEADER TIP: Consider having learning goals address the work of ELCA World Hunger in relief, education, advocacy and sustainable development. For example, goals might be for participants to name specific factors that contribute to poverty (food, water, income, health and education) and to describe the role of advocacy in addressing these factors.

Make an action plan for logistics

There are a number of logistics that may need attention in advance of your service experience. It's important to work with host organizations to ensure you will be adequately prepared and be able to properly communicate expectations to your group.

Determine group size

Make sure you know how many participants the site expects or can reasonably accommodate.

Gather supplies

Determine what (if any) supplies your group will need for the service project.

Arrange transportation

Determine your group's mode of transportation and make necessary arrangements, including any plans for accommodations and meals (if required). For longer trips, make sure transportation arrangements are clearly negotiated with your hosts.

Screen volunteers

Screen adult volunteers and conduct background checks as required by the service site or your church.

Gather documents

Collect documents your group requires for the service activity, such as medical release forms, permission slips, behavior covenants, etc.

Inform your group

Provide necessary information to participants as to what the project will look like. Don't forget to tell the participants about expectations and logistical information like what to bring (appropriate clothing, supplies, money, etc.).

Maintain records for future use

Make a plan for how to document the steps of your service experience (Preparation, Action, Reflection, Celebration) so you can properly evaluate your experience and share what you've learned with others. This could potentially make your next experience easier to manage.

LEADER TIP: Recruit an organized person to assist you with attending to the details of your project!

PREPARING FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

International travel adds another set of challenges. Be sure you have made arrangements for completing appropriate government paperwork, gathering travel documents, securing insurance and determining vaccinations needed. Because these logistics can take time, planning at least a year in advance is recommended.

Discuss individual and group expectations

Discuss expectations

Find out what participants hope to gain from the project. Ask questions like: What are you most looking forward to? What concerns do you have? What are you hoping to get from the experience?

Create a covenant

Develop a covenant or agreement for individual and group expectations. This is a positive group-building activity that places responsibility of group behavior with the whole team. The covenant can include “non-negotiable” policies from leaders (such as behavioral expectations or use of electronic devices), but have the group develop most of it.

Begin to shape the covenant by asking: What can we agree on to ensure a safe and positive experience for each member of our group? When finished, prepare a copy for everyone to sign to demonstrate their commitment to the group’s expectations.

Clarify adult roles

Meet with adult leaders to review expectations you have for their involvement in leading or supporting your service activity. Don’t assume they know what you expect just because they are adults or have been involved before. Be sure to invite them to share their particular gifts and potential limitations to more fully shape their role.

Spend time in community building

Get to know each other

Design community-building activities for the group so they can get to know one another before the service activity. For one-day projects, this might include simple activities to learn each other’s names and interests. For extended projects or trips, community-building can happen through pre-service planning meetings, Bible studies and fundraising events.

Name gifts and talents

Utilize a spiritual gifts inventory and conversation about the use of gifts to determine what each person has to offer the group or the project.

Bless the group

Hold a commissioning service to bless the group prior to the service activity. This is also a good opportunity to involve others, such as parents, mentors, pastors and the congregation.

Prepare the group for the service activity

Study God’s word

Conduct a Bible study on servant leadership, hunger and poverty or the call of Christians to serve others. (See list of suggested biblical passages on page 28.)

Introduce the concept of accompaniment

Use global resources to introduce participants to the concept of accompaniment and how this lens might shape the group’s service experience.

Share information about the site

Provide details about where you will serve by sharing photographs, articles, websites or video clips.

Discuss history

Introduce participants to the history and context of the community where you'll be serving. This is especially important for global experiences in order to understand how the current social, cultural, economic and political climate has been shaped through history.

Discuss power, privilege and identity

As participants are introduced to new contexts and communities through service, it is important that they are first introduced to the roles that power, privilege and identity play in both their lives and within the host community.

Invite a guest speaker

If you are serving locally, bring someone from the service site to meet with your group and share how your work will be of benefit.

Discuss cultural dynamics

Schedule a cross-cultural training session to introduce participants to the concept of culture and how our unique backgrounds affect the way we think and view the world. Then, discuss cultural dynamics that might be present in the place of service (such as stereotypes) and how you might respond.

