



# HEART OF A SERVANT

**LCMS  
SERVANT  
EVENTS**

Bible Studies and Devotions  
**Participant's Guide**

**“O Lord, I am your servant;  
I am your servant, the son  
of your maidservant.  
You have loosed my bonds.”**

– Ps. 116:16





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## A Servant's Heart is ...

**WILLING**

(Galatians 5:13)

**PRAYERFUL**

(Luke 6:12)

**COMPASSIONATE**

(Ephesians 4:32)

**BRAVE**

(Joshua 1:9)

**BROKEN**

(Psalm 51:17)

**HOPEFUL**

(Romans 15:13)

# A Servant's Heart is ... **WILLING**

**Leader** We begin this day in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Group** **Amen!**

**Leader** O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;

**Group** **In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.** (Ps. 5:3)

**Leader** But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.

**Group** **For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.** (Ps. 59:16)

**All** **Amen.**

## SONG

## SCRIPTURE READING

*“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.” – Gal. 5:13*

## A WORD FROM THE HEART

Albert Schweitzer said, “I don’t know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.” God asks us to serve others willingly because it’s good for the people we serve AND it’s good for us!

## SHARE YOUR HEART

**Q:** What helps you to be willing to serve?

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**Q:** What is the connection between our freedom in Christ and serving others?

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## SERVANT HEART IN ACTION AND PRAYER

*In pairs or threes, knee-to-knee ... each one shares one servant heart in action they will commit to for today.*

Today I will commit to (pick one):

- Praying for someone I come in contact with today that I don’t know;
- Telling someone specifically what I like about them; or
- Eating something that is good for my body.

*In the same pair or three, knee-to-knee, pray this prayer aloud together:*

Dear Jesus, Thank You for Your willing service to me. Make my servant heart willing to follow You and serve the people You love. Amen.



# A Servant's Heart is ... **WILLING**

## WARM-UP

### SONG

### THE GRAND TOTAL

Get a worksheet and pen or pencil. Fill in the numbers, add them up and get the "Grand Total." Then in the large group, go around the circle and share the "Grand Total" as well as sharing three of the numbers you put in (any three you choose).

### HEART CONDITION

Find a partner and share:

- One high for you from today;
- One low for you from today; and
- One way you saw God at work today.

Come back to the large group and share a few highlights from the pair conversations.

## DIGGING IN

**Q:** What do you have to do in your life that you are the least willing to do?

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**Q:** What would the people around you say that you are like when you have to do that thing?

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### HEARING FROM THE WORD

*"And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them."*  
— Luke 4:38–39

**Q:** Do you get the impression that Jesus was "willing" to serve Simon's mother-in-law? Why or why not?

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"Immediately she rose and began to serve them."

**Q:** In this story, there are two kinds of serving (healing and serving food). Is one more important than the other? Why or why not?

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**Q:** Do you know anyone who is a good example of being willing to serve? Tell the group why they are a good example.

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**Q:** How “willing” are you to serve this week? What gets in the way of your willingness?

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*“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”*  
– Col. 3:23–24

**Q:** What does this passage say about willingness to serve? Why should we be willing?

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**Q:** How can we help each other remain willing to serve all week?

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 **PRAYER**

Spend some time in prayer, asking God for His help to have a willing heart for service this week. Remember to pray for loved ones back home.



“Work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.”



# The Grand Total

Fill each box with the correct number and then total your score. When everyone is finished, go around the group, share your total and three of the numbers you wrote down (any three you choose).

_____	+	_____	+	_____	-
The number of car accidents you've been in		The number of pictures in your wallet		The number of pets you have	
_____	+	_____	-	_____	+
The number of pets you have		The number of siblings you have (including stepbrothers and stepsisters)		The number of bones you've broken	
_____	+	_____	-	_____	-
Day of the month you were born on		Number of balls you can juggle		Number of TV's in your house	
_____	=	_____			
Number of times you've been sent to the principal's office		<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			

# A Servant's Heart is ... **PRAYERFUL**

**Leader** We begin this day in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Group** **Amen!**

**Leader** O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;

**Group** **In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.** (Ps. 5:3)

**Leader** But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.

**Group** **For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.** (Ps. 59:16)

**All** **Amen.**

## SONG

## SCRIPTURE READING

*“In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God.”*

– Luke 6:12

## A WORD FROM THE HEART

JC Ryle said: “Fear not because your prayer is stammering, your words feeble, and your language poor. Jesus can understand you. Just as a mother understands the first lisping of her infant, so does the blessed Savior understand sinners. He can read a sigh, and see a meaning in a groan.” Jesus (the Son of God!) felt the need to pray — sometimes all night long. With His example, and the promise of God to listen to us, what are we waiting for?

