COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY

May 13, 2017

Sabbath School Program

Rae Lee Cooper

Groundwork ideas:

“and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,
then your light will rise in the darkness,
and your night will become like the noonday.”
Isaiah 58:10 (NIV)

The message encouraging church members, young and
young at heart, to be involved in community service comes
from scripture. Besides help extended to those in need,
consider the rewards mentioned in the text above – “your light
will rise in the darkness.” Services provided with love and
kindness to someone in need can definitely bring heavenly
cheer and sunshine into that life.

“Your night will become like the noonday.” Kindness and helpfulness extended to bless
others has a remarkable way of brightening and encouraging one’s own spirit like nothing else.
One tends to forget their concerns and complaints in the satisfaction of unselfish, meaningful
service for Jesus to others. The joy of service is energizing and inspires a will to do more. This
is true even for children and youth.

What is community service?

Services volunteered by individuals or an organization
to benefit a community or its institutions.

In preparation for Community Service Sabbath, several weeks before
the appointed Sabbath, the Sabbath School Superintendent should meet with
the Sabbath School Council. Leaders of all children’s divisions, teachers
from each Adult Sabbath School Class as well as the church treasurer should
be present for this meeting. At that time plans should be made for a week (or
two) of assigned community service projects with the goal of encouraging
everyone in the church family to become involved. Projects suitable for the

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching
the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who
desired their good. He showed His sympathy
for them, ministered to their needs, and
won their confidence. Then He bade them,
‘Follow Me’” (Ministry of Healing, pg. 143).
local area should be discussed and chosen. Someone should be designated as the official photographer and videographer.

The Sabbath following that meeting the community service plan should be presented in detail and with great enthusiasm to the church family. In the foyer a special table with an attendee or two should be set up and decorated to draw attention with balloons and/or flowers. The table should contain a list of community service options for members to choose from and sign up for. Children should definitely be included.

On Community Service Sabbath, at the end of the designated time period during which the members fulfilled their community service assignments, there should be a special Family Sabbath School. Plan for this program to be a bit longer than the usual Sabbath School time due to this special occasion. All children’s and youth divisions and adults should gather together for a program of reporting and celebration. Be prepared for much enthusiasm and eagerness on the part of those involved to share their experiences.

**Project suggestions:**

Following is a list of possibilities for community service projects. According to the area in which your church is located and the number and abilities of your congregation, choose projects which will accommodate both. The goal is to have something every member can participate in, whether actively out in the community or by helping with preparation at the church base.

1. Provide a free lunch to firemen, construction workers, or servicemen.
2. Provide meals, cookies, gift baskets, or other treats for the teacher’s lounge at an area school.
3. Clean up the yard or house of an elderly person in the neighborhood.
4. Give out free bottled water at a busy traffic intersection or at a shopping area.
5. Visit a local Nursing Home or Assisted Care Facility and . . .
   a. Provide fresh flowers and a “listening ear” to the residents.
   b. Provide a worship or music program for the residents.
   c. Offer to read a story or short devotional and pray with the residents.
   d. Offer to drive an elderly resident to a doctor’s appointment if needed.
   e. Throw a “Senior Party” and have live music, food, games, and decorations.
6. Have a free car wash. No donations accepted, just serving the community.
7. Serve a hot breakfast for the homeless in your community.
8. Take a gift basket or a hot lunch to your local police station. (Call beforehand to make an appointment and receive agreement to the idea.)
9. Take gift baskets to the nurses at your local hospital. This will be a surprise and will be greatly appreciated.
10. Offer to provide prayer and scripture reading to patients in the hospital.
11. Prepare sack lunches for day laborers – those who congregate in various areas waiting for people to come by and hire them.
12. Have a “Free Grass Cutting” day in one or several neighborhoods.
13. Inquire at a local mall or shopping area if the medical professionals in your church could set up a table, take blood pressures and weight and give advice on dieting and other health issues.
14. Do a community trash cleanup – or choose a road or neighborhood and clean up the trash along the route.
15. Volunteer with Habitat for Humanity to help build a home for someone in need.
16. Host a “Block Party” near your church with free food, games, live music, and activities for children.
17. Paint or fix up a run-down school or local home.
18. Do a door-to-door grocery giveaway in a low-income area.
20. Provide a healthful food preparation demonstration at a community center, local school, or even at an outdoor location – offer tasting samples, share recipes, and award door prizes. Take a poll to see if additional classes would be desired and on what topics. (Don’t forget to involve children and youth.)

The Community Sabbath School Program

The foyer of the church can be tastefully decorated with pictures of members participating in community services. This would also be a good Sabbath to have a pre-Sabbath School Brunch. Members could come and enjoy fellowship in eating together and then go directly to the Sanctuary for the Sabbath School program.

Song Service Hymns:

- *Working, O Christ, With Thee* Hymn 582
- *‘Tis Love That Makes Us Happy* Hymn 579
- *Make Me A Servant* (Kelly Willard – A chorus from Maranatha! Music Praise, Hymns and Choruses)
- *I Would Be Like Jesus* Hymn 311

Responsive Reading: 1 Corinthians 13 (NIV)

Leader: “If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels”
Congregation: “but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.”
Leader: “If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith that can move mountains”
Congregation: “but do not have love, I am nothing.”
Leader: “If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,”
Congregation: “but do not have love, I gain nothing.”
Ladies: “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.”
Men: “It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.”

Children: “It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

Congregation: “Love never fails.”

Leader: “But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled;”

Ladies: “where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part,”

Men: “but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears.”

Children: “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

Leader: “For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror;”

Ladies: “then we shall see face to face.”

Men: “Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am full known.”

Leader: “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.”

Congregation: “But the greatest of these is love.”

Opening Prayer and Welcome: (With an introduction and explanation about the program for the benefit of any visitors present.)

Special Music: (Children’s Group) “Give,” Said the Little Stream (By William B. Bradbury, “Happy Songs for Boys and Girls”)

Community Service Reports:
This portion of the program can be conducted in several different ways.

a. A roving microphone could be available for anyone who wants to stand up in the congregation and tell of their experience. A time limit might need to be in place for each person to share.

b. Several chosen speakers from the congregation could be invited beforehand to take turns reporting for their groups.

c. A video recording could be played showing church members at work in the community, with someone as a narrator.

d. Children and youth representatives also need to be given the opportunity to be involved.

e. Some guests from the community who benefitted by the services provided could be invited to give a report in a show of appreciation.

Closing Song: I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go Hymn 573

Dedication Prayer