Address safety and liability issues

Identify safety issues

Review safety, health and liability issues that might arise at the service site and take all reasonable precautions. Determine a plan for emergency procedures and review with participants as necessary.

Collect medical information

Require participants to provide a medical history and release form. Review each one carefully to understand your participant's health history and current medical concerns.

Identify possible risks

Pay attention to your church's policies for youth-to-adult ratios, as well as other child protection policies, including those established by the service site.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

For international trips, determine potential safety issues by researching travel advisories issued by the U.S. Department of State. Register your travel with the embassy at your destination and have contact information for the nearest embassy or consulate office in the event of an emergency or loss of travel documents.

The action stage involves the service activity your group has been preparing to do. Through an actual service experience, young people engage in meaningful service and are given the opportunity to understand their role as Christians in the world, called to serve in Jesus' name. Not everything that happens in the action stage can be planned or predicted, as the experience will be different for every group and every occasion of service. Even so, there are a number of things leaders can pay attention to in order to ensure a positive group experience.

A word of caution: Great preparation can make all the difference in the quality of your experience as you turn to action. Even with good planning, frustrations often arise related to differing expectations, cultural understandings or unexpected incidents. With good preparation those frustrations can be reduced and when they occur the tools are often in place for these to be adequately addressed and to potentially become a source of great learning and reflection. With planning, unexpected occurrences can even become serendipitous blessings.



A closer look

Choosing language for service experiences

Words such as “project” or “trip” suggest a one-time event, as opposed to a process of serving and learning over time. Instead, try using the language of encounter, journey, experience or pilgrimage, emphasizing a deeper, richer faith-forming experience.

Relationships with those you serve among

As your group looks forward to a service experience, it's important to point out a unique challenge most groups face: Because service is often seen as doing something for another person or place, a hierarchical relationship can be established in which there is one who gives and one who receives (i.e., “We are here to serve you”). Service learning provides the opportunity to challenge this common mindset by practicing the values of mutuality, inclusivity and empowerment. (See “Accompaniment: A Lens for Mission” on page 11.)

LEADER TIP: Introduce your participants to language that avoids the notion “*We serve them.*” Instead, opt for “those we serve *with* and *among.*” In this way, the service relationship is reciprocal, as each person becomes both giver and receiver, teacher and learner, host and guest.

Suggestions to ensure a positive service experience

Pray

Continue to immerse your service experience in thoughtful prayer. Pray for the service being done, the people or place you serve among, for safety, and for the opportunities to grow, learn from and share with others.

Conduct an orientation

The group should receive an orientation to the community or service site. The orientation can include an introduction to the community; learning the organization's purpose, philosophy and history; and understanding how your group's role is significant. If possible, have the group hear from a person who will be impacted by the group's work, or have a site leader share a personal story of someone likely affected.

Review expectations

Make clear the expectations you have for individuals and the group. It may be helpful to review your group covenant (if one was created earlier). If working with an organization, make sure your group understands their expectations as volunteers or guests.

Review safety concerns

Ensure that safety issues specific to the site or project are reviewed with your group. Make sure participants have necessary safety equipment and are trained to use it properly. Always plan for an emergency; they often happen in the least expected times!

Involve and empower each participant

Make sure each person has a specific role and the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the project. Find ways to empower participants in their leadership through discovering and using their unique gifts, talents and passions.

Continue community-building

Create opportunities for community-building during the experience to allow participants to continue to get to know each other. This is especially important for groups on an extended trip.

Remain flexible

Be flexible in responding to unforeseen circumstances. Despite careful planning, service projects will not always turn out as you had originally planned or hoped. Leaders and participants must exercise patience and gratitude in the midst of chaos or changing priorities and remain open to the new opportunities that present themselves. Youth will often take their cue from adult leaders, so it's important that adults hold a positive attitude through the entire experience – even if it's unpleasant or the project didn't unfold as planned.

LEADER TIP: Ask participants to take photographs that represent the outcomes of service learning or themes you've been exploring through Bible studies. Then, invite them to share during a break.

□ Reflect during the experience

It is wise to begin some of your reflection activities during the service activity. This provides opportunities for participants (individually and collectively) to debrief and process their experience. Reflecting during the service activity also grants the special opportunity to involve the host community in a time of learning together that can bring great meaning to the experience. (Refer to the next section on reflection for more ideas.)

