



CROSSINGS

a resource
for providing
spiritual focus
before, during, and after
your CROSS mission trip

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PART 1:
BEFORE

Why Train?

*Okay, you're busy. Your kids are busy. Your chaperones are busy.
Why should you add one more thing to your schedule and theirs?
Won't a training meeting be asking too much of them?
Isn't it enough that they agreed to go on this trip?*

These are many reasons to glance over this section and forget about it. But CROSS highly values team preparation, and we think it is an important key to the success of your mission experience. Here's why:

1. **Teams work better together than acquaintances.**
Chances are, everyone signed up for this trip does not know everyone else. While the trip itself will be a great time for group bonding, it's a good idea to start that bonding before you get to Charlotte. Your first few days will be much more beneficial to everyone if your team already knows each other and is comfortable working together. These sessions contain a few team building exercises to help your group start to become a team.
2. **Teams should understand the Biblical context of the trip.**
Don't just hope your group "gets it" by the last day of the trip. Start early focusing this experience as an active response to God's word. These sessions contain a number of Bible studies that will help your group understand the connection between sorting cans of food and living as a follower of Christ.
3. **Teams should know what they're getting into.**
Groups that have a heads-up on the problems and issues they will encounter always have a better experience. Talk ahead of time about the root causes of poverty and the different lifestyles you will likely see. These conversations will help your team avoid unnecessary fear, awkward feelings, and misplaced blame. This kind of preparation also makes groups more sensitive and loving towards people who are different from them.
4. **You can't reach a goal if you don't have one.**
Why are you making this trip? What do you hope to accomplish? What do you want your team to understand, question, or do as a result of this trip? How would you like to see them grow? Why did *they* sign up for this trip? Taking time to talk together about these questions and to set goals for your team will lead to a more meaningful experience.

Training and preparation will help your team see their mission trip as a time for serving and growing, not just as something to check off their list for the year. We ask that you not bring your group to Charlotte without first meeting together to prepare. The sessions that follow are suggestions. Feel free to adapt this material to suit your group.

*CROSS will be in prayer for you and your team
as you prepare for your mission experience!*

Session #1

Goals: Establish team unity, look at expectations, and develop goals for the trip

Getting to Know You...

Give each person a piece of paper and a pen. Tell them they have 10 minutes to find out something interesting about each person in the room. They are to ask one question to each person in the room, but they cannot ask the same question twice. Also, they cannot answer the same question twice. After 10 minutes, call everyone together to see who was able to speak to the most people. Ask the group to share interesting things they found out about each other.

Twenty-one Legged Race

This is sort of like a three-legged race, except the whole team ties its legs together! Establish an easy course (like "to the chair/tree 20 feet away and back"). If anyone falls down, they all have to go back to the starting line and begin again. Time the group to see how long it takes them to complete the course. Let them race against themselves by trying the course a second time to see if they can improve their time.

Discuss: What made the task difficult? What did the group do to be successful? What did you learn about teamwork from this experience?

Body Talk

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-31. Discuss the following questions:

1. What are some of the different parts of the body that Paul mentions?
2. Why does the body have different parts?
3. Why do you think Paul compares Christians to a body?
4. What does this "body talk" have to do with teamwork? Did you experience this in our race?
5. What lessons should our team learn from this passage as we get ready to go on a mission trip together?
6. Reflect on your own gifts and talents. What part of the body are you? How might you be a blessing to this team?
7. Make a list of blessings that come from working and being together. What blessings would you not experience if you were alone?

BREAK

What Do You Expect?

Brainstorm a list for each of the following, and write them on a board or butcher paper as kids call them out. If you have a large group, consider breaking into small groups for this part.

1. Name some words you associate with "the city."
2. Name some fears people might have who are going on a trip like this.
3. Describe some of the people you think we might meet.
4. Name some attitudes we might encounter.
5. What do you expect to do?
6. What do you expect to eat?
7. What do you expect to learn?

Discuss their answers. If anyone on your team has done urban mission work before, ask them to share some of their experiences.

Setting Goals

Tell the team to break up in groups of two or three with people sitting near them. In their groups, they should answer this question as truthfully as possible: Why are you going on this trip? Tell them there are no wrong answers. After they get that out, see if anyone wants to share their answers with the large group.

