



## *2017 Training Manual*



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## Serving Ventura County - We're Better... Serving Together!

What happens when followers of Jesus from different churches unite to serve their local communities? You'll find out on Serve Day!

ACTION Serve Day is an annual event empowering local churches to get involved in community service that clearly demonstrates the power of God's love through acts of kindness and meeting real needs. Each year, churches from Ventura and Western Los Angeles Counties join together to plan and implement over 400 service projects in their communities, businesses, schools, and other locations in practical and tangible ways. Be part of ACTION Serve Day – join us and serve!

### **Our Vision**

To share the love of Christ through acts of service that change lives and strengthen our communities.

### **Our Mission**

Mobilizing volunteers, churches, businesses and agencies to profoundly impact lives, families and communities with hope.

### **Serve Day Purpose**

To provide opportunities for people to participate in community service that clearly demonstrates the power of God's love through our unity in Christ. To celebrate the service that happens year-round.

### **Serving Together**

As we serve together, our actions will communicate God's love and truth to the people we serve, to those who serve with us, and to the community at large.

- Serving alongside **other local churches**, the Church unites to make Jesus known in a powerful way throughout Ventura County (John 17:20-23)
- Serving together with **local community groups** (e.g., agencies, schools, residential facilities), we connect with these folks to make Christ known in very tangible ways (1 John 3:16)
- Inviting our **non-believing friends** to serve with us, they see our faith in Christ is alive and real (James 2:15 - 17)

## Opportunities

The opportunities are limitless!

### **Projects:**

- Meet legitimate needs
- Connect people
- Offer varying degrees of “risk” for participants
- Include all ages and stages of people
- Include one-time service and on-going service

### **Church Possibilities:**

- **Mentoring Church:** Share your model of local service with another church.

Ask yourself whether your church has a *passion* for serving others in Jesus' name...

- Is the *purpose* of your service to make faith in Christ real to both the servants and those served?
- Are there currently *people* who are passionately doing this in your church?
- Are you are already serving *people* and *places* in your community?

Your church would then partner with another church, share your model, and grow the momentum of transforming the community in Jesus' name!

- **Partnering Church:** Come along side an experienced mentoring church. Perhaps your church is not actively serving others in our community in the name of Jesus at this time, but you are ready to make that happen. Partner with a church who can share their model and guide you through the process of making Serve Day 2017 happen at your church.
- **Participating Church:** Send volunteers to serve alongside others. Giving congregation members the opportunity to spread the love of Christ, touch the lives of others, transform communities, and help internalize service into our everyday lives.

**All churches can participate and ACTION can help wherever you are!**

## Church Point Leaders

### **The Role of the Church Point Leader**

As the Church Point Leader you will hold the vision, along with other key leaders at your church, for Serve Day. To ensure that Serve Day functions smoothly and to ensure that your church has a positive experience, there are several expectations that participating churches will need to anticipate and your role is to champion these things at your church.

#### **1. Pray**

Pray for your church, for the organizations that we will be partnering with, for the community at large, and specifically for those that will be serving and being served on Serve Day.

#### **2. Plan and lead service projects**

We encourage your church to develop service project opportunities within your sphere of influence to ensure that your projected number of Serve Day participants will have enough opportunities to serve. ACTION will have some available as well on the project list. For example, if you expect 50 people to participate in Serve Day, you'll need enough service projects to accommodate all 50 people (i.e. 2 projects for 25 people each or 5 projects with 10 people per project). Your church attendees can participate in any service project sponsored by any church on Serve Day. Use this guide as a starting point in project development.

#### **3. Enter service project information online**

You will be responsible for getting this information to ACTION. ACTION will post the project(s) on our website. This data will appear when people sign up online. If your church wants to serve together, we still encourage you to leave some openings for those outside your church. People from the community will join us giving us the opportunity to serve alongside people who may never enter a church on their own. Be prepared to provide the following information for projects: project title, project address and city, description of project, any needed items that the volunteers will need to know (age restrictions, tools to bring, specifics on where to

meet if needed, etc.) maximum # of participants and number of these spots that are already filled from your church (if appropriate), start and end times, organization contact information, project leader contact information, and if there will be a follow-up project at the same location.

