



## SERVICE WORSHIP

### Implementation Guidelines and Suggestions

#### **Purpose of Service Worship**

The purpose of Service Worship is to provide our congregation with the opportunity to worship God and his Son through service to those in need in our local community. Service is a form of worship as we reach out to them in Jesus' name and actually be his hands and feet in a broken, hurting world. Service Worship can take on many different forms. Some churches prefer to have Service Worship on each Sunday that is the fifth Sunday of the month. Other churches decide to serve once a year on a Saturday. However you decide to serve, the goal is to partner with non-profits in the community, create a Christian presence, and love our neighbors as God first loved us.

#### **Getting Started**

Once you have decided to implement Service Worship at your church, here are some suggestions on how to get started:

- **Establish a Service Worship Leader** - This person is responsible for planning and leading the Service Worship meetings
- **Create a Service Worship Planning Team** - The job of the Service Worship Team is to
  - Find a variety of projects to fit your congregation
  - Establish and support leaders for the projects
  - Manage the Service Worship budget established by church session or governing body
  - Create awareness, communicate with the congregation and get project sign ups
  - Organize the commissioning, worship, and logistics for Service Worship day

#### **Service Worship Planning Team**

- **The Service Worship Planning Team should begin meeting approximately eight weeks before the Service Worship Sunday.** It is recommended that they meet regularly, i.e. weekly, and work with other church leaders and staff. It would be good to have representation from across as many different church departments and groups as possible.
  - Part of the ministry of Service Worship is to engage other churches in Service Worship days so that eventually, they can go back to their own churches and start the program there. Once your Service Worship team is more established, they can use the information to train other churches to lead a Service Worship day by inviting them to participate in your program.

## **Service Projects**

We suggest that the team chooses projects that:

- Will be within the skills and capabilities of people in the church
- Could be completed in four hours or less
- Would fill a real need in the community
- That will make a difference in people's lives

When planning a Service Worship day, it is important to have a variety of projects that benefit the local community.

- At least one of these service activities should be "family-friendly" in order to encourage families with children to participate and serve together.
- There should be at least one service activity on-site for the mobility-challenged or those who don't feel comfortable participating in an off-site activity.

Each Service Worship Planning Team should start by brainstorming new agencies or programs to serve, in addition to the existing projects that will be done again. Each Planning Team should also identify two new potential projects for the NEXT Service Worship since some new projects require longer lead time to arrange.

- When searching for new projects, please inquire about the **need** of the community organization rather than what we may want to do and do not make any commitment **until the project has been approved by the Service Worship Planning Team.**
- Please remember that there is basically no budget. We are there to help with our labor and are not interested in fundraising-type activities or those projects which would require the outlay of a lot of money (e.g. for materials, appliances, etc).
- It also seems to work better if our volunteers go to the location or living space where the customers or needy reside, rather than asking or expecting them to come to the church. Meeting people where they are is the current missional emphasis that many churches are employing. Having people come to the church, although still a valid way to do ministry, reflects an older model of church outreach that, given our current culture, is simply not as effective.
- **For any new request, the team should first go out and look at what work is being requested before committing. We have found that some agency's definition of need does not coincide with ours. After an initial inspection, the team should rank the requests based on work requested, need, and distance from church. Then it is wise to commit to the jobs based on available manpower.**

With regard to projects, each Planning Team starts with a clean slate. Projects should be selected based on the greatest need. No project is guaranteed a slot in the next Service Worship. However, some projects have been on-going, so sensitivity must be exercised in dealing with those projects.

When looking at prior projects, the past project leader should be asked if the project should be continued. If the project is selected again, then the past project leader should be given first right of refusal to continue as project leader but should be under no obligation to do so. Co-project leaders should be encouraged to develop their leadership abilities as well.

## **Expenses and Budgets**

Our original vision called for no budget, just service. The budget for Service Worship will be different for every church. Often, the governing body of the church, or Session, decides the amount of funding allocated for

Service Worship Projects. It is easy to get started with very little budget. The key is finding projects that supply materials and just need the manual labor. Many non-profit organizations like to partner with manual labor groups because it saves them from having to hire someone to do the work. If you have allocated funds, The Service Worship Team works with Project Leaders to identify projects that require funding and will allocate its limited budget to the projects needing a budget and will notify the affected project leaders of the approved budget amount. It will be up to the project leaders to ensure that their budgets are not exceeded. We discourage budget overages being covered by project leaders. We do not want anyone to turn down a project leader position because he/she can not afford to do it. Having said that, the “vision” for Service Worship should be driving its budget, not the other way around.

### **Promoting Service Worship**

Spreading the news about the next Service Worship is key to its success. Your most efficient mode of communication will depend on how your church operates. Here are a few suggestions.

- Church newsletter (electronic or paper)
- Church website
- Sunday morning bulletin
- Sunday morning announcements
- Email blast
- Facebook event
- Sign-ups after worship services
  - For projects that require a certain number of people to be successful, **we suggest taking sign-ups about three weeks prior to Service Worship day.** This can be done electronically or in person. Be sure to include contact information so the project leader can ensure that the right numbers of people are committed to each project.

### **Church Activities/Events at Service Worship Time**

Service Worship has been sanctioned by our governing body (Session). To avoid any conflict, **any church activity or event that takes place during the time set aside for Service Worship must go through and be approved by the Service Worship Planning Team.** Service Worship is usually scheduled between 9am and 5pm but can also include other days of the week when a Service Worship project might be scheduled, i.e. Saturday projects can run from 2 to 7 hours.

### **Service Worship Day**

Have project leaders send an email to their team members the week before the Service Worship day and provide the location and any pertinent project details. Remind them to have someone bring a digital camera to take pictures of the project (especially before and after).