



ThereforeGo.com

FALL 2021

- SERVE 2022: Gratefull
- GoExplore Resources
- Ministry in the Anxious Age

ThereforeGo | Fall 2021

ThereforeGo Ministries has a rich 100 year history of assisting churches ministering to youth. Birthed out of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, ThereforeGo Ministries remains committed to the reformed perspective while serving alongside congregations of any denomination. We strongly believe that the local church is the tool God is using to reveal himself to this world, and we are blessed to partner with congregations to offer faith-forming experiences that reach this generation of youth for Jesus Christ!

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SAVE THE DATE!



ThereforeGo Annual Golf Outing May 16, 2022

LOCATION:
Pilgrim's Run Golf Club
Pierson, Michigan

This annual event helps ThereforeGo Ministries provide resources like mentoring networks and SERVE mission trips below their actual cost.

 **Golfer registration: thereforego.com/golf**



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Rick
Zomer



Being grateful

Like many of you, ThereforeGo Ministries is excited to begin a new season of ministry this fall. While the past 18 months have been challenging, we are preparing for the coming year and living into the theme of “Gratitude” that will be the theme of SERVE 2022 and our upcoming year.

We are grateful to God for the many ways He is blessing us during this time. We have 17 churches in Canada and the United States that are getting ready to host over 1,000 SERVE participants next summer and explore God’s command in 1 Thessalonians to be joyful,

prayerful and thankful. Over the next 8 months we are preparing to work with 25 churches who want to deepen mentoring relationships with students and emerging adults in their congregations. In addition, we are grateful for the partners who created the ministry resources you will find in this magazine.

Finally, we are grateful to God for you and your commitment to youth and emerging adults. ThereforeGo’s mission is focused on collaborating with the local church in their youth ministry efforts. While we have the privilege of long standing partnerships with many churches, I

recognize that some of you receiving this magazine may be less familiar with our ministry. Thanks for your time and for reading about our work. You can also learn more about us by scanning the QR code below to watch a video about our ministry’s history.

Blessings,

ThereforeGo
Ministry History



Christ Centered Discipleship
& Summer Experience
for **Young Adults**



SoCo is a ministry of **Immanuel CRC, Simcoe**
& in partnership with **Resonate Global Mission**

THE SOUTH COAST BEACH PROJECT

is a May - August discipleship and community living experience for young adults (ages 18 – 29) while being employed for the summer.

Learn how God’s story impacts your story for the sake of the world’s story!

SOCO BEACH PROJECT

Port Dover, ON, Canada

PHONE : 226-206-0215

EMAIL : info@southcoastbeachproject.org

FACEBOOK : [@SoCoBeachProject](https://www.facebook.com/SoCoBeachProject)

What SERVE Means to Me

by Patty Schuurman

SERVE has been a staple in our youth group for over a decade now. Every July, students pack up their bags, jam some sugar/snacks into their pockets, triple check to ensure they have their passports, get commissioned by our church family, and pray together with leaders and parents before boarding a van and embarking on an adventure. Whether that adventure leads them to the states or another area in Ontario, our youth have found this trip to be invaluable.

SERVE has been a combination of fun and fellowship, boisterous activities and quiet reflections, hard work and leisure, silliness and seriousness, singing and sleeping. It's been an opportunity to grow in relationship with our God, with each other, and with new faces as we seek to love our neighbour. The churches

who've hosted us have done so with generosity and kindness, modeling how to love abundantly, live intentionally and laugh ceaselessly. And the impact of this experience is noticeable years later as youth and leaders reflect on what SERVE means to them:

"SERVE is a place where teens serve others in a community while also deepening their relationship with God and with the people around them."

– Natalie Rekker, former youth

"SERVE is an opportunity for participants to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community where the job sites are located."

– Marja Mol, former youth leader



"SERVE is a beautiful experience where youth can make a positive difference in the community and grow in their faith at the same time...and that's a beautiful thing!"

– Cindy Schreutelkamp, youth leader

"SERVE is a great experience for both students and leaders. It's a time of spiritual growth as well as a great time of building new friendships all while learning how to serve others within the community."

– Carolyn Kaldeway, youth leader

Schuurman is a Youth Leader, on behalf of the Planning Team at Crosspoint CRC and ClearView CRC in Ontario, Canada.





Faith In Action

by Alex Monsma

My history with ThereforeGo Ministries can be traced by many formative moments in my faith as a student, but when I first led a group to SERVE in 2016, I was surprised by the lasting impact it made on me as a leader as well.

Student ministry leaders spend countless hours planning meetings, leading youth groups, spending time with students in coffee shops and cheering them on at events. So often, this natural routine cultivates relationships with Jesus in our students. It's time well invested and a big portion of how students experience and know Christ.



