

#forthelou Family Guide

A step-by-step resource to spark conversation,
creativity and genuine excitement around how to
show God's love through acts of service.



Wondering how to make #forthelou a worthwhile and fun experience for everyone?

You are not alone. Perhaps this will help.

LET GOD LEAD.

Life is busy. Still, God calls us to love one another as He loves us. He knows this takes time, effort and energy. He can be trusted to make a way.

So, take a deep breath, say a prayer and remember you all are enough. Right now. Just. As. You. Are.

*Isaiah 48:17, Matthew 22:36-38,
Matthew 25:37-40*

LET THEM IN.

Now that the pressure's off, invite everyone into the conversation and resist the temptation to talk too much or make most of the decisions.

God has been using broken, imperfect people to spread His love since the beginning of time. All we need is to show up with a soft heart.

2 Corinthians 12:5, Psalms 51:10-12, Mark 10:13-14

LIVE IT UP!

Families serving together to spread God's love is a beautiful thing and should be deeply enjoyed and authentically celebrated.

Be on the lookout for subtle ways to "mark the moment", as well as encourage and affirm one another.

*Hebrews 10:24-25, Ephesians 2:4-10,
Matthew 25:23*



LEARN SOMETHING NEW.

The process outlined in this guide promotes learning and gives everyone a chance to own their experience.

In the hours or days after you serve, set aside time as a family to do some post-serve reflection. It will deepen their understanding and generate questions and ideas to propel future learning experiences.

Below are a handful of questions* to get you started. Make sure everyone gets a chance to share and feel free to let the answers guide your conversation.

When giving feedback, try to focus on behavior, attitude and skill development, not just how well a task was completed.

- *What happened that I did not expect?*
- *What was the most interesting discovery about the situation, others and myself?*
- *What do I want to learn more about?*
- *How will this impact how I think and feel?*
- *What was the most enjoyable moment? What was the most challenging?*
- *Did I put forth my best effort? What am I most proud of?*
- *What would I do differently next time?*

**Consider sharing them in advance. Some people enjoy having extra time to think and/or write down their answers.*

If/when you are ready,

here are a few more things we found helpful.



Stay flexible. You will find the right, age-appropriate fit for your family. It might just take a few attempts.



Explain what to expect during your serving experience. Discuss both pleasant and unpleasant feelings that may arise. Make a list of things you will want/need to bring.



Look for ways to talk about the issue you'll be addressing and how it affects people. Was there a time you or someone close to you needed similar support?

Embrace the hard questions and find the answers together. There are plenty of books and online resources that can equip your family with the skills to serve others well. One of our favorites in [The Crossing Bookstore](#) is "Small Things with Great Love" by Margot Starbuck.



Talking through one's different life experiences is important. Equally important is recognizing the similarities. That is the secret to building community with one another.



Practice people first language and be cognizant of how you share info/photos at [#forthelou](#). Did you ask permission? Doing so preserves dignity and shows respect.



[#forthelou](#)
Family Guide



STEP 1: Plan.

Gather the family, something to write with, your favorite snacks and start with Step 2.

STEP 2 : Listen: xing.church/kcvideo

Listen to this mom and her daughter as they share why serving others is so important.

- What thoughts did you have as you watched them?
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STEP 3: Pray.

Invite God into your conversations. Consider asking him for guidance, courage and a humble heart.

STEP 4: Discover.

Take a look at the Bible to see what Jesus and the early leaders had to say about serving others in [Matthew 25:34-36, 40](#), [Mark 10:45](#), [James 2:14-17](#) and [1 Peter 4:8-10](#).

- What do you feel God telling YOU from these verses?
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STEP 5 : Reflect.

Talk about how your family likes to serve one another.

STEP 6: Identify.

Whom are you drawn to serve? Circle your top two before you move on.

- **NEIGHBORS...**
people who live close by who might need some help or encouragement
- **ESSENTIAL WORKERS...**
people who serve us like police, mail carriers and grocery store clerks
- **SCHOOLS...**
people who teach, lead, care for and attend our schools
- **LOCAL BUSINESSES...**
people who own restaurants, shops and provide important services
- **GREATER ST. LOUIS...**
people in our city who might need food, clothing or other support

STEP 7: Choose.

Head to the ForTheLou website: thecrossing.church/forthelou (after June 1) to decide where to plug in!

- Write down the date, time and location here:
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WE ARE
FOR
THE
LOU

Go the Extra Mile!

Consider sharing your plans (and your experience) with others.

- Share the ForTheLou link (left) to invite others to come along.
- Post pictures to social media with the #forthelou and tag us @kidscrossingstl

BONUS: Text forthelou to 48099 to continue the conversation about why we are called to love others in our city.