

A guide to
SERVING



Find your 'one thing' and do it with all you heart!

When I was 18 years-old, as a brand new Christian, I wanted to make a difference so I jumped into church life with both feet: I attended a Monday youth discipleship group; I was part of a team at a youth drop-in; I helped out at a midweek kids group; I attended worship team practice; and I visited an elderly lady in the church. I really went for it and nobody stopped me. Soon, I starting to experience burn-out and slowly felt my passion ebbing away. I felt tired and disillusioned...even a bit resentful.

When I was 19 years-old I met Maggie and she helped me to see (as she has done many times since) that *activity* and *busyness* aren't the same as *fruitfulness*. I vividly remember sitting in a cafe with her, feeling stressed, writing down all my commitments on a napkin. As we considered each in turn, it became clear that I needed to lay some things down. Immediately following the waves of peace that accompanied this decision came the waves of guilt: '...but they need me; If I step down it will increase the burden on those who are left...I can't do that to them!' and, 'What will people think of me if I give up so easily? I won't be trusted with more important roles if I can't even see this through!'

Fortunately, I listened to Maggie's God-given wisdom instead of the devil's condemnation and stepped back from a few things. When I spoke to the ministry leaders about my decision they were all very gracious and understanding. I felt like a weight was being lifted off my shoulders and I was overcome with a new sense of purpose and focus.

Here are some of the lessons I learned from that experience:

- Serving God by serving others is at the heart of Christianity.
- It is better to do one thing wholeheartedly than several things half-heartedly.
- Some ministries are only for a season.
- Guilt is never a good motivation for ministry.
- If we serve reluctantly or with resentment, the fruit tends to be bad.

Serve with excellence

You are a minister! Did you know that? *Ministry* literally means *service*, and all of us are called to a life of service. That makes every Christian a minister. There is no clergy/laity divide in the Kingdom of God...all of us are called to play a part!

In Hope Church, we have many opportunities for service and many growing teams with opportunities to step out in ministry. So, we ask that everybody prayerfully considers serving in at least one area of ministry. Remember, we are not doing someone a favour by serving; we are doing it in the name of Jesus to bless others and bring glory to God!

Here are a few personal commitments you may like to make:

- **I'm going to serve with humility and love.** I will keep reminding myself that I do what I am doing for the good of others.
- **I'm going to give my very best.** Because I'm doing it for God, I will serve with my whole heart. God wants my 'first-fruit' not my leftovers!
- **I'm going to be fully committed.** I know it positively impacts my team when I prepare well, turn up when agreed, arrive on time and serve with a good attitude. That is the kind of team member I want to be.
- **I'm going to be reliable.** When I am due to serve on a rota, I will make every effort to be available and turn up when expected.
- **I'm going to go the extra mile.** If I'm not available to serve - for whatever reason - I'll see it as *my* responsibility to find someone else on the rota to swap my week with. It is not my team leader's job to find someone (unless I've done everything I can do first).
- **I'm going to be teachable.** There is always something new I can learn and I am committed to becoming better at what I do.

A few final thoughts...

- We want those who are new to the church to 'bed-in', join a Life Group and spend time getting to know people. There is no pressure to join one of our ministry teams immediately but we do want everybody to have a ministry.
- We want it to be easy to *join* a team, but also straightforward to *leave* a team.
- There are certain ministries (such as **Hope Kids**, the **Prayer Ministry** team and the **Worship** team) that require you to have been in the church for a while before you join.
- Other teams (such as our **Set-up & Set-down** team and **Refreshments** team) can be joined straight away.
- If you would like to join a team, please speak to the relevant team leader to find out what is involved.
- If you decide to join a team, we would ask you to make an initial commitment to serve for six months (and then to re-assess every six months after that).
- If you feel that you would like to step down from a team, you can do so at any time without feelings of guilt. Simply speak to your team leader and try to give them as much notice as possible.

Go for it!

We appreciate every single person who gives their time to serve in Hope Church. We celebrate every act of service, both seen and unseen. As a church, our goal is to bring glory to God and see people moving towards Jesus. That is the Lord's priority and so it is our priority too! The great news is that all of us have a part to play in seeing it happen...so let's give God our very best!

Together in His service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damien', with a horizontal line underneath.