## SHARE YOUR HEART

**Q:** What do you usually talk with God about?

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**Q:** What is the connection between serving others and talking to God?

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## SERVANT HEART IN ACTION AND PRAYER

*In pairs or threes, knee-to-knee ... each one shares one servant heart in action they will commit to for today.*

Today I will commit to (pick one, two or all three):

- Praying before I fall asleep tonight;
- Praying for someone back home; or
- Praying with someone else.

*In the same pair or three, knee-to-knee, pray this prayer aloud together:*

Dear Jesus, Help me this day through Your Word and Spirit to turn my heart to You in prayer many times. Thank You for wanting me to have that kind of relationship with You. Amen.



# A Servant's Heart is ... **PRAYERFUL**

## WARM-UP

### SONG

### ELECTRICITY

Divide the group into two teams. Each team sits side-by-side in a line, facing the other team; each person crosses their arms in front of them and holds the hands of the people on either side. One team is “heads”; one team is “tails.” At one end, a leader flips a coin. If it comes up heads, the first person on the “heads” team squeezes the hand of the next person and then they squeeze of the next person, and down the line, until the last person feels the squeeze and quickly picks up the saltshaker. If they are right, they send the first person back to the end of the line where the saltshaker is. If they are wrong (it was really “tails”), then they send the person at the end of the line back to where the saltshaker is. The first team to move their whole line in a positive direction wins.

**Q:** What does this game teach you about communication and teamwork?

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**Q:** Can you learn anything about prayer from this game?

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### HEART CONDITION

*Find a partner and share:*

- One high for you from today;
- One surprise for you from today; and
- One way you saw God's love at work today.

Come back to the large group and share a few highlights from the pair conversations.



“He went out to the mountain to pray.”



## DIGGING IN

**Q:** How would you describe your prayer life right now (every day at a certain time, non-existent, only when I'm in trouble, really great, etc.)?

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## HEARING FROM THE WORD

*"But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray."*  
– Luke 5:16

*"In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God."*  
– Luke 6:12

*"Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?""*  
– Luke 9:18

*"And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed."*  
– Luke 22:41

**Q:** If Jesus was the Son of God, why did He need to pray so much?

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**Q:** Why do you think Jesus so often "withdrew" from people to pray?

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**Q:** Do you have a particular place you go to pray? If not, where might you try that?

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**Q:** Jesus also prayed in a small group (Luke 9:18, above). What would help you pray in a small group?

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**Q:** What is the connection between prayer and serving others?

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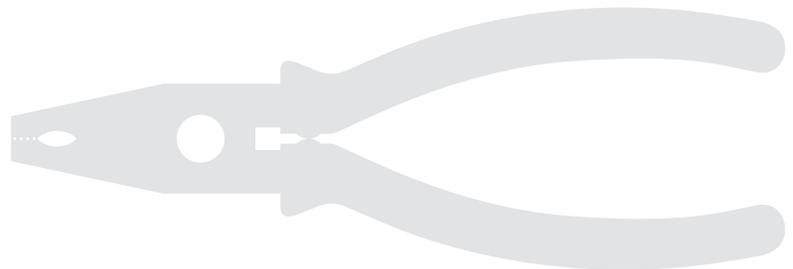
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## PRAYER

Find your own spot in the room, perhaps facing a wall or lying down, so as to avoid distraction. Use this time to just really talk to God.

- For the young people from my home church (those here and those not here).
- For the poor in the United States and in the world.
- For my school and the kids in my school.
- For my friends (those here and those not here).



