

**A Healthy Body
The Muscular System: Service
August 28, 2016**

Introduction

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4:11-16 NIV)

The Body of Christ is strengthened through our combined activities. To employ a common sports mantra, “We are only as strong as our weakest link!” I don’t know about you, but I don’t want to be that weak link! This week, let’s spend some time talking about how we must work together to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Then, let’s stop talking and start DOING!

Digging Deeper

Results of Service

- We build up the Body of Christ. It takes a concerted effort by EVERY member in order for our congregation to reach our full potential. How and where have you seen the Body of Christ become bigger, stronger, and able to accomplish more for God’s Kingdom because of everyone’s full participation?
- We reach unity in the faith. Did you know ants can lift up to 5,000 times their body weight? That’s pretty impressive. But do you ever see just one ant? Their teamwork makes the dream work. Discuss ways that uniting with likeminded Christians in service can develop our faith and bring us together as one Body in Christ.
- We become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Days ticked off carrying a Bible or going to church don’t make us mature. Rather, serving Christ in an effort to become like Him does. Read Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV). Talk about what thinking of service in this way means to you. How does this type of thinking change your attitude or performance?

Ways to Exercise Your Service “Muscles”

- Discover your gift. If you are an extrovert, you probably want to do something where you can directly interact with people. Introverts might prefer behind the scenes endeavors like event setups or planning/prayer related activities. Thankfully, God has a place at the table for everyone. Have you ever taken a personality test? Were the results as expected, or did anything surprise you? If you are struggling with identifying your hidden talents, try taking a spiritual gifts

inventory or personality assessment. Here are a couple of suggested sites:
www.spiritualgiftstest.com; www.16personalities.com.

- Decide on your ministry. Hard as we may try, we can't do everything. More importantly, we haven't been gifted to do so. So once you find your passion, the fun part becomes picking your pleasure. Can you share an experience you've had while serving where it became clear to you that God placed you exactly where your unique gifts could be maximized for His glory?
- Do your work. You don't get physically fit by reading about exercise or thinking about it. "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." (John 13:17 NIV) Actions speak louder than words. Is there something more you could be doing to build up the Body of Christ? Discuss ways your family or small group could work together to meet a need in our community. For example, there are many servant opportunities available at LHUMC's newly "adopted" school, Southport Elementary. Visit our website, myLHUMC.net, for a complete listing of how you can answer this call to action!

Conclusion

Through our service, we, the Body of Christ, are revealing the fullness of Jesus to those around us. What is LHUMC revealing through its service? How will you use your time, talents and tithes to demonstrate His greatness to His people?

Greater things have yet to come. Greater things are still to be done in this city! (Chris Tomlin, "God of this City")

¹⁸But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. ¹⁹How strange a body would be if it had only one part! ²⁰Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. ²¹The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you."
(1 Corinthians 12:18-21 NLT)