



Ideas for a Service Fast:

The concept of a “service fast” is to give up some of the time that you normally would spend on yourself and your own interests in order to serve others. The kind of service you can offer does not need to be life-changing or life-saving, but just simple acts of caring for people – much like Jesus washing His disciples’ feet. That act didn’t “save” them, but it “showed them the full extent of his love” (John 13:1). And following His example carries this promise:

“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet... Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”
(John 13:14,17)

You can try one of the ideas below during the next 40 days, or use them as something to start your own creative thinking. Some of these ideas will require involvement that may extend beyond the 40-day fasting period. But that just may be the way it should be...

- Go to a nursing home in your area and ask the head nurse what resident doesn’t have any family that visits. Set a time each week to visit that resident. Find out what he/she enjoys – read a book, take them for a walk or wheel chair ride on a nice day, etc. Be consistent.
- Go to a school in your neighborhood and find out what students could use some tutoring or that could benefit from reading out loud. Contact the parent and set a time to meet with that child to read together. Be consistent.
- Ever notice an “unkempt” lawn in a nice neighborhood? Find out if an older person lives there and if he/she needs help with the yard. Make a contact and offer to help weekly.
- Ever notice a public bathroom that needs to be cleaned? How about offering to clean one at a local establishment for free? ...more than once.
- Get a group of teens or children together and organize a pickup day along a road in a neglected neighborhood. Arrange for a truck to follow and pick-up bags. Going out for an ice cream afterwards adds a special touch.
- Serve a single parent from your congregation. Contact that parent and offer to take the children to the park, for ice cream, watch a video (approved by the parent), etc. Give the parent a set time the children will be brought back so that parent can have total freedom in what they choose to do.
- Serve a family in need in the church. Contact them and have them over for dinner a couple of times this month. Find out their favorite dishes and make a special effort to cook what they enjoy.
- Serve an elderly person or a single parent who could use some help around the house. Call and let him/her know that you would like to help with a task. Set a day that you could do that and give a time you could arrive and how long you can stay.
- If you have young parents in the church – offer to take care of the children for the evening and give the parents a night out. It would help them if you could baby sit the children for free plus give them some money to go out to dinner together (Two people could work together on this task.)

- Get out of your comfort zone and help in the nursery if you don't normally do that. This will bless your nursery coordinator!
- Take a person in your church out to lunch that you don't normally spend time with – and not many others do either. Find out some of his/her likes and needs, and see how you can minister to him/her and continue to show interest in his/her interests afterwards.
- Go to a local school in an underprivileged neighborhood and see what kind of tasks they need done around the school. Organize a work group (if necessary) and get the task(s) done.
- Go to a church in an underprivileged neighborhood and take the pastor out to lunch. During that time, find out the needs of the church and see what you can do (and possibly along with some others) to help the church out.
- Organize a window washing team. Go to an area of older homes where more senior citizens might live and go from house to house offering to wash their windows for them on the inside and/or outside.
- Know a large family or a family that the mom and dad both have to work? Call them and tell them you are coming over to pick up the laundry. Get it back to them by the next day.
- Organize a group of singers and musicians. Contact local nursing homes and offer to come and put on a program for the residents. Include some children in the program.
- As you have your prayer time, ask the Lord to bring people to mind that may need some encouragement. When a person(s) come to your mind, write a note or call to just let them know you are thinking of them.
- Work in a large corporation? Write a small note of appreciation, attach a candy bar and leave it on the desks of people you know that rarely get recognition for what they do.
- Organize a bus driver appreciation day for the drivers in your school district. (You don't have to be a parent to do this.) Bring small bags of homemade cookies to the bus garage and hand them to the drivers, or hand them out when they line up the busses at the schools before the children are dismissed. Present the gifts and your appreciation before the children board. (Let the school know what you are doing.)
- Do the same kind of recognition as above for janitors in the schools or any other public service place.
- Go to the local police station or fire station loaded with morning goodies with a note of appreciation attached for all they do.
- Know a young couple who are low on income? Purchase gift certificates from a local grocery store, haircut shop, gas station or fast food. Treat them to some everyday opportunities that may be a stretch for them financially.
- Plan ahead before you go on your errands around town and call an elderly person who lives alone. Ask him/her to join you, or if he/she has errands you could run.
- Know a teenager that seems to be a "loner?" Invite him/her out for some ice cream.
- Organize an "odd jobs" work team by advertising in the church bulletin. Plan a couple of work days to help others with their lawns, painting, garage/basement cleaning, oil change, etc.