# A Servant's Heart is ... **COMPASSIONATE**

**Leader** We begin this day in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

**Group** **Amen!**

**Leader** O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;

**Group** **In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.** (Ps. 5:3)

**Leader** But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.

**Group** **For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.** (Ps. 59:16)

**All** **Amen.**

## SONG

## SCRIPTURE READING

*“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” – Eph. 4:32*

## A WORD FROM THE HEART

Frederick Buechner said: “Compassion is sometimes the fatal capacity for feeling what it is like to live inside somebody else’s skin. It is the knowledge that there can never really be any peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy finally for you too.” God is compassionate to us in Jesus and asks us to be compassionate to others. This week, we are learning to serve others, whether they “deserve it” or not.

## SHARE YOUR HEART

**Q:** What makes it hard to practice compassion, at times?

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**Q:** For whom do you feel compassion this week? Why?

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## SERVANT HEART IN ACTION AND PRAYER

*In pairs or threes, knee-to-knee ... each one shares one servant heart in action they will commit to for today.*

Today I will commit to (pick one):

- Asking God to help me not to judge those I am serving;
- Listening to some Christian music; or
- Giving away a snack or drink to someone who needs it.

*In the same pair or three, knee-to-knee, pray this prayer aloud together:*

Dear Jesus, Thank You for Your compassion towards me, in my sin. Give me Your servant’s heart of compassion today for those I serve and for those I serve alongside. Amen.



# A Servant's Heart is ... **COMPASSIONATE**

## WARM-UP

### SONG

### COMMON GROUND

Divide group into two or more equal-sized teams. Each team needs a sheet of paper and a pencil. The team needs to list everything they can think of that all team members have in common. For example, team members might all attend the same school, have the same favorite TV show, etc. The only rule is that you can't list similar body parts, like "We all have two legs, a heart and a nose." You have four minutes.

**Q:** How easy was it to discover something in common with another team member? With every team member?

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**Q:** What does this reveal about the extent to which we're alike? The ways in which we're all different?

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**Q:** How can our similarities draw us closer together?  
How can our differences help us grow closer?

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### HEART CONDITION

*Find a partner and share:*

- One high for you from today;
- One low for you from today; and
- One way you saw God at work today.

Come back to the large group and share a few highlights from the pair conversations.

“When I was brought low, he saved me.”





## DIGGING IN

Look at these definitions:

- **“Compassion:** Sympathy for the suffering of others, often including a desire to help.” (*Encarta Dictionary*)
  - **“Empathy:** Understanding of another’s feelings; the ability to identify with and understand somebody else’s feelings or difficulties.” (*Encarta Dictionary*)
- Q:** Is compassion a feeling, an action or both? Can you be compassionate even when you don’t *feel* compassionate?

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- Q:** What kinds of people are the hardest for you to have compassion for?

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## HEARING FROM THE WORD

*“Then I called on the name of the Lord: “O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!” Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful. The Lord preserves the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me.” – Ps. 116:4–6*

- Q:** How has God shown compassion to you? Be specific if you can.

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- Q:** There are at least three great words in this passage: “gracious,” “righteous” and “compassion.” As God is “righteous” (perfect and right), He wouldn’t necessarily have to be “gracious” and “merciful,” but He is. What helps you get in touch with the ways God has been merciful to you?

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*“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” – Eph. 4:32*

- Q:** What does this passage say about WHY we are compassionate to others?

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- Q:** Who, specifically, are you compassionate towards this week?

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- Q:** How, specifically, are you practicing compassion this week?

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## PRAYER

Close in prayer, especially reflecting on the events of the day in connection with compassion.

# A Servant's Heart is ... BRAVE

Leader We begin this day in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Group Amen!

Leader O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;

Group In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch. (Ps. 5:3)

Leader But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.

Group For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress. (Ps. 59:16)

All Amen.

## SONG

## SCRIPTURE READING

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”*  
– Joshua 1:9

## A WORD FROM THE HEART

Ambrose Redmoon said, “Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.” Sometimes serving God means doing things that are outside our “comfort zone” or even scary. Joshua reminds us that God is with us and because of THAT, we can be brave and go where He calls us to go and serve whom He asks us to serve.

## SHARE YOUR HEART

Q: What about this week has called for courage on your part?

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Q: Why is it important to depend on God’s strength rather than our own?