If most of the answers you hear sound like, "Because my boyfriend is going," or "I don't know, my mom signed me up," take this time to talk with your group about setting some appropriate goals for this mission experience. Here are some suggestions: to follow Jesus, to grow in my faith, to learn about servanthood, to look at the way I spend my money and my time, to experience Christian fellowship, to see Jesus, to have my heart broken by the things that break God's heart.

Team Covenant

Get a large piece of butcher or construction paper that you will be able to take with you on the trip. Ask the group to discuss these questions:

1. How do we need to treat each other to make this mission trip all that God wants it to be?
2. What kinds of attitudes do we need to have towards one another?
3. How should we behave on the trip? What behaviors should we avoid?
4. What goals do we agree to work towards together?

Ask everyone if they agree on these answers. Remove, alter, or add things as needed. Write the final version on the big paper. This will be your team covenant. Have everyone sign the covenant. Bring it with you to Charlotte and hang it in a prominent place during the week to remind the group of its covenant with each other.

Homework

Assign a few eager team members the following questions to answer at the next training session: How many homeless people are there in the country? In our community? In Charlotte? What is the average income in the country/our community/Charlotte? How many people die of hunger every day around the world? What social services exist for poor people in our community? In Charlotte?

Closing Prayer

Here are some suggestions of things to lift up in prayer together as you close: the team, safety, Charlotte, the poor here and around the world, agencies who are helping the poor, spiritual growth and better understanding of servanthood, good relationships within the group.

Session #2

Goals: Study social issues and examine what the Bible says about poverty and our response

Learn about the issues

Discuss in large group or in small groups:

1. Define the word "poor."
2. Why do you think some people are poor? Share the facts and statistics that some people have researched since the last session.
3. "There will always be poor people, there's nothing we can do about it, so there's no point in trying to make a difference." Respond to this statement.
4. If you were a senator, what bill would you introduce into Congress to help the situation of the poor in our country?
5. How do you think God wants the church to respond to the needs of the poor?
6. How do you think most people respond when they see a homeless person on the street? How do you think God wants people to respond?

Bible Study

These could be split into four small groups.

1. From these passages, what is God's attitude toward the poor? Why do you think our attitudes sometimes differ from God's? Deuteronomy 15:7-11, Jeremiah 22:16
2. How can we express our love for God? Proverbs 19:17 and 28:27, 1 John 3:17-18
3. What do these verses say about Jesus' attitudes towards the poor and outcast? Matthew 25:31-40, Luke 2:4-7, Luke 4:18-19
4. How should we live in relation to the poor? James 2:1-9, Romans 12:16, James 1:27, Luke 16:19-31

Picture It

Hand out paper and crayons, pencils, or pens to everyone. Tell them to draw a line down the middle of the paper. On the left side, they should draw something that symbolizes how the world treats the poor. On the right side, they should draw something that symbolizes how the Bible teaches us to treat poor people. Ask them to share their drawings with the group.

Humble Thyself

Use the following passages to talk about humble attitudes: Mark 9:35, Luke 22:26-27, and Philippians 2:5-8.

1. What does the word "humble" mean? What is the opposite of "humble"?
2. How did Jesus show humility in his life?
3. How can we show humility in our lives?
4. Why do you think a humble attitude is especially important during this trip?
5. If we aren't careful, we might show a "we're better than you" attitude to people that we serve. How might this do more damage than good? How might we avoid this? What kind of attitudes might help build up the self-image of those we minister to?

Extra Options

Spice up your training sessions and preparation by adding a few of these options:

1. Add a meal to one of your meetings, but make it educational. For example, take the group to the nearest grocery store and divide the group into teams of 5 people each. Give each team \$5 and 10 minutes to find their dinner for the night. Take them back to the church kitchen or to someone's home to cook up their dinner and talk about how hard it would be to make food decisions on such a limited income all the time.
2. Hold all or part of one of your training sessions outside during uncomfortable weather. Talk about how important shelter is to our health and well-being. Pray for those without shelter.
3. Find enough people in your congregation to match a prayer partner with each team member. Write the prayer partners letters telling them who their partner is, and list things they can pray for before, during, and after the trip. While you are in Charlotte, have the team members send letters or postcards to their prayer partners.
4. Get your feet wet! In the months or weeks leading up to your trip, take your group to visit a local nursing home, shelter, food bank, or other social service agency. This will help the group get to know each other and better prepare for their time in Charlotte.