Some questions that may be asked during the action stage include:

- How do you feel about what you are doing?
- What role are you playing? Is it the best fit for you?
- What skills are you using? What gifts are you able to use?
- What changes or adjustments would improve your service experience?
- What are you learning about the people with whom you are working with (or the community, environment, etc.)?
- How are your actions affecting others?
- Where do you see God at work? How is God present in this service experience?
- How did you express God through your words or actions today? How did you fail to express God today?

□ Involve the whole congregation

Prepare congregation members for their role in supporting youth in their service experiences. This might mean a commitment to praying for the youth at the time of the service activity or throughout an extended trip. Strengthening intergenerational connections can bond youth to the wider congregation.

LEADER TIP: For extended trips, debriefing should occur at regular intervals (such as each evening) and might integrate Bible study, prayer, worship or other spiritual practices. In addition to enhancing the learning process, these opportunities continue to build community within the group.

While intentional reflection should happen to some degree at each stage of the service learning process, it is a critical element to follow the action stage. In fact, the service learning process depends on reflection to help distinguish it from community service and volunteerism. Through critical reflection, individuals discover meaning and gain new knowledge from their experiences – often in “Ah-ha!” moments as they share, analyze and evaluate experiences, reinforce or form new opinions or consider changes in attitudes or behavior.

The best learning moments often come in the time during and immediately following the service experience, but for a variety of reasons (time constraints, distractions, etc.) it is often put off or even forgotten. If reflection activities aren’t provided, leaders miss a vast learning opportunity as well. For extended trips, leaders might also schedule reflection opportunities several days or weeks following the service experience by gathering the group together or utilizing social media to prompt conversation.

Debrief experiences using reflective thinking

As a key component of the service learning process, reflective thinking requires careful attention and planning to increase the likelihood that participants will learn and grow from the experience. A simple, yet effective approach for processing group experiences uses a sequence of three questions: What? So what? Now what?

A number of possible reflection questions are provided below as examples, though questions for each step should be specifically chosen for your group’s particular experience or context.

□ What?

These sample questions are designed to gather facts and observations about the service experience. They invite participants to describe, without judgment, their observations and experiences using concrete examples.

- What did you do today? What was your role? What did you contribute?
- What was the best/worst/most challenging thing that happened?
- Describe the people you met today. What were your interactions like?
- Invite reflection on the senses: What did you see? Hear? Smell? Taste? Touch?
- Were you comfortable or uncomfortable today?
- Did anything frustrate you?
- Where did you see God at work?
- How does this experience compare to others you’ve had?

LEADER TIP: Intentionally schedule your service activities with sufficient time for preparation and reflection. For example, if you’re planning a two-hour work project, have participants commit to three hours, adding 30 minutes to the beginning for preparation activities and 30 minutes at the end for reflection. Resist the temptation to cut reflection short or suggest it as optional.

□ So what?

These sample questions invite participants to process their experiences on a deeper level, providing opportunities to analyze and interpret thoughts and feelings. (Be sure to consider questions in both areas, as some individuals are “feelers” while others are “thinkers.”)

Feeling questions:

- What feelings or emotions did you experience while serving? What impact did it have on you?”
- What did you appreciate (about another person, the site, your experience, etc.)?
- What is new in your relationship with God?
- Do you feel like you were able to contribute as a part of the team?

Thinking questions:

- What was going through your mind today? What did the experience make you think about?
- Have any of your assumptions or stereotypes about people or a community been challenged?
- Who determines what is best (for people, for the community, for the earth, etc.)?
- In what ways has your understanding of service/servanthood changed?
- How might your efforts contribute to or hinder social change?

□ Now what?

This third set of sample questions invite participants to consider the implications of the service experience and to determine the “next steps” or a course of action based on their experience and reflection. Challenge participants to consider how to incorporate their experience into some type of action, such as a change in attitudes or behaviors.

- Where do we go from here? What’s the next step?
- What changes might you make in your life?
- What are you interested in learning more about?
- How might you (or our group) become involved in advocacy issues related to the service experience?
- How does this experience challenge you to live as a Christian in the world?
- How might God be calling you to use your gifts in light of this experience?
- In what ways can you share your experience and your learning with others?

