

Unit 4 We recommend that you set up additional time to take on this project rather than fitting it into the normal curriculum. Use this as a follow up, or however you like!

Service Learning: Sending Cards of Support

We all like to get mail—as long as it’s not junk mail—and yet we rarely send it to each other, even knowing how much joy it might bring. Let’s change all that. Send some cards of support through the mail and share some joy. When you sit down and think, there are loads of people for you to send cards to. But don’t let that list intimidate you; start with one card and go from there.

What does Sending Cards have to do with Boundless Invitation?

It used to be that you wouldn’t get invited to something with a text message or DM. In the ancient times before smartphones people actually used their phones as phones or even used weird things called stamps to send messages through the mail. Joking aside, there is a personal touch that goes with writing out a physical card in your own hand that you just can’t replicate digitally. Some of us are old enough to remember getting birthday party invites in the mail. Maybe you’ve even experienced that joy recently. There’s lots of love in opening an envelope and discovering that inside it says that someone wants you to be a part of their special day. Even if your birthday isn’t coming up soon, you can give that experience by inviting someone into God’s love with a card of support. When Gabriel invites Mary into the incredible Gospel story in Luke 1, both this angel and the soon-to-be mother of the savior of all creation get what God is trying to say to the world. God is sending the world the ultimate “thinking of you” card in the person of Jesus.

Here are some potential steps for this service learning project:

- 1) Inform your church leadership that the youth will be writing and sending cards of support.
- 2) Have the youth individually write out a list of at least five people who could receive a card of support from them. Stress that the youth won’t necessarily have to write a card to everyone on their list but at least they’ll have the names if they do want to do that. You may need to help the youth find addresses.

- 3) As a group brainstorm and write down everyone from church who could use a card of support and compare that to the lists the youth made.
- 4) Write and send cards. Your youth may want to make their own cards but you can also easily purchase blank cards for them to use. Be patient and gracious while explaining how to address an envelope because some youth may be doing it for the first time.

Who should be helping to lead this project?

Your youth are your best leaders! Apart from youth, you should consider inviting your deacon or pastor, your outreach or service board committee chair, and the person who is best at finding people's addresses from church.

How to get church leaders to say "Yes!" to the youth and to this project?

Ask your leadership if it is worthwhile for your church to get into the practice of sending cards of support within its midst. Talk about whether the time spent on this project is worth even just one person feeling that the church sees them and cares. Ask the leadership if it is worthwhile for the youth to feel like they have been seen, heard, and can make a difference. It might be helpful to imagine how you would say yes to this project; something like, "Yes, but we may need to convince someone to help pay for the postage, but that shouldn't be too hard because sending cards of support is a clear way to share and invite people into God's love and to make the church a place of [Boundless Invitation](#)."

Here are some sample messages that could be written in a card of support:

- Dear __[insert recipient name]__,
I have been thinking of you because I am thankful for all that you have brought to our church community over the years. You are an amazing gift from God. "I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus." ~1 Corinthians 1:4
In Thanks, __[insert your name]__
- Dear __[insert recipient name]__,
I am praying for you and thinking of you. I hope you can pray for me too. Thank you for being a part of our church family. We miss seeing you at church but know that you are truly with us in God's spirit. "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." ~1 Corinthians 12:27
Sincerely, __[insert your name]__
- Dear __[insert recipient name]__,
Thank you for being a light for God. I want to share the light that God has given me and am thankful to have an example like you to follow. "You are the light of the world..., let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." ~Matthew 5:14-16
Sincerely, __[insert your name]__