#### **4. Recruit Project Team Leaders to help you**

Although you may act as a Point Leader for your church, we recommend that you recruit and empower at least one volunteer per project to plan, lead and implement their respective project. Team Leaders should be proficient on email, enjoy people, and be detail oriented. Please see Project Team Leader section.

#### **5. Promote ACTION Serve Day at your church**

Your church will be responsible for promoting ACTION Serve Day in a way that is appropriate for your church to receive maximum participation. A promotional DVD and Serve Day logos will be available for your use, accessible through the ACTION website.

#### **6. Order T-shirts for members of your church**

By wearing Serve Day shirts it shows unity and comradery. Imagine our cities seeing the same shirts all over town! Order form included.

#### **7. Yard signs will be available**

Let us know if a yard sign is appropriate for your project. For instance, if your project is visible from the street we'd like to get you a yard sign. We want people to ask us what we are doing!

#### **8. Facilitate the sign-up process at your church**

Beginning several weeks prior to ACTION Serve Day, people from your church will be able to sign up to serve at Serve Day – either online <http://www.actionvc.org> or through your church sign-up sheet. Serve Day participants can sign up for any project in any city on line – not just the projects that their church is sponsoring.

#### **9. Plan and implement follow-up events**

Every Church Partner is encouraged to hold a follow-up event at each service project location as a way to continue to meet needs & develop a relationship with the organization/individual and to facilitate greater community involvement for all Serve Day participants.

#### **10. Work closely with ACTION**

As a Point Leader, you will have a close relationship with ACTION. We will help you with the registration process, keep you abreast of new information, remind you of deadlines, and answer any questions that aren't answered in this packet or on the website.

#### **11. Care for your Team Leaders**

Your Team Leaders will be your right hand, your helpers, etc. Be sure to check in with them regularly, communicate with them regarding deadlines and other things that might affect their success, pray for them, and encourage them. Ensure that each Team Leader understands his/her role well. Make sure that they are present at the Serve Day kick off sites. Finally appreciate them after Serve Day by sending them a thank you note.

#### **12. Have Fun & Serve!**

## **Project Team Leaders**

### **The Role of the Project Team Leader**

The Project Team Leader will be responsible for all aspects of the project including prior site visit, planning, volunteer communication, implementation, filling out the Project Survey, and the follow-up service project if there is to be one.

#### **1. Contact service project locations**

Call the contact person at the potential project location and inquire about their interest in being served. Please identify what ACTION Serve Day is, what church you're calling from and check to see if any other church has contacted that organization already. Be sure not to overwhelm them, we want to meet needs and serve, not be a burden.

#### **2. Get all of the detailed information**

It is essential in the planning stages that you get valid, up-to-date information for each project. Double check all phone numbers, addresses, etc. There may be a different address for the agency and the location of the project – make sure that you get both! Likewise, make sure they know who you are and they have a way to contact you.

#### **3. Plan all aspects of the service project.**

Each service project Team Leader will work with the organization contact to plan the event. This will include planning exactly what will be done, gathering needed supplies, and following up with volunteers who signed up for the project. You are responsible for finding a way to pay for expenses related to the service project. Some churches can find a small budget for this. Many agencies will pay for needed items like paint if you supply the volunteers. Ask! Some supplies can be acquired or discounted by asking retailers to donate. (A donation letter can be obtained by emailing or calling ACTION – We need to know who is being contacted on behalf of ACTION) Additionally, there are many serve projects that require little or no cost. If you would like each volunteer for your project to bring something with them to contribute, please let them know well in advance and post it on the website as well (for example – painting a fence, have everyone participating bring a brush or roller with them). If your church does not have all the needed resources, contact ACTION for additional ideas and assistance. Also, attire is important, be sure to note dress codes or requirements (for example – closed toe shoes, painting clothes, sunscreen, etc.)