PART 2:

DURING

UN-Packing List

Each night during your CROSS mission trip, your group will have time to be together, talk about the day, ask questions, sing, and pray. The group leader is responsible for planning these times. However, CROSS staff will be available to help lead at the group leader's request. The following section contains many suggestions to springboard discussion and to help your group unpack the events of the day. The ideas are arranged into the following categories:

Morning Thoughts -

These short verses and prayers are simple and can easily be led by a student. They will help to focus your group each morning.

Discussion Questions -

Pick a few of these questions to start out your evening devotional time and get the group talking.

Interactive Exercises -

These hands-on ways to process the day will get your group up and moving. They are especially appropriate for younger groups.

Bible Study -

A number of Bible passages are listed with themes and discussion questions.

Short Stories -

The stories included give insight into urban culture, humility, and stereotypes. Discussion questions follow each story.

Reflections -

Don't forget to let God speak through the silence. Many ideas are listed to help students reflect during quiet times.

Prayers -

A variety of prayers are included to close your time together.

Last Night -

This section focuses on looking back over the week and looking ahead toward what will change because of the trip.

Your evening devotional time may take any shape you wish. You could pick a few discussion questions, read a short story, and close in prayer. Or if the group has more energy, focus your time on group skits and deeper discussions. Every day will be different, and the events of the day and the attitudes of the group will help you best determine appropriate material to use.

The point of these times each day is to help the group process what it is experiencing and learning, and to continually focus on God's purposes for the group.

Morning Thoughts

Psalm 118:23-24

"This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Be joyful in your work! Show your gladness and your eagerness to share the love of Christ. Know that God has made this day. Know that God has brought you here to serve him. Go forth and shine!

O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the need of others, open my ears that I may hear their cries, open my heart so that they need not be without help. Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong, nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich. Show me where love and hope and faith are needed, and use me to bring them to these places. Open my eyes and ears that I may, this coming day, be able to do some work of peace for you. Amen. —Alan Paton

Psalm 135:1-3

"Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord; give praise, O servants of the Lord, you that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing to his name, for he is gracious."

Psalm 46:5

"God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns."

O God, help us not despise or oppose what we do not understand. —William Penn

Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give them peace and joy. —Mother Teresa

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

"Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone."

Discussion Questions

What did you do today?

Say one word to describe how you felt at any point during the day.

What was your favorite part of the day?

Talk about something funny that happened today.

What were the ups and downs of the day?

What did you see for the first time today? What did you think about it?
What do you think God thinks about it?

What did you do for the first time today?

What did you see today that you have a question about?

What made you uncomfortable today?

What did you learn today?

Where did you see God working today?

Talk about a time this week when you have helped someone. What did you do? How do you know you helped them?

Talk about a success you've seen so far.

Talk about something beautiful you have seen so far this week.

Describe someone you have met this week. How is your life similar to and different from his or her life?

Interactive Exercises

Skits from the Day

When your group is split into different ministry sites during the day, let the groups share their experiences with the rest of the group through skits acting out the highlights of their day.

Picture the City (for groups from rural areas)

At the beginning of the week, give each person paper and something to write with. Ask them to draw their impressions of the city. What do people in the city look like? What kind of homes do they have? How is the city different from where they live? At the end of the week, pass out the pictures again, and have the group draw their impressions of the city on the back of the picture. How have their impressions changed during the week? What have they learned?

Skits from the Bible

Take one of the passages from the "Bible Study" section and have your group act it out. Good passages for acting out are noted with an asterisk (*).

Hands of Christ (for week-long trips)

On your first night, give everyone a piece of paper and something to write with. Tell them to trace their hand on the paper and write their name on the bottom part of the hand. Then each night, give your group a different question to answer about the day. They will write their answers for each of the five nights on each of the five fingers. Questions could include, "Who did you meet today?" "What did you do for the first time today?" "Where did you see God working today?" "What do you want to pray for when you get home?" and "What did you learn today?" At the end of the week, have the group cut out the hands and tape them on a poster. This could serve as a keepsake for your church at home.

Snapshots

Split your group into a few teams. Tell each team to come up with a scene, or snapshot, from the day that they would like to remember. Then tell the team to think of a way to show that scene to the rest of the group by making a "living photograph" using everyone in their team.

Foot Washing (for more mature groups)

After studying John 13: 1-20 (questions found in the "Bible Study" section), hold a foot washing service with your group.

Get out there!

Try doing one or two of your nightly devotions at different locations around Charlotte. Ask the CROSS staff for some suggestions.

