

Serving Others as a Family: Vignettes

In order to live out the values described in Colossians 3, families not only pay attention to how they treat one another, but they consider how they serve others. We learn about serving others as we see it practiced in the home, but also as families participate together in mission and service with others. The vignettes below may spark ideas for your congregation or individual families to implement.

What committee of your congregation has responsibility for helping the congregation participate in hands-on service and mission? How might existing projects include families serving together?

What service to others would your family be interested in doing? Can you identify other families who might be interested in working together in serving others?

The Hunger Walk



The first year Garth went on the Hunger Walk, his mother pulled him in his red wagon. He was only three, after all. The next year, he walked some and rode in his wagon part of the way. If asked, he would tell you that he was walking so people wouldn't be hungry. When he was five, Garth and his mother wrote to family members and special friends, asking them to pledge for their walk. Garth signed the letter too. Now at ten, Garth knows more about hunger in the world, and he is concerned about children around the world who go to bed hungry. He never fails to pray for hungry people in his bedtime prayers. Garth is determined to walk the whole way this year, and he hopes that "by the time I am a parent, there won't have to be Hunger Walks."

Go to www.cws.org for information on Crop Walk. Is there one in your community?

The Soup Kitchen



The Cortez family was up early that Saturday morning. It was the day their congregation was responsible for cooking and serving over 200 people at the soup kitchen. In the past the children had helped bake cookies that they delivered to the church for other volunteers to take that day. But today, the whole family—Mom, Dad, Maria, and Eduardo—were going to volunteer themselves. They talked about what they would do: set tables, make sandwiches for the people to take home for their evening meal, and make the guests feel welcome. They also talked together about why they were doing this. Not only did they volunteer because the people did not have enough food, but the children understood that they were spending this day at the soup kitchen because Jesus taught his followers to help others.

Intergenerational Work Camp

Randy had gone on work camps with the youth fellowship of his church, but this was different. This time his whole family was going, even his ten-year-old sister Renee. Their family would join others from their church for a week in another town where they would repair and paint a home. Some of the work camp would hold a vacation church school for children in the community. Renee and his father were working with the vacation church school, while he and his mother were assigned to the painting crew. Each family was to prepare a brief night devotion for the work camp. "Three more days," said Renee, breaking into Randy's thoughts, "I can't wait!"



Visiting the Lonely



Janie and her aunt had passed the pink house numerous times. Finally, Janie asked, "Who lives there?" Her aunt answered, "That's where Mrs. Jones lives. All her family has moved away. I wonder if she's lonely?" "Could we visit her?" asked Janie. "I wouldn't like to have all of my family move away."

Who in your community is lonely?

Who could you visit?