



Every member is a minister:

Kindling our servant hearts

(Leader's study with answers)



Contents

Introduction:	4
Part 1: Our God-given purposes	5
...As individuals	5
...As members of Christ’s church, his body	6
Part 2: Our motivation to serve	7
Discuss: Who is doing the serving in this verse, and who is being served?	7
Discuss: What other presents does the Holy Spirit give us?	7
Discuss: What is your response to these “gifts”? Do we struggle to think of these things as presents?	7
Our ultimate motivation	8
Discuss: What does Jesus most want from us?	8
Correcting our motivations:	9
Part 3: Getting practical	10
Part 4: What next?	12
Pray together	12
Appendix: Examples of some of the gifts from the Holy Spirit	13

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Aim of this study:

Our vision is to be a growing Christian community devoted to maturing in Jesus all for the glory of God.

For God's glory, we want every member of our church to be committed to becoming more and more like Jesus every year. Recently we heard a sermon teaching us that we are each the ministers of Campbelltown Anglican Church and are to grow to be more like Jesus through our service to him in our church family. This is a topical Bible study to help us reflect further on that teaching, refresh us if we are feeling burdened from serving, and encourage us to kindle our servant hearts.

The study focuses on the main passages used in the "Members who minister" sermon (Romans 12:1-13 and Ephesians 4:1-16). Each of those passages has also been specifically preached on recently.

If you would like to revisit the talks, the links can be found here:

[Launching 2024 - part 2: Members who minister](#)

[Ephesians 4](#)

[Romans 12](#)

Introduction:

When we serve at church, we often feel a range of emotions as we go about our various “jobs”. Which of the following picture/s represent your current (or past) attitudes towards serving?

 <p>You feel burdened and weary – (serving out of obligation and duty)</p>	 <p>You feel happy because others are appreciative and grateful for your work (serving for your own glory)</p>	 <p>You feel resentful because your serving is going unnoticed – you wonder why you’re bothering</p>
 <p>You want to be as good a Christian as you can (serving for assurance that God will accept you)</p>	 <p>You feel content and free not to serve – we are saved by grace alone!</p>	 <p>You hope God will look favorably on you and protect you from bad things happening (serving to earn God’s blessing)</p>
 <p>Feeling that you owe Jesus so much that in return you need to work hard for him (serving to pay Jesus back)</p>	 <p>You serve because you enjoy feeling needed and are annoyed if someone else does your job (serving so that Jesus thinks you are valuable)</p>	 <p>You feel frantic and overwhelmed with a long todo list, too busy to pray (serving without Jesus)</p>

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Part 1: Our God-given purposes

Read Romans 12:1-13 together.

What are our God-given purposes?

...As individuals

Using verses 1-2, complete the following table:

Verse	What is our purpose as individual Christians?	What is God's reason?
1	<i>to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice</i>	<i>(it is) holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship</i>
2a	<i>Do not conform to the pattern of this world</i>	<i>you will be able to test and approve what God's will is (you will be able to know what is good, pleasing and perfect to God)</i>
2b	<i>be transformed by the renewing of your mind</i>	

Briefly discuss how these God-given purposes should shape our everyday lives. In what ways do you think this hard or challenging?

...As members of Christ's church, his body

Read Ephesians 4:1-16 together.

Using verses 11-16, complete the following table:

Verse	What is our purpose as a member of Christ's church?	What is God's reason?
12	<i>to become equipped for works of service</i>	<i>so that the body of Christ may be built up</i>
13	<i>To be united in the faith and knowledge of the Son of God</i>	<i>So that we attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ</i>
13	<i>To become mature</i>	<i>vs 14 – we will not be immature and unstable in our faith, easily deceived by false teaching</i>
15	<i>To speak the truth in love</i>	<i>So that we become the mature body of Christ</i>
16	<i>To each play our part in the work</i>	<i>The whole body of Christ grows and builds itself up in love</i>

Discuss how these God-given purposes should shape our church life.

Before we think through how we each “play our part” it is important to understand what our motivation should be. If we serve for any of the reasons we thought through at the start, we will give up.

Part 2: Our motivation to serve

This section is largely drawn from the book "Serving without sinking", Chs 5-9.

In Mark 10:45, Jesus says, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus is speaking with his disciples at this point.

Discuss: Who is doing the serving in this verse, and who is being served?

