

Serve Local – The Role of the Pastor

Pastor, your role cannot be minimized in a successful Serve Local event. The church will follow and model your interest and passion for Serve Local. The participants look to the pastor as equipper, motivator, and leader. However, if you attempt to plan, organize, and carry out Serve Local on your own, you may limit what your church can do – and find yourself frustrated. Building a group of people to assist in carrying out Serve Local can expand the number of ministries and the reach of the church.

As you lead, consider the following characteristics to help your church experience a successful Serve Local.

Intentional training. Your church will want to know what is expected of them when they commit to participate in Serve Local. Using the resources provided, work with your Leadership Team to clearly lay out your expectations, which will depend upon the ministries performed. Annual research done by the North American Mission Board shows that the top baptizing churches in North America train their members how to share their faith at least once per year. The correlation between salvations and proactive evangelistic training is simply not debatable. Be prepared not to just tell people to share their faith; instruct (and show) them how to do so.

Adaptability. The resources and training available to you need to be tailored to your ministry context. What works in Conway might not work in Brinkley. A good idea in your community might not be an option in any other location. The framework provided is not necessarily a “one size fits all,” but it can be adapted to any location and size. Serve Local gives you the opportunity to do ministry in a way it has never been done within the walls of your church.

Flexibility. As your Leadership Team begins to set a plan in place, encourage them to be flexible. Ask others for input and be open to their suggestions and constructive criticisms. Even on the day of Serve Local, be willing to adjust plans as obstacles and opportunities arise. Your modeling of flexibility serves as an example for others to exhibit it as they serve.

Local community focused. The thrust of Serve Local is to minister in your local community. The resources offered will give you some ideas, but do not limit yourself. Consider ministry opportunities that are unique to your community. Think of ways to leave an impact that lasts beyond one particular day as your people live in the community. Allow Serve Local to be a springboard for future action.

Gospel centered. The Gospel is what separates Serve Local from any other community organization’s event. While serving others is the motivation for the day, the end goal is to see people place their faith in Jesus. As you plan, keep the Gospel as the motivation for all of your Serve Local ministries, and prepare to clearly share the Gospel at each ministry site.

Keeping these characteristics before your Leadership Team and church can help you thrive in providing effective leadership for Serve Local and can result in people experiencing the life-change that comes through a relationship with Jesus. By prayerfully implementing these characteristics, your church can experience a very successful Serve Local under your leadership.