#### **4. Plan follow-up service project.**

It would be wise to plan a follow-up service project at the same time the ACTION Serve Day project is planned. Or on the day of the event as the service project is going well, you can discuss a future return visit.

#### **5. Contact all service project participants.**

Email and/or call all service project participants. You'll need to remind them where and when to show up for Serve Day, and what to wear and bring. A good reason to have volunteers sign-up on ACTION's website is that automatic email reminders will be sent out!

#### **6. Attend a Kick-off.**

We encourage all volunteers to attend one of the area Kick Off sites. It gives us all time to worship and pray as the Church together, prepare our hearts for serving, and gives volunteers a clear picture of what the day is all

about – the big picture. It’s too easy to get wrapped up in the hands-on project and forget that we need to take the time to build relationships, pray for people, and serve with the heart of Jesus. Some of the kick-offs are even held in public places – how awesome is that!

### **7. Enjoy the blessings as you serve on Serve Day!**

Prepare ahead of time and make sure your serving location is ready for your participants when they arrive. Be sure all participants have signed a liability release/permission to be photographed form. When the volunteers arrive, pray together. Give overview and directions of what you will be doing. Let people know what to do if they have a question or are finished with their area. Remind them of specific dos and don’ts of the project. Where is the bathroom or first aid kit located? More communication is always good!

### **8. Tell the story.**

Take pictures of your team as they serve, and gather some thoughts about the team’s experience. Send your story in words and pictures, to ACTION; we’ll use these stories to encourage churches and believers across the county. (action@actionvc.org)

### **8. Pray and plan for on-going service, as a team and individually.**

Hold post-project leader teams huddle to debrief the day’s experience; pray and thank God for the people you served and the growth God that has accomplished in each of the team members. Look to the future – identify how the team, individually or as a group, can continue serving others in Jesus’ name. Complete the ***Project Leader Survey***.

## **Project Planning -- People and Places to Serve**

We encourage you to find volunteer opportunities within your local community.

- Who does your church already serve? You’ll likely want to build on those relationships by serving those you already serve. If you have a food pantry, perhaps a food drive at a local grocery store, cleaning the pantry and rotating food.
- If you’re looking for new people and places to serve, start with your current connections. Who do you know who can help identify needs in your community? Utilize your church’s existing relationships. Do you hold church at a movie theater or recreation center, perhaps they have a project you can do. Is someone in your congregations a local teacher, help at their school. Does someone live at a senior apartment complex, wash the resident’s windows and serve them lunch.
- Opportunities of places to serve can be identified by a review of current ministries of the church. What are your church’s specific ministry goals and how does community service help accomplish them?
- Check out the Serve Every Day scrolling list of needs on ACTION’s website (actionvc.org) for needs that have already been identified in our community.
- Make sure you get the people who work at the organization you’re serving to come to ACTION Serve Day and serve alongside you if it is appropriate.
- Ideas: small jobs at mobile home parks or senior apartments, beautification projects at agencies or schools, clean a trail or park for the parks and recreation department, bake treats and deliver them to your local fire and police stations, make crafts and deliver them to nursing homes, build a handicap ramp for a wheelchair bound person, put together care bags for foster children, collect used medical devises for a medical closet for those in need, etc.
- Need more ideas, call us!

## Step-by-Step: Planning a Service Project

### **3 Months Ahead: Find Your Project**

- Work with your current ministry partners to identify needs in your community.
- Contact non-profits, local government agencies, city offices, other churches, schools, mobile home parks, etc. and uncover the needs of your community. Ask ACTION for guidance.
- Confirm that they will be able to accommodate our efforts on the date(s) on which you plan your Serve Day project(s).
  - Plan your project complete with time, location, supplies, etc.
  - Get to know your contact at the agency – this is a great opportunity to be a “light”. Be aware that some agencies (especially government agencies) will need extra time to get approval for projects.
  - Over communicate but don’t be annoying!
- Check out the organizations website, stop by their facility, and get to know who you are serving.