Short Stories and Illustrations

1. "Calcutta"

Once there was a young man who was overwhelmed with the problems he saw in the world. So he decided to make a difference. He knew that Mother Teresa had made a difference in Calcutta, India, so he decided to work with her. He wrote her a letter explaining his desire to come to Calcutta, and he waited for her response.

Each day, he ran to the mailbox to see if her reply had arrived. Weeks went by, and there was still no word. The young man began to get frustrated.

Finally he received a letter from Calcutta. He ripped open the envelope and was surprised to find just four words written on the paper. It said simply, "Find your own Calcutta."

Discuss:

Why did the young man want to go to Calcutta?

What was the young man expecting to find in the letter?

What do you think the young man did next?

Where is your Calcutta? Where has God placed you to make a difference?

2. "Real World"

If we could shrink the world's population to a group of 25 people, it would look something like this:

14 Asians	13 female	20 live in substandard housing
5 Europeans	12 male	18 are unable to read
3 N. & S. Americans	18 non-white	13 suffer from malnutrition
2 Africans	7 white	
7 Christians	1 possesses 60% of the world's wealth,	
18 non-Christians	and that person lives in the U.S.	
¼ has a college education, and ¼ owns a computer		

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead, and a place to sleep, you are among the top 25% of the world's wealthy.

If you also have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

Discuss:

Which statistic surprised you the most?

Based on these statistics, describe the majority of people in the world.

Where do you fit in those statistics? How do you feel about that?

3. "The Stewpot"

In the fall of 1975, as he was going to work, the Reverend Bob Lively became enraged as he passed an unkempt old man sitting on the curb outside the church eating a can of beans, a handout from the church's pantry.

Lively stormed into the office of the Reverend Jack Moore shouting, "That's my Lord out there eating a can of beans!"

From that encounter between those two associate ministers, a new ministry emerged. Moore confronted the church's service commission, and it was decided to open a small

soup kitchen in the ground level hallway of the church. To avoid the connotation of the soup kitchen of the depression days, they chose to name the venture the "Stewpot." (Helen Parmley, *The Dallas Morning News*)

Thus, the Stewpot was born and continues to serve as many as 300 of Dallas' needy daily—in many more ways than just a hot meal. It all started with a vision of Christ in a bedraggled man on the corner. Christ is within every person we will encounter this week—sometimes Jesus' presence will be evident, other times it will not. Our job is to keep looking. (from "Homelessness, Monday Devotional," *Stewpot Devotionals*)

Discuss:

In what ways was Jesus homeless?

How have your ideas about homelessness changed this week?

Why is it sometimes hard to see Jesus in other people?

4. "We Belong to Each Other," by Robert D. Lupton

(from *Theirs is the Kingdom: Celebrating the Gospel in Urban America*)

Available in the CROSS Lounge.

Discuss:

Why was the woman in the story hurt?

What actions or attitudes might hurt the people we are serving?

Why do you think we might need the poor?

Talk about the differences you saw this week between the "givers" and the "receivers."

What have you learned about being a servant?

What have you learned from the people you served?

5. "Foxes Have Holes," by Robert D. Lupton

(from *Theirs is the Kingdom: Celebrating the Gospel in Urban America*)

Available in the CROSS Lounge.

Discuss:

How did the man react when he found someone in his car?

Why do you think he reacted that way?

If you were the narrator in the story, how do you think you might have reacted?

“Go Get Your Bibles!”

Genesis 17:7-8 (God makes a covenant with Abraham)

What is a covenant?
How is a covenant different than a promise?
Why did God make a covenant with Abraham?
What kind of covenant will your group have this week?

***Exodus 3:7-12** (God calls Moses)

What happens in this passage?
Who calls whom?
What is Moses' reaction?
What has God called you to do this week?
Have you felt like Moses this week?
What is God's promise to Moses and to us?

***1 Samuel 16** (David's anointing)

According to this passage, what part of us does God pay attention to?
What does this say about how we should see others?
Why do we tend to make judgments based on outward appearance?
When have you been challenged this week to look beyond appearance?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (Two are better than one)

What does this passage say about community?
What are the benefits of being together, according to this passage?
What is difficult about living together in community this week?
What benefits have you experienced from living in community?
How would your ministry this week be different if you came alone?

Isaiah 58:6-9 (loose the bonds of injustice)

What is the fast that this passage talks about?
How will the Lord respond if we do these things?
What stood out to you in this passage?
Why do you think that is important?

