

Called to Serve

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We have been looking at various aspects of what it means to belong to our church. Related to our church membership, we explored several basics of belonging. In previous months, the newsletter covered “Saying “Yes” to God, Real Worship and Growing in Christ Jesus.

Our Pastor, serving ministers, deacons, deaconesses, trustees, teachers, secretarial and clerical staff, and custodians, along with other hardworking church members are among our most valuable assets. They make it possible for us to serve and worship God comfortably, and more effectively. Yet, it is important to point out that all of us have been called to serve. Jesus informed us that ‘the Son of Man (Jesus) came not to be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many.’ (Mark 10:45) If our Lord and Savior came to serve, so should we.

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.¹ [Gal 5:13]

Given that we are no longer under the law, our Christian liberty compels us to serve one another in love. Service is part of the will of God. As we serve by the strength that God gives us, let us serve to His glory. (1 Peter 4:11)

One writer said that love expresses itself in service to the needs of others (Hansen, G. W. (1994). Galatians (Gal. 5:13–15) “**The third basic of belonging in the church is serving.** It’s about sharing with others, reaching others, and serving others. The way the church fulfills God’s outward calling is through serving.” (Sam Rainer, *Seven Basics of Belonging*, 2021, pg. 37)

All of us can serve. Each Christian has been given at least one spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit. Spiritual gifts are God given graces for serving others (Jerry Bridges, *True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia*. Pg 87-89). Each believer has a unique spiritual gift that the Holy Spirit individually measured out according to God’s sovereign will and design; spiritual gifts are given to each and every one of us (1 Petr 4:10, 1 Cor 12:7).

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. [1 Peter 4:10]

The Phillips translation paraphrased 1 Corinthians 12: 7 quite clearly: *Men have different gifts, but it is the same Spirit who gives them. There are different ways of serving God, but it is the same Lord who is served. God works through different men in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves his purposes through them all. Each man is given his gift by the Spirit that he may make the most of it.*

Two important questions to ask are: What opportunities to serve have been opened to you? It is also important to consider; what opportunities in some ways have been closed to you? Most important is the confirmation from other Christians. They can validate whether the church or others have been blessed, encouraged, or strengthened by your gift. All gifts must be developed and exercised. Every gift is a gift of grace whose purpose is to serve others, the church, and to glorify God!

Volunteer

With the launching of our virtual church services, we were able to continue our church service, Bible studies, and teaching ministry, Thanks be to God for talented and gifted people in the church with technology skills who are willing to teach others how to do zoom and host many of these events. Consider participating in a training session to help as a host for some of these sessions. Autumn Fellowship is a ministry within the church that serves the community. They are in need of volunteers. No technology skills are required; only a willing heart and hands on.

Reach Out

One of the most important ways we can serve now given the impact of the pandemic is to contact members of the church body. Reach out with a phone call, card, written note, text, or email. Find out if they have any needs; food, meds, household chores, lawn or yard care, or errands they cannot do. Not only will they be blessed so will you. Let us not grow weary in well-doing.

Share

Share your resources, friendship, time, talents, and skills. Perhaps, you have skills or abilities that could benefit the church such as painting, carpentry, lawn service, cleaning, plumbing, accounting, nursing, medical skills, music, legal abilities, or teaching. Consider sharing some of these with the church pro bono, without charge.

²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. [Col 3:24]

Sam Rainer, outlined Five Steps to Serving in Your Church:

1. Look for Opportunities
2. Volunteer where there is a need
3. Take the Initiative
4. Invite your neighbors to church
5. Share Jesus with people

We can serve on various levels: in the home, at church, in the community, and at work. As we serve in our homes, the church, and the community, let us exhibit the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. **Reach Out, Support, Share, Serve** Remember all that we do is to the honor and glory of God.