LEADER TIP: Ensure your experience makes a tangible difference by asking youth, “What is one simple, concrete change you can make today based on what you have learned or experienced?”

Ideas for individual and group reflection

□ Group conversation

Group conversation is an effective reflection technique because participants have shared a concrete experience together. Young people also learn in social contexts, so debriefing service experiences with peers can provide a catalyst for discovering deeper, richer meaning.

When designing group conversations, be ready with a set of questions to serve as prompts for the discussion. Carefully select two or three questions from each of the three stages described above (What? So what? Now what?), though you should remain flexible based on the group's dialogue.



A closer look

Tips for leading group discussions:

Conversations that invite deep reflection require a safe, comfortable environment. Here are suggestions for creating a space that facilitates reflection, growth and learning.

Form a circle. Circles provide the chance for everyone to see each other and don't create a focal point.

Keep small groups small. A group of four to eight is appropriate for conversation. If your group is larger, break into multiple groups.

Be on the same level. When everyone sits in chairs or on the floor, everyone can see each other and no one physically dominates the conversation.

Refer back to your covenant. Remind participants of important elements that might affect your discussion (such as confidentiality).

Avoid closed questions. Closed questions require a simple answer, such as "Were you challenged?" Instead, use open-ended questions, such as "To what extent were you challenged by this experience?"

Appreciate every answer. Resist the temptation to analyze every response, allowing participants the freedom to share their thoughts and feelings without comment.

Honor the right to pass. Some youth aren't comfortable sharing certain things at certain times.

Turn questions back to the group. Keep conversation alive by turning questions back to the whole group. For instance, say, "That's a great question! What do you all think about that?"

Leave questions unanswered. Not every question has an answer. As young people raise questions and issues, resist the urge to always find a resolution.

□ Journaling

Journal writing is another effective reflection tool to process service experiences. Usually completed individually, journaling provides time and space for participants to thoughtfully reflect on their experiences. You might allow participants to write in free form or provide carefully selected prompts using the What? So what? Now what? questions (above) as a guide.

One technique is to provide youth with a set of samples from which they can choose to write about based on their personal experience. For example:

- Role: What I've been doing
- Story: A particular moment I want to remember
- Gifts: How my gifts and talents are being used
- Question: Something I'm wrestling with or don't understand
- Insight: An "aha!" moment
- Awe: Where I sense God's presence
- Think: What I'm learning or thinking about
- Feel: Feelings and emotions I have experienced
- Blessing: A blessing I have received
- Faith: How my faith is strengthened or challenged
- Action: What I want to do with this experience

For extended trips, you might create a printed journal that includes daily reflection questions, Bible verses, prayers, pictures or images, outlines for group conversations, or other reflection activities. This provides youth with a tangible record of their experience and allows them to see the importance of ongoing reflection.

□ Creative reflection methods

Creative reflection methods should be considered to meet a variety of learning styles, promote creativity and invite participants to exercise their unique gifts and talents.

Examples for creative reflection:

- Compose a song
- Paint a picture, draw or doodle
- Capture and share photographs
- Produce a video
- Read a story, poem or other writing pertinent to issues raised
- Design a brochure, information sheet or flyer
- Create a handbook, guide or other resource for future participants
- Write a story from another person's perspective (such as a person encountered during the service experience)
- Create an artistic piece from items collected at the service site

The creative tools for individual and group reflection are numerous! Don't become locked into a small handful of methods that are used project after project. These approaches often reflect the leader's preferred teaching method; therefore, the challenge is to try new and creative ways of leading reflection.

LEADER TIP: To ensure you are meeting multiple learning styles, offer several options for reflection and allow participants to choose which best fits their interests, gifts or talents.

Following the action and reflection stages, it is time to celebrate! Celebration ties in the previous three stages and offers an opportunity for youth to honor the work accomplished, tell stories of their experiences and consider possible future engagement. Celebration also is a time for worship, to recognize and rejoice in the ways God has called us to serve, guided the serving and challenges us to a lifetime of meaningful service to and with others. The celebration stage can be a continuation of the reflection stage, as most activities at the celebration stage require continued reflection on the service experience.

Much like the reflection stage, the celebration step can be easily put off or forgotten after the service experience. The best way to ensure celebration happens in your service learning process is to create a plan before your service activity. That way, participants already anticipate there's more to the project than just doing it and can also give them something to look forward to.