### **2 Months Out: Finalize and Post Your Project**

- Contact the organization
  - Ensure that you have the correct information:
    - Project Address (to be posted online)
    - Organization Address (for your records & thank You’s)
    - Project Phone (your cell phone #)
    - Organization Phone (for your information)
    - Project Times
    - Project Directions
    - Project Details (attire, rules, etc)
    - Project Needs & Supplies
- Work closely with your Church Point Leader to make sure that your project is ready to post online and sign-up volunteers.
- Reconfirm with the community partner (ministry, non-profit, local government agency, city, etc.) the date that you plan your Serve Day projects!
- Compile your list of supplies for volunteers to bring.
- Compile your list of supplies for you to purchase.
- Keep Online Information Updated.
- Recruit Volunteers to be on your Project Team as leaders if you need them.
- Keep you church Point Leader informed.
- Pray for your project, volunteers, and community partner.

### **1 Month Out: Communicate**

- Check in with your church Point Leader often. Let ACTION know of any difficulties or challenges.
- Contact all registered volunteers for your Project.



- Welcome them.
- Remind them to attend Kick Off events.
- Tell them about rules & needs of your Project.
- Continue to pray!

### **Get out and Serve!**

#### **The weeks following: Thank You & Follow up**

- Thank all the volunteers and let them know how important they were to the project and the results from their efforts. (phone call, email, letter, church service, etc.)
- Thank your community partner organization & contact.
- Plan and communicate about follow up events.
- Fill out a Project Leader Survey and send it to your Church Point Leader or to ACTION.
- Give thanks to God!

## **ACTION: Your Partner in Serving**

ACTION will walk alongside you in preparation for *Serve Day – We’re Better... Serving Together*. We offer resources and training in how to:

- Develop service projects
- Build a partnership between churches
- Identify and train team leaders and volunteers
- Form a partnership with the community you serve (social service agencies, schools, residential facilities, etc.)
- How to pray with people

### **Materials**

- A promotional video, the Serve Day logo, liability forms, packets for use when serving at Mobile Home Parks and apartment complexes, document on praying and giving words of encouragement to those we are serving, and documents such as a general bulletin announcement, poster, and a What is Serve Day flyer.

### **T-shirts**

- Serve Day shirts are available for purchase. While this is not mandatory, we encourage everyone to wear one to show our unity in our communities. We have heard people say that they saw these logo shirts on people in numerous places all over the city and they wondered what was going on.

### **Yard Signs**

- ACTION has yard signs to be used at project sites that are visible to our community. We encourage the use of these so that the neighbors, people passing by, and others can be curious and ask what we are doing.

### **Kick-Off Event**

- Gather for the mandatory kickoff event on the morning of the service. Kick-off events occur throughout the county and are intended for worship, celebration, and prayer for the Church’s unity in serving, meeting needs, and bringing the love of Jesus to our community.

## **Promote Now**

The promotion of Serve Day at your church is critical in order to engage the maximum number of people. Here are some ideas that we've found to be helpful in years past.

### **1. Tell people to 'save the date'**

In your bulletin, newsletter, email updates, and website, encourage people in your congregation to set aside the date for ACTION Serve Day.

### **2. Facilitate the Serve Day sign-up process**

Plan to advertise ACTION Serve Day in your bulletin beginning a month before, if not sooner. We encourage you to put an ad in your bulletin pointing them toward the website (<http://www.actionvc.org>) to sign up. You may want to have laptops and leaders assist in Sunday morning volunteer signups.

### **3. Use the Serve Day logo**

The Serve Day logo is available to download and utilize for your bulletin, newsletter, email updates, website, and digital announcement slides.

### **4. Use the Serve Day promotional DVD**

A promotional DVD is available for your use at services, small groups, website and facebook pages, and beyond.

