Service is being like Jesus. It isn’t merely thinking about Jesus or acknowledging what Jesus did for us. It is essentially doing what Jesus did and living as He lived. To truly serve, we make another person the most important person. When we do service, we are loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves--the two greatest commandments. True service involves doing something for another person with no strings attached. It is doing something for a person that is needed or will help them, without wanting or expecting anything in return. No indebtedness results from this Jesus kind of serving. True service encompasses humility and altruism: both characteristic of the Good Shepherd.

PRAYER:

Wondrous God, thank you for blessing us with hearts and minds to serve one another. Let us always be mindful that we love each other because you first loved us. We rejoice in that by serving one another, we are able to show that love for each other and for you, LORD. Help us continue in that spirit, that your will may be done and your kingdom may come. We ask that you continue to bless us and strengthen us as we try to be more like you. In your holy name we pray, Amen.

—Jerry O'Donnell, 2008 Workcamp Co-Coordinator
Scripture Jam:

Person 1: Of all the commandments, which is the most important?

Person 2: You shall not murder?

Person 3: You shall not steal?

Person 4: You shall not make for yourself an idol?

Person 5: The most important one is this: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Person 1: But that’s not one of the 10 commandments!

Person 5: The second is this:

Person 2: There’s a second?!

Person 5: Love your neighbor as yourself.

Person 3: I didn’t know those before!

Person 5: There is no commandment greater than these.

Person 4: We are called to love God.

Person 1: We are called to love our neighbors.

Person 2: We are called to treat others as we would like to be treated.

Person 5: We are called to serve God and our neighbors.

Person 3: We are called to service.

Person 4: How can we fulfill our calling?
Closing Prayer:

Loving God,
We are called to serve others and by doing so we show Your love to those who need it the most: the poor, the hungry, the sick, the naked, the lost. Thank you for this calling. Thank you for the ability to serve others with the resources we have at our fingertips, the courage to step beyond our comfortable lives, and the love pouring from our hearts. Guide us as we discern your call to service and what that means to us personally and as a congregation. Lead us down your path, Lord, encouraging us as we show Christ to others when we serve.

Amen.

Sing Hymn # 307 Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

-Rebekah Houff, BVS Unit 275, NYAC Coordinator
I entered into BVS unit 277 this past September with the hope of making the world a better a place. But, no matter how much you give, you receive more back than you could ever imagine.

Our orientation unit spent our last week in Kansas City. One afternoon we set out on what was called Operation Knock Knock. We divided into groups of three and set out into an inner-city neighborhood. We were to knock on doors and offer to help the owner in any way we could: clean up the yard, vacuum, do dishes, or any form of service that we could. All 31 of us volunteers donned our purple BVS shirts and out we went.

Our group had a hard time finding someone for whom we could serve. We were walking down the street and a lady standing at her car yelled across the street, "What's those purple shirts about?" We stopped and told her about BVS and Operation Knock Knock. She told us about her life. She had just gone through a series of heartbreaking events: she was a single mother raising three kids, one of whom was just diagnosed with sickle cell anemia; her house had been broken into three times in the last year; she had just lost her job; and, she was about to move. After telling us about her hardships she asks where we are staying. We tell her and she says, "I'll be by with some drinks for all of you." We protested, but she insists. We leave at that. We ask if we can do anything for her. She says she is doing fine, but thank you. We thank her for talking with us and we head on our way.

Two nights later there is knock on the door and our orientation leader returns carrying four bags of groceries. The lady from our conversation followed through with her promise. In the bags we found drinks, chips, cookies, bread and lunch meat. Our friend, who we tried to serve, wanted to send us off. She wanted no recognition, she did not come in to meet the three of us again or the group at large. She just wanted to show her support.

I learned a powerful lesson that day--one that I hope stays with me for a long time. Life is not about serving people or trying to make people's lives better. Life is about working *with* people. So we all can grow and make the world a better place together.

_Hymn, Here I Am Lord_

Written by: Jon Zunkel a BVS-er currently serving in Northern Ireland
Jesus’ answer to the scribe wasn’t just a pithy answer to a pointed question. While his response satisfied the scribe’s probing and validated his knowledge of the Jewish law, Jesus also lived the life that the commandments mandated. His answer here in Mark satisfied the scribe because it was directly from the Jewish tradition. “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one…” is from Deuteronomy 6:4. Known as the “shema,” this is the commandment that Jews are to keep in their hearts, teaching them to their children, fixing them on their foreheads, and writing them on the doorposts of their houses. Loving neighbor as self is familiar, too - it comes from Leviticus 19:18. The scribe commends Jesus for his accuracy, saying that “this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices,” (Mark 12:33).

For Jesus, though, the greatest commandments were not only accurate legal answers to difficult scribal questions. Jesus himself actively lived out the commandments he espoused, glorifying God and working for his neighbor’s good. In the Brethren tradition, have a beautiful reminder of this combination of loving both God and neighbor in the service of footwashing. When we read John’s account of Jesus’ last meal with his disciples, we hear a hint of Jesus’ motivation for kneeling to wash their feet:

“How during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet…” (John 13:2-5).

Jesus washed his disciples’ feet because he knew that he had come from God and was returning to God. This posture of service - kneeling down to wash another’s feet - gracefully combines the two most important commandments. Because Jesus knows that God is both the source and end of his life, he glorifies God by serving his neighbors. In loving his disciples, he also loves God. May we also learn to follow these great commandments, glorifying God and working for our neighbor’s good.

Written By: Dana Cassell, Current BVS-er in COB Ministry Office
Service Sunday

For the Glory of God and my Neighbor’s Good

- from the Sauer Press

Service ministry worship ideas

Call to Worship:
Lord, we come to this place with open minds and time to give to those who need us. We ask for your help in opening our eyes that we might see those who need us most. May our prayer, songs and meditation praise your Holy name.

Invocation:
Holy God, you have given us so much and others so little. We pray for insight as to what we can share with those who need our love and attention. We are your hands and feet and want to serve others in your name. This we pray, Amen

Morning Prayer:
Compassionate God, we praise you and covet your presence. Let us meditate on the people around us. Pray for the person on your left. Pray for the person on your right. Father God, who heals the sick, makes the blind to see and comforts those who are grieving, help us to be willing to serve others. We pray for peace for all nations. We ask a special blessing on our government and those with whom we need to build new understandings for peace and justice. We are your servants, Lord and we are here with open hearts and listening ears as to where and how we should share your love and compassion. Lord, it is from you we receive strength and hope; and we thank you for the love you have shown us, give us courage to open ourselves to serve wherever we find a need. In the name of our Lord and Savior we pray, Amen

—Roma Jo Thompson, a retired Nigeria missionary