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## SERVANT HEART IN ACTION AND PRAYER

*In pairs or threes, knee-to-knee ... each one shares one servant heart in action they will commit to for today.*

Today I will commit to (pick one):

- Doing one thing that I would normally be nervous or afraid to do, asking God for courage;
- Noticing someone else’s bravery and thank them for their example; or
- Talking to someone that I wouldn’t normally talk to.

*In the same pair or three, knee-to-knee, pray this prayer aloud together:*

Dear Jesus, Give me the courage today to serve You in new ways. Thank You for the knowledge that You are always with me. Amen.

# A Servant's Heart is ... **BRAVE**

## WARM-UP

### SONG

### ANIMAL KINGDOM

Sit or stand in a circle. Introduce yourself and say which of the following animals you most identify with: eagle, dolphin, lion, sparrow or whale. (Use fewer animals if you have less than 10 people.) Now group yourselves according to the animals you chose.

**Q:** What is one thing all of you have experienced that many other people have not?

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**Q:** What is one thing that all of you believe in?

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**Q:** What is one thing all of you are afraid of?

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### HEART CONDITION

*Find a partner and share:*

- One high for you from today;
- One surprise for you from today; and
- One way you saw God at work today.

Come back to the large group and share a few highlights from the pair conversations.

## DIGGING IN

**Q:** What were you afraid of when you were little?

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**Q:** What helps you when you are afraid?

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Joshua led God’s people into the Promised Land. It was hard! There were reports of giants in the land and Joshua knew that the people living there would not give up their land easily. As a servant leader, Joshua knew that the people needed a word from God.

### HEARING FROM THE WORD

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”*  
– Joshua 1:9

**Q:** How can fear lead to discouragement?

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**Q:** According to this passage, what is the reason we can have strength and courage?

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**Q:** How can you apply this passage to this week’s Servant Event? Have you needed to be brave in some way? How or why?

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Check out the following passages about fear and courage:

- Matthew 14:27
- Acts 23:11
- Hebrews 3:6

**Q:** What do you learn from each?

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**Q:** God says “do not be afraid” 366 times in the Bible. Why so many times, do you think?

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### PRAYER

Close in prayer, especially asking God for courage to live as His servants.



# A Servant's Heart is ... **BROKEN**

Leader We begin this day in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Group Amen!**

Leader O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;

**Group In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.** (Ps. 5:3)

Leader But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.

**Group For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.** (Ps. 59:16)

**All Amen.**

## SONG

## SCRIPTURE READING

*“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” – Ps. 51:17*

## A WORD FROM THE HEART

Eugene O’Neill said, “Man is born broken. He lives by mending. The grace of God is glue.” Often our striving to present ourselves as “OK” and not needing anything or anyone gets in the way of our servant’s heart. It is far better to admit our brokenness to God, who loves us and forgives us. This is the best preparation for service!

## SHARE YOUR HEART

**Q:** What makes it hard for you to admit that you are broken in some ways?

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**Q:** How can confessing our brokenness help us to be the servants God has called us to be?

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## SERVANT HEART IN ACTION AND PRAYER

*In pairs or threes, knee-to-knee ... each one shares one servant heart in action they will commit to for today.*

Today I will commit to (pick one):

- Admitting a mistake, out loud, to someone else;
- Confessing my sins to God before I go to sleep tonight; or
- Telling the truth about how I’m feeling or what I’m thinking about today.

*In the same pair or three, knee-to-knee, pray this prayer aloud together:*

Dear Jesus, I am broken by sin, and I need Your grace today. Thank You for loving me and giving me Your servant’s heart. Amen.

# A Servant's Heart is ... **BROKEN**

## WARM-UP

### SONG

### THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER

Divide into pairs for "Rock, Paper, Scissors": Cliff, Climber, Ground. Once you've practiced it a bit, have a play-off and get to a final winner (best two out of three each round).

**Cliff:** arms held straight up

**Climber:** One fist on a hip, the other fist held out in front.

**Ground:** both arms held straight out to the sides

- Cliff beats ground (rises above it).
- Climber beats cliff (climbs it).
- Ground beats climber (by squashing the climber after a fall).

### HEART CONDITION

*Find a partner and share:*

- One high for you from today;
- One low for you from today; and
- One way you saw God at work today.