*Jesus is serving his disciples. His disciples are the ones **being** served. To become a disciple of Jesus is to turn to him and accept his serving of us. He doesn't need us to serve him. He came solely to serve us! Why would he do that? Think of what he gave up to come. What would motivate him to do so?*

Read this summary: It is important for us to grasp that truth and to know that nothing has changed since Jesus first said it. Being a Christian, becoming one of Jesus' disciples is not about becoming a servant and serving Jesus. Rather, it is about us understanding that we are being served **by** Jesus. That **he** came to serve **us**. No strings attached. Our relationship with God has nothing to do with how much we serve him. It is all about his service of us. Because Jesus gave his life for us, and because he continues to serve us by praying for us and advocating for us with the Father (*Rom 8:34, 1 John 2:1 and Heb 7:25*) we are given the privileged position of being friends with the Boss (*John 15:13-15*), brides of the King (*Eph 5:31-33*) and sons of the Father (*Rom 8:15-17*).

As well as being elevated to these privileged positions, as Christians God also gives us good gifts. The best gift is the Holy Spirit, given to everyone when they become a follower of Jesus (*Luke 11:11-13, Rom 8:15-16*). He is an eternal gift, who keeps on giving.

Read again Romans 12:6 and Ephesians 4:11.

Discuss: What other presents does the Holy Spirit give us?

Different gifts, eg prophesying, faith, teaching, serving, evangelists etc.

Discuss: What is your response to these "gifts"? Do we struggle to think of these things as presents?

Being given a "job" doesn't sound like a present!

Read this summary from the book (p92-98) which helps us to see these as "good" gifts:

1) God made all of us to use our gifts relationally... God's gifts are given to be enjoyed with others. The idea is that God's people are meant to use their Spirit-given gifts to serve the rest of God's people. They create unity, and they depend on unity. That's why different people have different gifts. It enables us to help one another, and causes us to rely on one another. God's gifts do not work by themselves. They rely on the context of the church body. And in needing this unity, they help to create it. They make it obvious to everyone that we need each other. They cut against the individualism of sinful selfishness and make us enjoy being part of Christ's body, the church.

2) Christ's gifts are good because they draw us to Him. He is the greatest treasure we can have, and He will draw us closer and closer to Him. And He will use our gifts, even (in fact, especially) the harder ones, to do this...If we were only given gifts which enabled us to serve in ways we naturally found easy or fun, we wouldn't learn to depend on Christ, to lean on Christ, to ask Him for help. We need gifts and service that lead us to draw closer to Jesus.

3) God's gifts are good presents because there is a significance in using them. When we use a gift Jesus gave us, for His sake, we are serving Him. His cause, "the kingdom of God", is the only thing that will last for ever. You can do something today that will have eternal significance, simply by using an ability or circumstance that Jesus gave you to serve Him.

Our ultimate motivation

Before we think about unwrapping and using our "presents" from God to serve in our church body, we need to remind ourselves of what Jesus most wants from us. Read the following verses and complete the sentence.

John 15:9	<i>As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.</i>
Ephesians 6:24	<i>Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.</i>
Revelation 2:4	<i>Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.</i>

Discuss: What does Jesus most want from us?

Jesus wants us to know that he loves us. Jesus wants us to remain in his love. God wants us to love Jesus with an undying love. Jesus values love above hard work (in Rev 2).

Our ultimate motivation to serve is because _____.

Correcting our motivations:

Look back at the pictures from the start of the study. How should we correct each of our unbiblical reasons for serving? (Feel free to draw upon parts of Scripture as well as the study so far.)

When we serve...	God wants to tell us that...
Out of a sense of obligation and duty...	<i>If we serve because we love Jesus, we will find serving a joy and a rest (Matt 11:28-29)</i>
To be respected and appreciated...	<i>We should not be people-pleasers, seeking our own glory. Rather, seek the glory of God and serve him alone. (Col 3:22b-24)</i>
Because we have to - unless we do it, no one else will...	<i>He does not need anything from us (Acts 17:24-25). Rather, it is a privilege to be invited to be his co-workers (1 Cor 3:7-9)</i>
To have more assurance that God will accept us...	<i>We are already fully accepted by God. (Rom 5:8)</i>
We don't serve! We know we are saved by grace alone...	<i>We are saved by grace alone, and by God's grace we are free in Christ. However, we are now yoked with Christ and he has created good works for us to do (Eph 2:8-10).</i>
So that God will look favourably on us...	<i>He has already given us every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph 1) and we know that God does not promise that bad things don't happen to "good" Christians. Indeed, we are warned that persecution and trouble will come to Christians (2 Tim 3)</i>
Because we owe Jesus so much and are in debt to him...	<i>If we think we owe Jesus, then we do not truly understand grace (Gal 2:20-21). Jesus did pay our debt, but his death was a present to us and our debt is now gone. We don't owe God anything. That is how much God loves us. He wants us to love him back, not feel in his debt.</i>
So that we are needed, so that we are valuable to Jesus...	<i>We are valuable to Jesus because he loves us. He doesn't need us, he just wants a relationship with us. (Matt 10:29-31)</i>
To get through the long list of jobs that need doing...	<i>The only Todo List we should care about is what is on God's list. He won't give us more than we can do each day. He is the one who has created our Todo List (Eph 2:10). Even Jesus only did what was on his Father's Todo List (John 5:19), and Jesus made time to pray (Matt 14:23).</i>