A word of caution: Celebration can happen in such a way that the group appears boastful or proud of what has been accomplished. Resist language that suggests, "Look what we did," instead focusing on how individuals' gifts were used, what impact the service has provided, and how young people have been transformed by the experience.

Ideas for celebration activities

Pray

Engage the group in prayer, asking God's blessing on the service completed, relationships formed, and insights or blessings received. Invite youth to engage in individual prayer as well, to continue to seek how God is directing them to use this service learning experience in their lives.

Worship

Hold a worship service with the group who participated in the service project, either at the end of your time together or at a point in the near future. Allow time during worship to share stories and to thank God for the opportunity to serve. Remember to pray for the service site, community and/or the people you served with and among.

Hold a Bible study

Conduct a Bible study on a topic related to your service activity, or revisit a Bible study used during the preparation stage and compare present responses, thoughts and feelings to those they had before the service activity.

Involve service partners

Consider how partners or recipients at service sites can be appropriately involved in celebration activities.

LEADER TIP: If your group is returning from an extended service experience, have a group waiting to receive them. This allows immediate sharing of experiences with others willing to listen. You might provide suggestions for conversation starters to parents, family and congregation members that stimulate deeper conversation (not just "How was it?").

Share the story with others

Tell the story

Seek opportunities to continue to share about the service experience, including sharing through church publications, local newspapers, websites, blogs, etc. As participants are comfortable, invite them to share the fruits of their creative reflection activities from the reflection stage or share excerpts from their journals.

Offer a training session

Plan a training session for members of your church or community that highlights issues or concerns raised during the service experience. Use the experience as an opportunity to raise public awareness about important social, political, economic and/or faith issues.

Lead a worship service

The group can prepare and lead a worship service for the congregation. Not only does it involve the whole church family in your service experience, it honors and blesses the ministry of the church's youth. Elements of worship (Scripture readings, the message, prayers, etc.) can center on the group's experiences and learning, thereby extending the reflection stage as they prepare.

Share with ELCA World Hunger

Share photographs and reflections of your experience as a way to tell your story and to acknowledge your group's role in eradicating hunger and poverty in the world. Send pictures and stories to ELCA World Hunger by emailing hunger@elca.org.

LEADER TIP: Incorporate elements from your group's experience into the worship, such as Bible passages you studied, prayers that were meaningful or songs you learned (including those in other languages).

Recognize everyone involved

Honor participants

Provide a way to acknowledge everyone involved in the service project, including adult volunteers. This recognition shouldn't focus so much on hours invested or projects completed, but how each person's gifts, passions and experiences were utilized for the benefit of the group's experience.

Thank supporters

If your project involved supporters outside the group, write thank-you notes to anyone involved. This provides a way to connect them to your service activity, even if they didn't participate directly. For larger projects or extended trips, you might host a meal during which you share about your experience.

Thank the service site

Don't forget to extend gratitude to the individual(s), host agency or community that received you. Be sure to express your appreciation for what the group learned from the service site – not just for what the group could give.

Evaluate the experience

An important component of the celebration stage is to evaluate your service experience with your group and your leaders. This evaluation is different than reflection and focuses on the planning and implementation of the service activity and the service learning process.

Suggested evaluation questions for leaders to consider:

- Did we identify a worthwhile need or opportunity to address?
- To what extent did we meet our learning goals?
- Did we involve youth in the right way?
- How adequately did we prepare youth and adults for this experience?
- To what extent was our project successful for the people we served among? For the organization or service site? The community?
- How successful was the project for each participant? The group as a whole?
- What are the short- and long-term outcomes of this experience on the youth?
- How well was the service learning process used? What might be strengthened in the future?
- What could we do differently, if we were to do it again?

LEADER TIP: Don't forget to involve partners from the service site in the evaluation process.

Consider the next step

Consider long-term involvement

Possibilities for longer-term involvement include revisiting the service site in the future or assisting with another project. Local service projects may set fire to a young person's passion to continue his or her involvement (by themselves, with a friend or in a small group). Or plan another future activity that capitalizes on the passions and gifts of group members that also fulfills expressed needs of an individual or community.