Come back to the large group and share a few highlights from the pair conversations.



### DIGGING IN

**Q:** We usually think of a "broken heart" as romance-gone-wrong. Are there other ways a heart can be broken? What are they?

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**Q:** How do you know that you are sinful?

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## HEARING FROM THE WORD

*“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” – Ps. 51:17*

**Q:** Read all of Psalm 51 aloud. What kind of brokenness is David writing about here?

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**Q:** What evidence is there, in your life or your thoughts, that you are a sinful being (Ps. 51:3)?

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**Q:** When we admit our brokenness, what are we to do with it (Ps. 51: 17)?

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**Q:** Has there been a time in your life when you really sensed God healing your brokenness? What happened?

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**Q:** What is the connection between brokenness and service (Ps. 51: 10)?

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**Q:** Is there any brokenness you need to confess tonight (Ps. 51:6)?

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## PRAYER

Close in prayer, especially asking God to heal the brokenness in our lives so that we might serve Him with our renewed spirit.



“A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

# A Servant's Heart is ... **HOPEFUL**

Leader We begin this day in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Group Amen!**

Leader O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;

**Group In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.** (Ps. 5:3)

Leader But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.

**Group For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.** (Ps. 59:16)

**All Amen.**

## SHARE YOUR HEART

**Q:** What is one of your biggest hopes for the people and/or places you have served this week?

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**Q:** What is one of your biggest hopes as you return home?

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## SONG

## SCRIPTURE READING

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”*  
— Rom. 15:13

## A WORD FROM THE HEART

Someone said, “Hope is putting faith to work when doubting would be easier.” As God’s servants, we always believe that life could be better for those we serve because of Him. Hope is the gift that God gives us to pass on to those around us.

## SERVANT HEART IN ACTION AND PRAYER

*In pairs or threes, knee-to-knee ... each one shares one servant heart in action they will commit to for today.*

Today I will commit to (pick one):

- Telling someone here what I hope for them;
- Talking to God about the hopes I have for my own life and asking for His help and guidance; or
- Being an optimistic member of the serving team today, no matter what happens.

*In the same pair or three, knee-to-knee, pray this prayer aloud together:*

Dear Jesus, Give me Your hope today and help me to share it with others around me. Thank You that You are the God of hope! Amen.



# A Servant's Heart is ... **HOPEFUL**

## WARM-UP

### SONG

### CATERPILLAR RACE

Think up one-syllable names for your teams. Then line teams up next to each other behind a starting line. Place your hands on the shoulders of the team members in front of you and race to a finish line according to the following rules of movement:

- The first person in line may hop one step forward. Then the next person in line may hop one step forward. Continue down the line until the last person in line hops one step forward. After the last person hops, he or she must shout the team's name. Then the whole team may hop one step forward at the same time. Repeat this process to move the caterpillar along.
- Players must keep their hands in front of them at all times during the race.
- Players may move forward only by hopping one step forward with both feet at once.
- If a team breaks any of the above rules, it must return to the starting line and start again.

### HEART CONDITION

*Find a partner and share:*

- One high for you from today;
- One surprise for you from today; and
- One way you saw God at work today.

Come back to the large group and share a few highlights from the pair conversations.



### DIGGING IN

**Q:** Have you ever felt hopeless? Why?

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“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace.”

**Q:** How would you define the word “hope”?

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### HEARING FROM THE WORD

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”*  
– Rom. 15:13

**Q:** There are four (at least) great words in this passage: hope, joy, peace and power. Hope is there twice. Talk together about your understanding of those words. What do they mean to the world? What do they mean in a Christian context?

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**Q:** What does it mean to “abound in” hope?

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**Q:** Who do you know that is in need of hope? How might you carry a message of hope to them?

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**Q:** Do you think of God as the “God of hope”? Do you think the kids you know think of God as the “God of hope”? If not, what do they think He is the God of?

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**Q:** How has hope been a part of this Servant Event? In your group? In the place where you have been serving?

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**Q:** How will you take God’s hope home with you, specifically?

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**Q:** How can you remind each other of hope when you get back home?

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### PRAYER

Close in prayer, especially focusing on gratitude for a great week.