Part 3: Getting practical

Read the following verses. What does God want us to know about our presents?

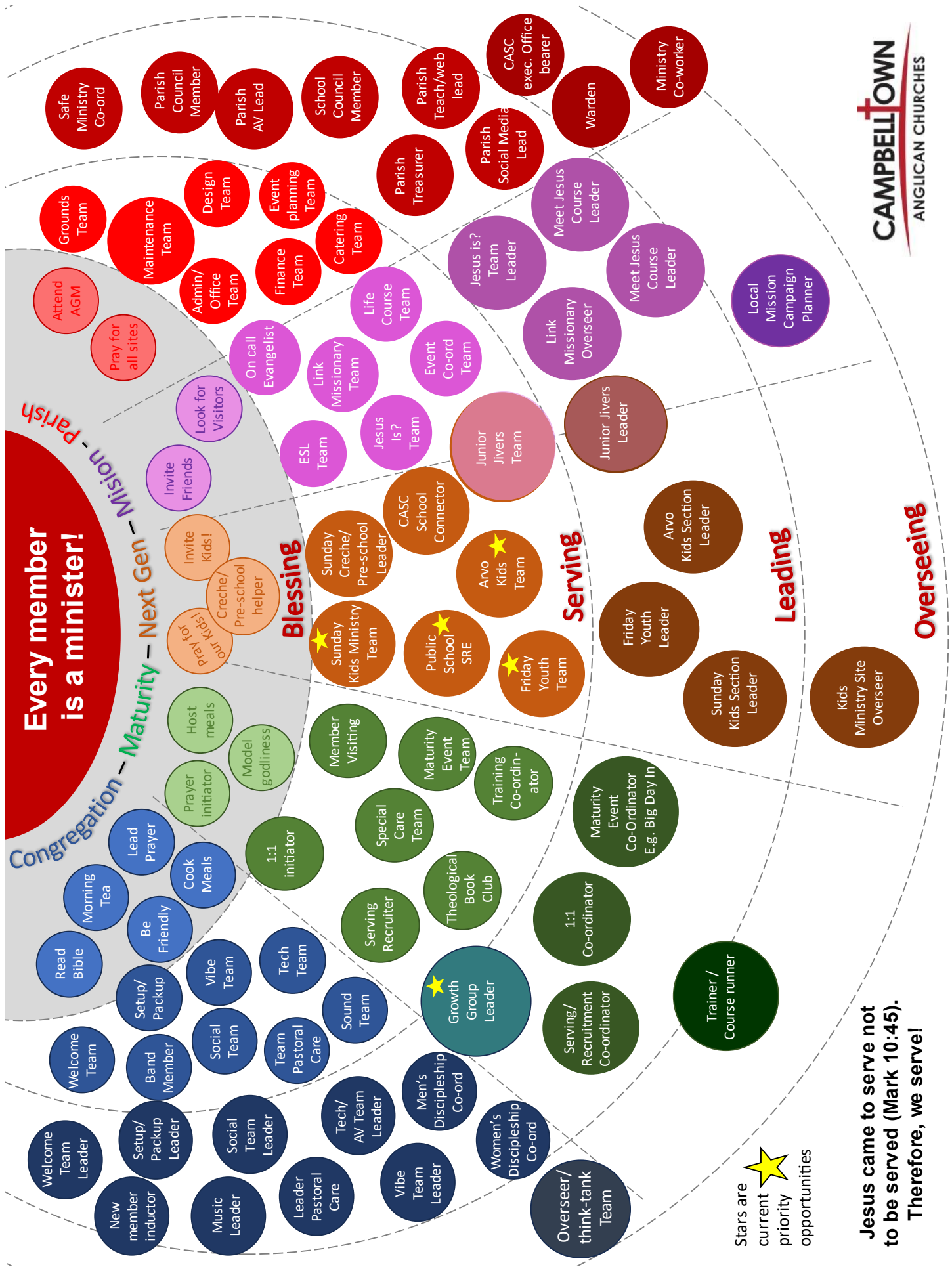
- 1 Cor 12:4-5 *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.*
- Rom 12:6 *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.*
- 1 Peter 4:10 *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*
- 1 Cor 12:12, 15-18 *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.*

