

Service Opportunities

At Rally on the Mountain 2018 (ROM), youth had the opportunity to serve at the New Vision Depot in Beaver, WV. Half of our group spent their afternoon serving at the Depot and the other half worked their way through different prayer sessions. The sessions included making prayer bracelets, walking a prayer labyrinth, and 4 prayer stations to help youth use tactile ways of prayer. The next day, the groups would switch so that all the youth had both opportunities.

At New Vision Depot, Dan and Sue Lowther had the youth split up to do different tasks. They inventoried a shipment of items from a truck as well as cleaned the outside of the New Vision building. Here are some ways you can take service opportunities home with you:

- Ask your pastor if there's anything your youth group can do around your home church
- Search for any UMC service ministries near your church (here are some ideas):
 - New Vision Depot (Beaver, WV)
 - Heart + Hand Outreach Ministries (South Charleston, WV)
 - Ebenezer Community Outreach Center (Huntington, WV)
 - Heart and Hand House (Philippi, WV)
 - House of the Carpenter (Wheeling, WV)
 - Scott's Run Settlement House (Osage, WV)
 - Tyrand Cooperative Ministries (Mill Creek, WV)
 - Upshur Parish House (Buckhannon, WV)

Service projects are a great way for your youth group to spend time and work together for the betterment of a ministry!



Prayer Sessions

Youth had different opportunities to experience prayer in a way they might not have before. A session of prayer bracelets was set up and youth were taught how to create their own bracelets. The paracord bracelets were tied in a way that each knot represented something different to pray for. As youth left Rally on the Mountain, their bracelets were used as a reminder for their time together as well as a means of prayer. Here are some simple ways to re-create prayer bracelets with your youth group:

- <http://www.paracordguild.com/prayer-bead-paracord-bracelet/>
- http://www.ucc.org/feed-your-spirit_practices_prayer-beads



Prayer Stations

Another prayer session offered to youth were 4 prayer stations. All 4 stations are simple and easy to re-create at your church. Here are the stations:

- **Courage to Follow:**
- **Items Needed:** Enough paper for each student to have 1 piece, pens/markers, and scissors
 - **Instructions:** (Matthew 4:18-22) Read aloud or have students read this passage to themselves and reflect on the things the disciples left behind to follow Jesus. Next, have students trace around their shoe or foot onto the paper and cut out the shape. Students should think about the courage it



takes to follow Jesus and where it might take them. Have them form their thoughts into words or images and draw/write on their cut-out.



- **Courage to Obey:**

- **Items Needed:** Play-

- **Doh/modeling clay and a basket**

- **Instructions:** (Matthew 14:13-21) Read the passage aloud or have students read it to themselves and reflect on their own offering to God. Let them know that Jesus accepts any gifts and graces we have to offer! Using the Play-Doh,

students should create a symbol that represents what they have to offer and place it in the basket as an offering. If they feel comfortable, students may discuss what their symbol is and why they chose to create it.

- **Courage to Take Risks:**

- **Items Needed:** Team of people/individuals for youth to pray with

- **Instructions:** (Matthew 14:22-33) Read this passage aloud or have youth read to themselves and reflect about Peter's motivation in wanting to come to Jesus on the water. Give students time to spend in prayer and ask themselves: Do you need courage to take risks? Have you taken a risk and felt like you were sinking? Give them the opportunity to pray by themselves or with somebody about risk-taking.

- **Courage to Stop:**

- **Items Needed:** Pen and paper for each student
- **Instructions:** (Luke 10:38-42)
Read the passage aloud or have students read to themselves then make sure each student has a pen and piece of paper. Have them clear their minds of any outside thoughts and reflect on the story of Martha and Mary and simply listen. They can jot down any words or phrases or pictures that come to mind during this time of reflection. If students feel comfortable, they may share their drawings/words and ideas behind them with the group.



Prayer Labyrinth

At Rally on the Mountain 2018 (ROM), another prayer session option was a prayer labyrinth. Before youth started the walk, they were informed about the purpose of a labyrinth and took their shoes off. There are simple ways to recreate a labyrinth for your home church, or you can ask around to other churches in your area to see if they have one to borrow. Here's a link to a finger labyrinth your youth can use if a full-sized labyrinth is not available:

- <https://devozine.upperroom.org/spiritual-practices/praying-with-a-finger-labyrinth/>

