

NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge:
Love Like Jesus!

Children's Discussion Guide December 2013: SERVE!

The NE MN Synod faith practice focus for December is “*Serve*.” You are encouraged to use this discussion guide with younger children in your home or as part of a Sunday school class or church children’s event. As a family you might do this after a meal, for nightly devotions, as you drive from one activity to the next, on a Sunday afternoon – whenever or wherever you have the opportunity to dwell on and discuss what it means for us as individuals and as a family of faith to Love Like Jesus! There are no right or wrong answers, no right or wrong way to do this...the point is to make room in your lives for thoughtful and deliberate faith conversations.

Remember – our spiritual hunger to grow and deepen our faith has nothing to do with success, getting the “right” answer, or works. It’s all about living – fully living – into the grace of God as God’s children...as discipleship, following Jesus in our daily life!

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel and for your willingness to help younger children grow in their discipleship to Christ our Lord!

For more information and resources on the Discipleship Challenge:

www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship

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From a very young age, children can serve. When they help set the table, hold the door for someone, or usher at worship, they are learning the importance of serving. Children are able to help family, neighbors, and friends in very simple ways that can make a big difference in their lives and in others’ lives. As young people learn to serve others daily, we hope their hearts are

gradually formed into “servant hearts.” Hearts that will gladly love and serve others each day in small ways and big ways for the rest of their lives!

Introduction: *Ask: **What is a servant?*** Invite the children to describe the characteristics of a servant (i.e. takes care of needs of others, humble, giving, helper, hard worker) *Ask: **Have you ever helped anyone do something or served someone? What was that like? Was it hard or easy? Did you enjoy it? Why or why not?***

Story/Bible Reading: Read the story of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet in John 13:1-17. Have older children read the story aloud from their bibles. Read from the story from a children’s bible if you have younger children.

*Ask: **What did Jesus do in the story?*** (Served the disciples by washing their feet) ***How did the disciples react to Jesus washing their feet? Did it surprise you that Jesus would do that? Why or why not? Why do you think Jesus did that?***

What did Jesus tell the disciples that they should do? (Have them highlight verse 15) What are ways that you can serve others?

Craft/Activity Suggestions: How do people in your church serve others? Have some adults/youth join your class today to share some ways they have served others in Jesus’ name. Have your class serve them treats (or even wash their feet) to thank them!

Arrange for the children to serve in worship (usher or greet), at fellowship time (make cookies or serve snacks), or just a special project in your church or community. Maybe the children could sharpen the pencils for the pew pads, clean toys in the nursery, or wash tables after fellowship time. Think of ways that you could serve as a group monthly or a few times a year.

Act it out! Tell the story of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. Get props (water basin, towels) and costumes if you can. Invite parents or another class to watch you tell the story. For older kids, you could have them write a skit based on this story that shows ways we can serve and love others like Jesus.

Closing Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us so very much. Help us to love and serve others in your name. Amen.