### **5. Plan a Sunday sermon or sermon series on serving & get up front time**

Prior to Serve Day, your church may want to plan a specific morning or an entire series to rally people around the value of serving the local community. If you can, have testimonies from people in your church or in the community that were impacted by prior Serve Day events. Stories are powerful. If you would like a representative from ACTION to come and speak, call the ACTION office ASAP as dates are limited.

### **6. Have an ACTION Serve Day Patio Table/ Information Booth**

Have a centralized place for people to ask questions, sign up, and get involved on your church patio/lobby after weekend services. If you have access to a few computers to allow online registration right there, go for it!

## **Do's and Don'ts of Serving**

Do NOT give out your personal phone number

DO give out ACTION's or your church's phone number

Do NOT go into someone's place alone

DO go in pairs or more

Do NOT take photos without permission

DO take photos after getting a release form signed

(Please forward form and photos on to ACTION!)

Do NOT pray with the person without asking permission  
DO pray for them and with them if they give you permission

Do NOT make promises that you may not be able to keep  
DO give them reasonable expectations and be sure to follow-through with what you say

## You Have Questions? We Have Answers!

We've provided answers to some of the Frequently Asked Questions.

### 1. Why just a one-day event?

As Jesus prayed in John chapter 17, our prayer is that the community would see the Body of Christ unified and working together. This is a great opportunity for us to share the Gospel in word and in deed on a large scale and celebrate what we do all year long. To that end, we plan to organize churches geographically to **partner with one another** in serving their communities' needs, to focus on **tying the churches to our communities** at kick-off events that are centrally located throughout the county.

In addition to the actual day of Serve Day, or the most convenient day for your Church, we plan to **come alongside Ventura County churches to support your ministries** of service and care, by providing church leaders and servant-volunteers with encouragement and opportunities to continue the good work that they've begun. Serve Day can be continued throughout the year as the needs arise or as much as your church wants.

However, Serve Day does live on beyond the one-day event. Out of this annual event has grown Serve Every Day which is an initiative that empowers individuals, families, and small groups to get out and meet needs on their schedule throughout the year. Our website ( [www.actionvc.org](http://www.actionvc.org) ) has an ongoing list of needs throughout Ventura County that you can plug into. Just click on the Volunteer tab at the top of the home page to see the list and go serve!

### 2. Our church has never done anything like this before. Where do I start?

No problem at all – don't be intimidated. We will find you a Liaison to help you every step of the way. We will walk you through the process.

### 3. Is training necessary?

Many of you have done this for years and are very comfortable in your roles. For those of you needing assistance and encouragement please call the ACTION office 805-877-0300 and we will put you in touch with someone who will answer your questions and concerns.

### 4. How does our church pay for these projects?

Many of these projects will not cost anything, and the rest have minimal costs. As a group, pray, then look for what God provides, but know for certain that He will provide. He is certainly interested in reaching our communities. He'll make provision. Donation request letters for asking businesses are available and ACTION will try to develop some project resources to come along side of you.

## 5. What about kids? Can we bring them along?

Kids can make a great addition to the serving provided the projects match their maturity and skills. If you're patient and have a little creativity, you can involve your child in any of the "Family Friendly" projects. You'll know best what project will be a good fit for your family. As a team, you may decide to designate someone to stay with very young children, so everyone else can be free to serve.

## 6. Why are participating churches encouraged to plan a follow-up service project at each location?

In years past, we have found that planning a follow-up project can help solidify a relationship between your church and the organization, business, or person you are serving. It also lets the participants see that the value is in regular service – not just a once a year event.

## 7. When do participants get t-shirts?

Participants may purchase t-shirts through your Church. Order forms are available on the ACTION web site for your church to order shirts. If your Church has not pre-ordered you may be able to purchase a shirt at one of the kick-off events or contact the ACTION office 805-987-0300.

## 8. Can people from my church sign up for any service project?

Yes. Anyone can sign up for any service project. It is fun to meet people from different churches and work alongside them for the common goal of serving our community.