Then, there are experiences like SERVE. SERVE gives students the opportunity to step outside of what is routine and experience God in new and deeper ways. They step

into situations they wouldn't otherwise find themselves in, serving at an inner-city community center, entering the home of a single mother to help rebuild and paint, re-roofing a garage or playing games with residents of an assisted living center. Each one of these places is an opportunity for students to put the pieces of faith they've established over the years into action.

At the end of each day, we unpack what we saw. We talk about how God was there and how he does abundantly more than we can ask for. Our hearts break together as we lament the brokenness of the world very near to us. And our faith grows as we look, together with hope, at Christ's promise for restoration.

I've come to realize the importance of SERVE not only in the lives and spiritual development of my students but mine as well. My call, as a leader, to help students find a real relationship with Christ happens when I also serve and remember to put my faith into action.



**“...our faith grows
as we look,
together with
hope, at Christ’s
promise for
restoration.”**

GoExplore RESOURCES

Have you checked out our resource page recently?
Visit thereforego.com/explore to see what's new!



▶ Mentoring Networks

Learn best practices for mentorship and discipleship between young adults and others in your church community.

We know that for the church to thrive, faith communities must be built upon strong intergenerational connections. While many emerging adults are looking to be part of mentoring relationships with older individuals, many congregations struggle to develop these connections. A mentoring network provides churches a place to discern and strategize with the goal of equipping their congregations to build a vibrant intergenerational faith community.

▶ thereforego.com/explore

GO EXPLORE

▶ Youth Group Curricula

Need a curriculum for your youth group this year? We've got you covered!

Forever One Curriculum

"The Bible is full of stories. These stories give us a glimpse into the nature and character of God, as well as God's relationship to humanity, in a way that informs how we should live. They tell of people, places, and events from particular times and cultures and yet speak to each of us right where we are at today."

The Other Six Curriculum

"The Gospel is not about you, but you can play a part. Let me share a word with you—egocentric. Egocentrism is the belief that you are the center of all you do, feel and experience. You believe you are right, you know best and life is all about you. That's being egocentric. Most of us grow up that way—it's not our fault. As young children, we learn quickly that we need to take care of ourselves. We need to learn, adapt, grow and experience life from our own perspective. Nobody will do everything for us."

▶ Now What?

Now What can help you have rich and impactful conversations about calling, purpose and direction with the youth and emerging adults in your life.

The process of figuring out what you want to do can be confusing. High school and college students face questions about work, education and the future but as we grow older, many of us realize that hearing and responding to God's call on our lives is a life-long process that doesn't end at graduation. ThereforeGo has created an online resource for parents and youth leaders as they walk through these questions with youth and emerging adults in their lives.



RESOURCES

▶ Compass 21

Compass 21 is an assessment tool that provides a deep dive into the effectiveness of youth ministry in your unique context. Our trained facilitators can help you evaluate and revitalize your ministry to young people!

We affirm that Scripture teaches us what healthy ministry looks like and from that, we have discovered 7 biblical values that will be explored as your team processes youth ministry first or next steps in your church.

▶ Youth Leader Volunteer Training

Check out our free video series, The 3R's of Youth Volunteers, for ideas about Recruitment, Retention, and Restructuring your adult volunteers!



MINISTRY IN THE ANXIOUS AGE

by Irene Kraegel, PsyD

It's an anxious age. Between the rising flood of negativity, people spending decreasing amounts of time with one another and institutions (such as churches) losing credibility, it's getting harder for people to feel belonging anywhere. Loneliness looms large for many, and these challenges are especially impactful on young people.

Scripture tells us, "do not be anxious" (Philippians 4:6), so how can ministry leaders help anxious students and families during these times? Here are some places to start:

1) Expect stress – it's normal!

Our fight/flight/freeze response is a God-given alarm system to keep us safe. Normalizing this and reducing "stress about stress" keeps us from escalating anxiety, and we can rest that the God-given relaxation response will kick in (as it always does) to calm us down.

2) Create calm spaces as you facilitate interpersonal connection.

Be aware of the power of music, lighting, and colors to calm our mood. Choose words that validate students' fluctuating emotions ("it's okay") while

highlighting God's constant care for them ("God is here"). Support young people in setting limits around their consumption of media and in cultivating positive, in-person connections with one another.

3) Incorporate mentally healthy practices into your programming.

When you provide opportunities for quiet meditation, gratitude journaling, receiving (and giving) compassion, physical movement, and other self-care practices within a Christian framework, you are teaching students to honor and care for themselves as God's precious creation.

Perhaps most importantly, be an example. Remember how often Jesus left the crowds for silent prayer, verbalized gratitude to his Father, expressed compassion, and even met his physical needs? These are all effective, God-given ways to manage anxiety and other uncomfortable emotions. As you care for your own mind and body, you serve as an encouragement for others to do the same.

TheMindfulChristian.com



Encourage students to honor and care for themselves as God's precious creation.