Continue celebrating into the future


If the service project was especially memorable to those involved (such as a lengthy service or mission trip or international immersion experience), consider holding another celebration months or years later. Discuss how the experience continues to have an impact on participants' lives. Using social media venues is a great opportunity to connect those at a distance (such as those who have moved away, are attending college, etc.).

Deepen your involvement with ELCA World Hunger

Continue to utilize the resources provided by ELCA World Hunger to deepen your group's ability to make an impact in the world. (See the section on resources for materials and links on page 29.)

Consider a volunteer experience

Youth significantly impacted by service and mission experiences may want to explore long-term options for domestic or global service as young adults, such as the opportunities provided through the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program or Lutheran Volunteer Corps.

 **A closer look****Forming a partnership**

Your group may be interested in a continued relationship with your local or global host and a long-term partnership can be mutually beneficial. However, there are a few things to keep in mind as you explore such possibilities:

- Decisions to form a continued partnership shouldn't be made unilaterally, but involve all parties equally.
- Ensure the partnership honors reciprocity, giving all parties the opportunity to contribute to and receive from the partnership and understanding the benefits for serving and learning together. Avoid the mentality of "we will do this for them," which suggests your group will take a superior role in the relationship.
- Do not make commitments (such as a return visit, supporting a project or sending money) that you may not be able to fulfill. Such promises are often made "in the moment" and if unmet can quickly damage relationships.

BIBLE PASSAGES

The following biblical passages can be used in conjunction with service activities as part of pre-service reflection, Bible studies, group reflection or journaling or for worship services.

Mission, service and justice

Amos 5:21-34 – Let justice roll down like waters

Micah 6:8 – Do justice, love kindness

Matthew 28:17-20 – Jesus gives the Great Commission

Matthew 5:13-16 – You are salt and light

Mark 10:35-45 – The greatest must be a servant

Luke 10:25-37 – Parable of the Good Samaritan

John 4:5-30 – Jesus meets the woman at the well

John 13:3-9, 12-16 – Jesus washes the disciples' feet

Acts 1:6-8 – Jesus sends his followers to be witnesses

Matthew 22:37-39 – Love your neighbor as yourself

James 2:14-26 – Faith without works is dead

Gifts and call

1 Corinthians 12:1-31 – The body is made of many parts

Ephesians 4:1-13 – God gives a variety of gifts

Romans 12:3-13 – All have been given gifts to share

1 Timothy 4:12 – Youth can be an example

1 Peter 4:8-11 – Serve each other as stewards of God's grace

Food, hunger and poverty

Exodus 16:1-35 – God provides manna from heaven

Deuteronomy 10:17-19 – God's justice for orphans and widows

1 Kings 17:7-16 – Elijah and the widow of Zarephath

Psalms 130:1-8 – Pleading and waiting for the Lord

Isaiah 58:9-11 – Offer food to the hungry

Matthew 5:1-12 – The Beatitudes

Matthew 25:31-46 – Serving "the least of these"

Mark 6:30-44 – Jesus feeds the 5,000

Mark 10:23-25 – Difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom

Luke 4:16-19 – Jesus anointed to bring good news to the poor

Luke 22:7-30 – Jesus shares the Passover meal

John 6:35 – Jesus is the bread of life

Acts 4:32-35 – All things were held in common

ELCA World Hunger resources

ELCA World Hunger Resource Packet. Collection of resources designed to raise funds and awareness for ELCA World Hunger is made available in a packet twice per year. Order online (or sign-up to receive them via mail) from www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources.

ELCA World Hunger Video Series. Stories of individuals and communities impacted by the work of ELCA World Hunger. Watch online or order the video series from www.ELCA.org/hunger/video.

Taking Root. Comprehensive curriculum available in four age-level courses, designed to teach the root causes and solutions to world hunger. Includes curriculum, leader's guide, handouts and videos. Order from www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources.

Hunger Education Toolkits. Activities, prayers, lessons and songs to create local education experiences on many themes related to hunger and poverty. Available at www.ELCA.org/hunger/toolkits.

ELCA Good Gifts Catalog. A catalog of global gift giving opportunities. Provides fundraising ideas (including hosting a local fair) to support ministries of the ELCA both domestically and around the world. View online at www.ELCA.org/goodgifts.