Jeremiah 22:16 (what it means to know God)

According to this passage, what does it mean to know the Lord?
Who should we be paying attention to if we want to know God more?
Why do you think this will lead to knowing God?

Jeremiah 29:7 (welfare of the city)

What is welfare?
Where do you see welfare in your city?
Who in your city needs welfare?
If we seek the welfare of the city, what else will we find? Explain.

Micah 6:8 (What does the Lord require of you?)

According to this passage, what does the Lord require of you?
Name specific examples of how we can seek justice.
Name specific examples of how we can love kindness.
Name specific examples of how we can walk humbly with our God.

***Matthew 25:31-46** (the least of these)

According to this passage, on what basis will people be divided?
How do the righteous respond to God's approval?
How do the unrighteous respond to God's disapproval?
What feelings does this passage arouse in you?
What message do you think Jesus is offering here?
How well would you say Christians have done in responding to this passage?
What makes it so difficult to live with this passage on a personal level?
What should be our motivation in serving others?
What do you think would help us serve the poor as if we were serving Christ?

Luke 6:20-26 (blessed are the poor)

What stood out to you in this passage?
Why do you think that is important?
After what you have seen this week, what do you think Jesus meant when he said, "Blessed are the poor"? What does he mean by "blessed"?

Luke 6:27-38 (love everyone, expect nothing in return)

What does Jesus instruct us to do in this passage?
What attitude does Jesus show here about possessions?
Of these instructions, which do you think is the easiest to follow? Why?
Which is the most difficult? Why?
How does this passage apply to your ministry this week?

***Luke 10:25-37** (good Samaritan)

How do the thieves see the man?
How does the lawyer see the wounded man?
How does the religious man see the wounded man?
How does the innkeeper see the wounded man?
How does the Samaritan see the wounded man?
How do you think Jesus would see the wounded man?

Luke 14:12-13 (invite the poor to your banquet)

According to this passage, whom should you invite to your parties? Why?
Why might this be difficult to do?
How do you think this applies to your ministry this week?

***John 4:1-42** (woman at the well)

What barriers does Jesus face in getting to know this woman?
How does he overcome those barriers to connect with her?
What is the result?
What barriers do we face in connecting with people this week?

How can we overcome them?

***John 13:1-20** (foot washing)

What does Jesus do in this passage?

What is Peter's initial response? Why?

Why does Peter change his mind?

What is Jesus trying to teach his disciples by washing their feet?

What does this passage teach us about being servants?

***John 21:15-17** (feed my sheep)

What does Jesus ask Peter? How many times?

Why do you think Jesus continues to ask Peter this?

How does Jesus say Peter should show his love?

Why do you think he says this?

What does this passage suggest about saying versus doing?

Romans 12:1-8 (living sacrifice, body of Christ)

What stood out to you in this passage?

Why do you think that is important?

How do you "present your bodies as a living sacrifice?" What does that mean?

How have you seen the body of Christ working this week?

What if we all had the same gifts?

What gifts have you used this week?

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 (body of Christ)

What body part best describes you?

Who are the weaker, less honorable parts of the body in our society?

How have you been served by being a part of Christ's body?

How have you served other members of Christ's body?

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 (generous giving)

Describe the generosity of the churches Paul is talking about.

What is "the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ"?

What is God's idea of equality?

What does v.12 say to someone who thinks they don't have enough to give?

What are you eager to give? What would you like to be eager to give?

Galatians 3:23-28 (justified by faith, all are one in Christ)

According to this passage, what changed when Christ came?

What does it mean to be justified by faith, and not works?

If we are not justified by what we do, why should we do good things?

If we really took v. 28 to heart, how would our behavior toward each other change? What would change in our culture if everyone believed this?

Ephesians 2:4-10 (by grace you have been saved)

Why does God love us?

Why should we serve?

Will serving save us? What will?

What does this passage say should be our “way of life”?

Ephesians 4:15-16 (building up the body in love)

What stood out to you in this passage?

Why do you think that is important?

How is our group growing up in love?

Philippians 2:1-15 (Christ-like humility)

What stood out to you in this passage?

Why do you think that is important?

According to this passage, what does it mean to be humble?

What characteristics of Jesus do we hear in this passage?

How do you think Jesus defines “success”?

How, then, should we define, “success”?

Define the word “servant.”

When have you felt God at work in you this week?

Colossians 3:12-17 (clothe yourselves with love)

With what five things does Paul tell us to clothe ourselves?

Why should we forgive each other?

Which instruction in this passage is the hardest to follow? Why?

