
VISION FORWARD



SERVANTS HEART

In 2023 I was given the opportunity to start a ministry that has long been on my heart. A ministry of tangibly being the hands and feet of Jesus. Over the past year you may have heard announcements of different service projects we were doing in our area, but may have not known what it was all about. So what is Servant's Heart ministry? Servant's Heart seeks to model Christ's example of serving others and furthering His kingdom by empowering and equipping local ministries and individuals through renovation projects, vocational training, and cultivating community in and through the body of Christ. Our "niche clientele" is specifically helping faith-based ministry organizations or individuals in ministry in our area. While we recognize the immense need to help the poor and needy in our area, our goal is to better equip those *already* doing that. Let's face it: being in ministry is hard work, sometimes discouraging, and can often feel lonely. As a Servant's Heart team, we want to be an encouragement to those in the trenches and help serve them so that they can continue to serve those in our community.

As we all know, construction is expensive. Not only are materials costly, but so also the skilled labor needed to get projects done with expertise. In our community we are very blessed to have several gospel-centered churches, along with many ministries aiming to reach the physical needs of the community as well as sharing the gospel. A large hindrance many, if not all ministries, face is construction-related obstacles. Whether it be building a bigger dining room table for a foster care family that now has more mouths to feed, a roof repair on a leaking church, or large residential renovation projects for organizations like Bridge to Hope, Desens House, or Victory Transformation. Our aim is to equip ministries and churches to better serve our community and further the gospel. Our desire is to come alongside faith-based organizations and individuals in practical ways to bless them and allow them to focus on their mission rather than existing physical barriers to their goals. By making construction projects affordable and attainable we can empower ministries to better serve those they are burdened to care for.

Over the last year one of our main goals has been to show a "proof of concept" for this ministry. Through our efforts we have had the opportunity to help out and partner with 10 local churches and ministries. While I don't

(yet) see this ministry as a full time job, I am confident in the significant need it is meeting. Projects like repairing Oswego Alliance's roof, repairing a fence for a widow in ministry, and laying a new floor for New Covenant church where they host their grief sharing ministry to name a few. A huge part of making this work possible is by having volunteers provide the blood, sweat and tears of the projects we take on. Volunteers that are willing to come out to our various projects on Saturdays have helped saved ministries thousands of dollars and enable their finances to go to reaching the lost instead of a huge bill.

Over the next year we strive to continue to do monthly service projects. Some months it will only be a handful of men and women needed, other times we will need "all hands on deck." You don't need to be a contractor, or even know how to read a tape measure to come out and be a part. Our heart behind this is that anyone with a "servant's heart" and good attitude can serve with us. We want our workdays to be a training ground for anyone interested in learning and serving. We have a large spectrum of volunteers from those who have been contractors for years, to those that have never picked up a screw gun before. We love teaching and helping equip volunteers so that they too can be an asset to helping others. We also want to build fellowship and camaraderie as believers united by the shared goal of helping other believers to further the gospel. I think one of the most common spiritual gifts given to believers is acts of service. At Servant's Heart, we want to be an outlet to use and give back with those gifts. While often our projects aren't super glamorous, there's something special about being the behind the scenes hands and feet of Christ. Anyone can learn how to swing a hammer, but what motivates us when we get covered in itchy fiberglass insulation, hit our fingers when we miss a nail, or carry heavy pieces of sheetrock up many flights of stairs is knowing what our efforts will be used for. Knowing that those that sit at the tables for the foster care family won't know our name, but will have the opportunity to hear and know HIS name. Or those that come into the Desens house will never know all the countless individuals who gave their days off to renovate their bedroom, but will have the chance to hear about Whose name we do our labor in.

Servant's Heart will only be as influential as the support behind it. We recognize that everyone has a part to play and we truly value every part. So, if I may ask, *will you consider helping support this ministry?* You might be asking "how?" Well that's a great question, and I'm so glad you asked! There are many ways to plug in and help support us. First is prayer, and I don't say this lightly. We need prayer and lots of it. The last thing we want to do is do this work in vain without the Lord going before us in everything we do. Please pray for direction as we are still in the beginning stages of this ministry. Pray specifically for myself (Leighton), Carson Smith, and Rohan Jacobs as we are all spearheading this ministry together. Pray that God will open the right doors and ministries in need of help will hear of us. Pray for the right connections with local ministry leaders, for volunteers, for businesses to donate supplies, and for safety as we tackle many different types of work.

Another huge way to help support Servant's Heart is coming out to our monthly Saturday workdays. While every month is different, we couldn't do what we do without volunteers on Saturdays. The last way we will be seeking support over the next year is financially. While we rely heavily on volunteers, a few of us leading the ministry spend many hours preparing for our Saturday workdays in advance, and are also doing other projects throughout the weeks. Another way financial support is often needed is to help supplement the cost of material for projects. Typically ministries we are helping front the cost of material and we provide the labor for free, but sometimes ministries are financially strapped and don't have the funds to cover material costs either. We feel blown away by the support from Elim Grace thus far, however, it is our long-term goal to be a financially stable ministry that is not so heavily relying on our church's budget. We will need individuals to faithfully give and support us as we tackle different needs for other ministries.

There are a few ways we will keep those interested in the loop of what we are doing. The first will be our social media pages. Please go give us a follow to see what projects we are tackling (FB page "Servant's Heart North", Instagram "servantsheartnorth"). The other way is a monthly newsletter. This will give a recap of what we tackled the previous month as well as letting those interested in volunteering that month know where we will be and what we will be tackling. If you are interested in signing up for our monthly news letter please email us at servantsheartnorth@gmail.com or sign up at guest services on our sign up sheet.

Once again, thank you for supporting us as we anticipate another year of helping ministries further the gospel in our area. We are so excited to see what our God has in store for 2024!

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Servants Heart Ministry

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