Resources on accompaniment. A number of resources to describe the methodology of accompaniment utilized by the ELCA. Video, links and suggested practices available at www.ELCA.org/accompaniment.

Service learning process and planning

Service And Learning Leadership Team (SALLT) Project. Provides resources to support the service learning process, including training videos, smartphone application, reflection booklet, training materials and numerous links. Learn more at www.sallt.org or access resources at www.sallt.org/store.

“An Asset Builder’s Guide to Service-Learning” by Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Tom Bright, and Beth Margolis-Rupp (Search Institute, 2000). A workbook-format resource to guide leaders through planning service experiences that promote development toward the Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets. Available from <http://searchinstitutestore.org> or 877-240-7251.

Finding Your Spiritual Gifts Self-Assessment. An online-based assessment tool to discover spiritual gifts, provided by the ELCA. Available at www.ELCA.org/evangelizingchurch/assessments/spiritgifts.html.

“Way to Live (Leader’s Guide): Ideas for Growing in Christian Practices with Teens” by Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter (Upper Room Books, 2002). A leader’s companion to “Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens,” edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter (Upper Room Books, 2002), this resource suggests a number of reflection activities based on Christian faith practices. Recommended chapters include Stuff, Food, Creation, and Justice. Leader’s guide available from www.waytolive.org.

LEADER TIP: Learn more about the work of ELCA World Hunger by visiting www.ELCA.org/hunger or emailing hunger@elca.org. Order these resources (and more!) from www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources, hunger@elca.org, or call 800-638-3522, ext. 2580.

“Deep Justice Journeys Leader’s Guide: 50 Activities to Move from Mission Trips to Missional Living” by Kara E. Powell and Brad M. Griffin (Zondervan/Youth Specialties, 2009). A leader’s guide for designing mission trips with deeper purpose and attention to critical justice issues.

Resources for global service

“Welcome Forward: A Field Guide for Global Travelers” (with music CD). A resource to help prepare groups of any age for thoughtful, respectful, life changing, community-centered mission trips and travel. Available at www.ELCA.org/globalmission/resources.

“Companion Synods Handbook.” Designed for groups visiting global church partners, Part 4 (Planning Trips) provides useful information, tools and ideas for any group participating in global travel – especially logistical arrangements. Also available in Spanish.

Available at www.ELCA.org/companionsynod or order from globalmissioninfo@elca.org or 800-638-3522.

“Meeting God in the Ruins: Devotions for Disaster Volunteers.” A devotional guidebook for disaster response volunteers. Order from http://resources.ELCA.org/Products-Disaster_Response.html.

“Short-Term Missions: From Mission Tourists to Global Citizens” by Tim Dearborn (InterVarsity Press, 2003). A concise workbook to short-term missions planning, including cross-cultural competence, avoiding a tourist mentality, and spiritual preparation.

Service organizations, ideas, and resources

Lutheran Disaster Response. Find information on current opportunities for service trips by going to the disaster page and clicking on “volunteer.” www.ELCA.org/disaster

Lutheran Services in America. Find Lutheran-affiliated community service organizations in your community. www.lutheranservices.org

Lutheran Peace Fellowship. An organization dedicated to encouraging Christians to be peacemakers and justice seekers. Provides a number of youth-appropriate resources. www.lutheranpeace.org

Wheat Ridge Ministries. A charitable organization that supports church-related health and human care ministries with the intention of growing healthy neighborhoods and communities. www.wheatridge.org

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. A full-service fraternal benefits and financial services organization, with local chapters engaged in community service efforts. Local chapters also provide grant funds for service-oriented projects. www.thrivent.com

Souper Bowl of Caring. An organization encouraging fundraising support for local hunger-related charities on or near Super Bowl Sunday. A “starter kit” (including DVD, handouts and promotional materials) is available. www.souperbowl.org

Do Something. A comprehensive website to inspire youth to community service and connect young people with local volunteer opportunities. Provides information on a variety of opportunities for community engagement, including the environment, violence, hunger, discrimination and disaster response. www.dosomething.org

ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program. A one-year international servant leadership opportunity for young adults ages 19-29. www.ELCA.org/yagm

Lutheran Volunteer Corps. A one-year domestic service opportunity. Participants are placed with various social justice and nonprofit organizations. www.lutheranvolunteercorps.org



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