Over the past week, your brothers and sisters have been sharing a variety of ways in which they have seen you use your God-given gifts. Take a few minutes now to look through their encouragements to you and reflect. **NB LEADERS PLEASE ONLY HAND OUT THE REPORTS AT THIS POINT!!!**

Are you surprised by any of the "results"?

Do you have different opinions about your skills and abilities?

Does this broaden your understanding of how you might play your part in our church body?



Jesus came to serve not to be served (Mark 10:45). Therefore, we serve!

Part 4: What next?

The “Serving with Joy” diagram is from earlier in the year can be found on the previous page (and an interactive version can be found on the Hub <https://campbelltownanglican.org/serving/>). Spend a few minutes looking at all of the serving opportunities cross our church.

After school holidays, the staff team is going to start afresh with how we each serve in our church body at CAC. Please take some time over the next few weeks to reflect on how God has gifted you to serve Jesus. Pray that you might serve him out of love, and that you would be refreshed to serve with joy. Stay tuned for the chance to complete the new serving form when it is distributed.

Pray together

Share and pray together about how this study has refreshed you, corrected you or challenged you.

Close by praying this prayer of dedication together:

*Eternal God and Father,
by whose power we are created
and by whose love we are redeemed,
guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,
that we may give ourselves to your service
and live this week in love
to one another and to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Appendix: Examples of some of the gifts from the Holy Spirit

(modified from <https://mintools.com/gifts-list.htm>)

Administration: is able to accomplish goals and directives by planning, organising, and supervising others. (*Seen in Acts 6:1-6*)

Cross-cultural ministry: is able to connect easily with and minister to those from other cultures and language backgrounds. (*1 Cor 9:20-23 "I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some"*)

Evangelism: feels comfortable sharing the good news of the Gospel and has potential to train others. (*Eph 4:11*)

Encouragement: naturally shares words of encouragement, comfort, consolation, and counsel to others. (*Romans 12:8*)

Faith: is firmly persuaded of God's power and promises and displays a confidence in God and his word that circumstances and obstacles do not shake. (*Eg Paul in 2 Cor 12:8-10 and 2 Tim 1:12*)

Giving: cheerfully and freely shares material resources without thought of return. (*Romans 12:8*)

Helping: loves doing practical jobs, frequently provides practical support or assistance to others in the body, notices undone tasks and uses available resources to get the job done. (*Romans 12:7*)

Hospitality: is able to connect with others easily and help them feel at ease; initiates social connections; warmly welcomes people, even strangers, into their home or church. (*Romans 12:13*)

Knowledge: learns as much as possible through the gathering of information and the analysing of that data. (*Eg 1 Tim 4:16 "Watch your life and doctrine closely"*)

Leadership: is able to set direction with care and diligence and can naturally motivate others to become involved and work together to accomplish goals. (*Romans 12:8*)

Mercy: naturally displays sensitivity toward those who are suffering, whether physically, mentally, or emotionally, so as to feel genuine sympathy with their misery, speaking words of compassion but more so caring for them with deeds of love to help alleviate their distress.

(Romans 12:8, seen in Luke 10:25-37 - The good Samaritan)

Pastoring: can be entrusted with spiritually caring for, protecting, guiding, and feeding a group of believers. *(Eph 4:11, 1 Peter 5:1-4)*

Prophecy: is able to testify to the word of God at work in everyday life; has an understanding of our world today and how God's word bears upon particular situations.

(Romans 12:6, Eph 4:11, 1 Cor 14:29)

Teaching: is able to instruct others in a logical, systematic way so as to communicate pertinent information for true understanding and growth. *(Romans 12:7, Eph 4:11)*

Wisdom: is able to apply knowledge to life by making spiritual truths quite relevant and practical in decision-making and daily life situations. Can clearly distinguish truth from error by judging whether the behaviour or teaching is from God, Satan, human error, or human power. *(Eg Rom 12:2 "able to test and approve what God's will is" or Titus 1:9 "encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it")*