How can you “do *everything* in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”?

James 2:14-17 (faith without works is dead)

What do faith and works have to do with each other?

Why is faith without works dead?

1 Peter 3:13-17 (be prepared to explain the hope that is in you)

What will you say if someone asks you why you are here this week?

1 Peter 4:8-11 (constant love and serve one another)

Why do you think “love covers a multitude of sins”?

Why shouldn’t we complain? What’s really wrong with complaining?

What is a “good steward”?

What are we taking care of?

How can we remember to speak and serve as verse 11 instructs?

*indicates passages that are good for acting out or interpreting through a skit

Reflections

Finding a moment alone can be very difficult during group events like mission trips. Give your group intentional times for prayer and reflection during the week so they may be still and listen for God.

For these exercises, give your group the assignment and a time limit (10 or 15 minutes), and tell them to spread out into a few different rooms to spend some time alone.

Ideas for Reflection Times:

Write a letter to God about what you are experiencing this week.

Write a letter to someone at home about the week.

Make a list of five questions you have about what you've seen this week. Then take those questions to God.

Write a letter to someone you've met this week.

Write down what you think God might say to a homeless person.

What is God saying to you?

Suggested Bible verses for reflection: Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 1:10, Ephesians 2:8-10, Philippians 2, Colossians 3:12-17, Psalm 46.

Prayers

Watch, dear Lord, those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ, rest your weary ones, bless your dying ones, soothe your suffering ones, pity your afflicted ones, shield your joyous ones, all for your love's sake. Amen. –*St. Augustine*

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen. –*The Peace Prayer of St. Francis*

God, grant me to be silent before you, that I may hear you; at rest in you, that you may work in me; open to you, that you may enter; empty before you, that you may fill me. Let me be still and know you are my God. –*A Listener's Prayer, Sir Paul Reeves*

Almighty Creator, thank you for the opportunity you have given us this week to work with your people and as your people. Help us to live as one, loving and caring for one another. Make our hands your tools, make our eyes and ears compassionate to the needs around us. Guide us this week in all we do. Amen.

Lord, you have brought us through this day to a time of reflection and rest. Calm us, and give us your peace to refresh us. Keep us close to Christ that we may be closer to one another because of his perfect love. Send peaceful sleep to refresh our tired bodies. May your help always renew us and keep us strong in your service. In the name of Christ, our Lord, Amen.

O God our Creator, we give into your hands our unfinished tasks, our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes. Please pour your blessings on the ministries and people we have worked with this week. To your great love and protection we commit each other and all for whom we have prayed, knowing that you alone are our sure defender. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Last Night

Discussion Questions:

What will you be leaving when this trip is over?

If you could bring one person from this city home with you, who would it be? Why?

Who at home will you tell about this trip? What will you say?

What have you learned about your faith? About God? Yourself? Your group?

What are you thankful for?

When were you challenged this week?

If you had a camera that could only take one picture during the week, what picture would you want to have?

What are ways that you can continue this kind of service at home?

After what you've seen this week, what would you like to change in your own life?

How will you change the way you spend your money and your time?

How can your church continue reaching out to others all year?

Matthew 25:40. So when did you see Jesus this week?

Romans 12:1-2. May the joy of serving others remain alive in your hearts always!

PART 3:
AFTER

After the Trip: NOW WHAT?

CELEBRATE and SHARE!

Share your experience with your friends, family and congregation. Host a dinner to share pictures and stories, or have representatives from the team share in worship.

REFLECT

Meet with your team after you return to share pictures, reflect, and plan your next move.

1. Look at the goals you set. How did you do?
2. What did God teach you as a result of this trip?
3. What gifts did you discover you had during the trip?
4. What is your definition of a servant now?
5. How will your own lifestyle change?

SERVE

"The true test of a person's spiritual life and character is not what he does in the extraordinary moments of life, but what he does during the ordinary times when there is nothing tremendous or exciting happening." Oswald Chambers

Don't let your trip be the end of your group's outreach efforts! Tell them that the trip was just the beginning. It was meant to inspire a lifestyle of service.

1. So what will you do now? What has to change?
2. What help will you need to make these changes?
3. What kinds of injustices did we see in Charlotte? Do those exist here, also?
4. What will we do to address those injustices?

The book *Beyond Leaf Raking*, by Peter L. Benson and Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, contains many project ideas for your group to continue reaching out to others in your own community with the love of Christ.

Resources Consulted:

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