



...educate...equip...mobilize...

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## Park Street Café Service Month: Mobilize for Service, 6/26/07

"Lord I give my life,  
A living sacrifice,  
To reach a world in need,  
To be Your hands and feet"  
- Casting Crowns, Lifesong

### **Background**

Last week we discussed how to equip ourselves for service, and we prayed that God might prepare our hearts and minds to recognize the needs that exist in the communities around us. If you weren't in small group last week, or if you didn't get a copy of the EQUIP study sheet, you can download it from [parkstreetcityworks.org/cafe.html](http://parkstreetcityworks.org/cafe.html).

The world is in need. And that need is on our doorstep, right here in Boston. But what can each of us do to reach out and meet that need? Café is a group of Christians with diverse talents, interests and abilities. As a Christian community, we are the body of Christ - some of us are hands, others are feet, and all of us are called to use the gifts we've been given to serve God in this city ... and in the world. This week we focus on MOBILIZING for service: how do we take the next step, and translate our prayers and thoughts into action that honors God by reaching out to those in need?

### **God is Calling You**

*Now begin the work, and the Lord be with you.*

- 1 Chronicles 22:16

Café member Adam Christian relates his own personal story about service:

"The first couple of years out of college I felt like something was missing. At first I thought it was that I needed to continue to become more involved in the church community. The community I found at Café has been great, but it didn't feel like the whole answer. Then at Café's Fall '06 Retreat my small group leader strongly encouraged each one of us to think about serving. He shared some of his story about how he also had felt like something was missing before he began to serve in Park Street's Youth Ministry.

"Following that discussion, I prayed that God would give me opportunities to serve those in need. He answered those prayers with a Café service group that meets weekly to do community service projects. Being part of this group has been challenging, uncomfortable and even difficult at times. However, it has taught me so much and helped me grow significantly in my walk with Christ, over such a short period of time. I now have a deeper understanding of trust, compassion, grace and thankfulness. I believe that no matter how inadequate we might initially feel when it comes to serving, God truly will provide if we just step forward."

We each have the opportunity to serve in many different ways. But the most important thing is simply to start serving, in any way we can, sooner rather than later. It's all too easy to make the usual excuses – "I'm too busy," "it won't fit my schedule," "I wouldn't feel comfortable doing that." But you and your small group are now better equipped than ever before to overcome these obstacles, and to overcome them together. God is calling you to serve others - and to grow His Kingdom in the process.

Remember – this is not about you individually, but each individual does have an important role to play. It's about stewardship. God has given you gifts, and He wants you to use those gifts to his glory. You serve and honor God by setting aside your own needs and making yourself available to serve others. If you're not regularly involved with service, you can find out more about service at Park Street by visiting the CityWorks web site at [parkstreetcityworks.org](http://parkstreetcityworks.org) or by participating in the next Café Care & Connect service opportunity, which is held monthly on the third Saturday morning of each month from 8:30am-12:30pm (with a free lunch!).

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## **Finding Your Fit**

If God has already led you to serve, it may be time to prayerfully consider whether there is more you can do to make better use of your unique talents and abilities. God wants us to invest the gifts we have been given in the most effective way possible. One approach by which we can become more mature Christians is through taking on a longer-term commitment or one that involves a specific person / group of people whose lives God can positively impact through us.

Café member Thaddeus Fulford-Jones relates the following story:

“My Café small group recently made a semester-long commitment to tutor a teenager in Roxbury as a means of reaching out and serving in the community. It was a great fit for our group – we definitely wanted a service opportunity that would make deliberate use of our various gifts and talents. It turns out that our group includes a number of professional engineers and science / technology grad students. Some of us have done tutoring and youth mentoring in the past.

Through a Park Street connection, we heard about a high school freshman who has learning disabilities and who is in serious need of help with math. We spoke with his parents and we offered to start weekly tutoring visits. In order to make it a manageable time commitment, we rotate between four members of our small group. That way each individual only has to commit one evening every four weeks. Since we meet regularly as a small group in any case, it is easy for the four tutors to discuss progress and make sure our teenager is getting a coherent learning experience.

We've all been enthused to see how much progress he has made, even over the past two months. Where previously he was getting C grades or worse, he is now achieving B's and has a much more positive attitude to the entire high school experience. It's great to know you're making a difference in a kid's life. We enjoy telling him about our small group and about the Park Street community. Hopefully one Sunday he'll even be able to come with us to a service at Park Street so that he can see for himself the community that we talk so much about.”

## **Response Questions**

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-28. How do you feel like you fit into the body of Christ? Spend some time talking about and writing down a list of strengths that you feel exist in your small group. You might choose to focus on spiritual gifts, character qualities, background experiences, or a combination of these. If you don't yet know those in your group well enough to identify others' gifts, share some of the skills God has given you.
2. Make a list of your group's service background. Is there anyone who is regularly involved with service projects? How about someone who previously did community service (maybe in college or high school)? What are the most memorable service projects that individuals in your group have participated in? What do you feel are some of the key ingredients that make for a rewarding service opportunity?
3. As your group feels led, make a commitment to do one service project together before the end of July/August. Discuss what type of project you would like to do and discuss what days/times would work best for your schedules. Would your group consider undertaking a long-term service project?
4. Discuss as a group the various networks that your small group members are plugged in to. These could be work-related, school-related, or connected with sports or other recreational activities. Does somebody in your group know of an individual/organization who could connect you with a service opportunity that would make sense for you to do as a team?

## **Prayer**

- Pray that God would guide and inspire your group as you renew your commitment to Him through service. Humbly ask that God would remove all obstacles as you work to grow in your faith and further His kingdom.

## **Additional Information**

- For additional information about service at Park Street Church, please visit the Park Street CityWorks web site: [parkstreetcityworks.org](http://parkstreetcityworks.org)

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