## 9. What do we say when interacting with those we serve?

Suggestions: "We're here today doing a community service project to show God's love in a practical way." "If Jesus were in town today, walking about, I think He'd be both saying things and doing things. This is the sort of thing He'd be doing for people." "We're here today living out what the Bible says." Instead of saying, "Here, read this", we're saying, "Here, experience this."

## 10. What about verbalizing the Gospel to them?

Your goal is to serve. Memorizing a pat response to use with everyone you encounter will not work. If the opportunity presents itself, share your own faith story in a spirit of servanthood. For more information on this see "***Caring words: prayer, encouragement, evangelism***" on the Serve Day Resources page on the ACTION website ([www.actionvc.org](http://www.actionvc.org))

## 11. Will this be any fun?

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is fun!" - A near quote of 2 Corinthians 3:17...Where there is true, good, clean fun, usually the Spirit of the Lord is found as well. If you aren't enjoying yourselves as you reach out with the kindness of God, you'll come across oddly to those you serve.

## 12. Are there any secrets to making this work?

Do as good a job as possible. Let's leave everyone we touch with a positive impression of both the love and quality of Christ. Smile while you serve! **Don't be distressed if you are denied the opportunity to serve.** The real power in our serving projects is in the *offer* to serve, even more than in the *action* of serving.

## 13. What happens when we serve others with love?

### a. We're escorting people forward.

Our job isn't to see everyone we encounter come to Christ on the spot. The apostle Paul said we are to plant and water seeds (1 Corinthians 3:6), but ultimately God is the one who does the harvesting work. Paul also

said there is great power unleashed as we plant seeds with the power of Christ's kindness - that this kindness, in fact, leads others to repentance (Romans 2:4).

**b. We're answering their questions.**

In this age of selfishness, it's startling for someone to do a deed of kindness with no apparent strings attached. It's only natural for people to ask, "So, why are you doing this?" After we serve, we simply answer the natural questions that come up. We don't have to be experts in defending our faith to answer the typical questions people ask during servant evangelism projects.

**c. We're loving them into a relationship with Jesus.**

These "Show the Love" projects are happening so that we have an opportunity to love our community into relationship with Jesus Christ. In our quest for tending to our church community, and growing into the kind of people God wants us to be, we can't forget about the world that God so loved that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for it. With each act of love and generosity, we can make a difference.

**14. What if things go wrong during our service project?**

A few things will definitely go haywire when groups begin to do servant evangelism. It's best to have a flexible, teachable attitude as you reach out. And don't forget to practice smiling as you do it!

## Project Team Leader Template Sample

*Use this as a guide for communicating with your team.*

ACTION Serve Day is an annual event empowering local churches to get involved in community service that clearly demonstrates the power of God's love through acts of kindness and meeting real needs. Each year, churches from Ventura and Western Los Angeles Counties join together to plan and implement over 400 service projects in their communities, businesses, schools, and other locations in practical and tangible ways. Thank you for serving, being the hands and feet of Jesus, as part of ACTION Serve Day.

Project Name: (your project name)  
Project Date: (your project date and time)

Team Leader: (your name)  
Team Leader Phone Number: (your number)

Project Address/Location: (project address)  
Project Directions: (attach map quest directions)  
Parking Instructions: (special notes)  
Project Location Phone: (phone number of location)

What to wear: (Serve Day t-shirt, designate shoes, sunscreen, etc)  
What to bring: (donations - paint brushes, trash bags, yard tools, work gloves, etc.)

Special Notes: From you to your team...

## Church Partner T-Shirt Order Form

Please fill out this form and return it to the ACTION office **asap**. T-Shirts are \$10 each and payment is due when order form is submitted. **(PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO ACTION FOUNDATION)**

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address/Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Point Leader Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Point Leader Phone(s): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Point Leader E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Order Details	Point/Team Leader(s) \$10 (Green)	Volunteers \$10 (White)
Adult Small		
Adult Medium		
Adult Large		
Adult XL		
Adult XXL		
<b>TOTAL (\$)</b>		

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