In May we had a conversation with Dr. Irene Kraegel on "Working With Students in An Anxious Age." You can access the replay at <https://www.thereforego.com/online-training/>



GRATE

BE JOYFUL • BE PRAY





EFULL

ERFUL • BE THANKFUL

THEREFORE 
MINISTRIES

➤ ThereforeGo.com/SERVE
Registration opens November 1, 2021.

Gratefull

Have you ever heard of “sin, salvation, service” or “guilt, grace, gratitude”? These are often presented as the three moves of faith. First, we realize our sin or our guilt, then we receive the gift of salvation or grace, and finally we live our lives in service and gratitude. Service and gratitude go hand in hand. Both are responses to what God in Christ has done for us!

You came into this week preparing to serve. But are you ready to be grateful? We are going to learn about gratitude this week. By looking at different bible texts, by trying different things in prayer, and by keeping our eyes open to what God is up to, we are going to discover the beauty and joy of gratitude.

Also, psychologists tell us that the two ways to lift us from anxiety and/or depression are...service and gratitude! It's like our Creator knew exactly how we need to live in order to thrive.

I Thessalonians 5:16-18

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

How will the discovery of gratitude shape your week of service? Wait and see!

Wouldn't it be amazing if those who watched you serve this week were struck by your compassion and kindness? You are in a community this week who needs you. They may need the things that you'll be doing: gardening, painting, cleaning, sorting. But what they really need is the love and grace you can show them. They really need Jesus.

We do, too. Maybe you came to SERVE tired, or discouraged, or regretting the choice to come. Maybe you're feeling pretty empty. Maybe you need some folks who serve you through meals, or prayer, or worship, or just hanging out and playing cards. Can you look for how God will bless you through the service of others?

**Service. Gratitude.
They change the world.
They change us!**



GRATEFULL

BE JOYFUL • BE PRAYERFUL • BE THANKFUL

SERVE youth mission trips for groups

Mission trips and other faith-forming experiences are proven to be the #1 way to keep teens active in the church and growing in their faith. SERVE youth mission trips for teens are all-inclusive, 5-7 day service trips for Middle School or High School students. The students go into communities in the USA and Canada to care for and restore their world in an environment where they'll encounter the concepts of justice and missional living. More than just a week-long short-term mission trip over the summer, SERVE is a faith-forming experience where the communities, congregations and students who are involved all experience lasting transformation.

The community-focused environment of SERVE encourages students' passion for their own congregation and community, so the impact of SERVE continues long after the students return home.

➤ ThereforeGo.com/SERVE

Registration opens November 1, 2021.



High school trips

High School SERVE mission trips are 7-day mission experiences open to students who have completed grade 8 through graduating seniors.

Middle school trips

Middle School SERVE mission trips are 6-day mission experiences open to students who have completed grade 5 through students who have completed grade 8.

Custom SERVE

Looking for a specific trip during spring break for just your students? Contact ThereforeGo Ministries and let us partner with you to create a custom SERVE experience.



CANADA

UNITED STATES

US VIRGIN ISLANDS
▼

In US:

- ☑ Abingdon, VA
- ☑ Byron Center, MI
- ☑ Cadillac, MI
- ☑ Douglas, MA
- ☑ Grand Rapids (Brookside), MI
- ☑ Grand Rapids (LaGrave), MI
- ☑ Holland, MI
- ☑ Lynden, WA
- ☑ Muskegon, MI
- ☑ Salt Lake City, UT
- ☑ Sioux Falls, SD
- ☑ Twin Cities (Edina), MN
- ☑ Whitinsville, MA

In Canada:

- ☑ Barrie, ON
- ☑ London, ON
- ☑ Niagara, ON

In US Virgin Islands:

- ☑ St. Thomas

**SERVE
2022 Sites**

Sites subject to change. Please visit ThereforeGo.com for additional sites and up-to-date info.



Planning calendar

- ✓ **September 1, 2021:** 2022 SERVE Sites announced at thereforego.com
- **September/October:** Choose a SERVE experience. Invite input from fellow leaders, students, parents and church leadership.
- **November 1, 2021:** Registration opens. Save your spots by placing a deposit of \$50 per person. You will only need to indicate the number of youth and adult spots at this time. Sites are filled on a first come, first served basis!
- **November 2021- March 2022:** After you receive your confirmation letter of your site placement, your group can then complete the individual online paperwork by providing specific participant information.
- **April 1, 2022:** Complete your online paperwork by April 1.
- **April 1, 2022:** Scholarship Applications are due by April 1.
- **April 2, 2022:** Any registrations on this date or after will be charged a \$50 late fee.
- **May 1, 2022:** Final balance due for all SERVE Sites.
- **May 15, 2022:** Adult leader background checks are due.

Before your SERVE experience

- **Collect Liability Waiver forms** from each student and adult participant. Bring these with you to your SERVE site.
- **Ensure each adult leader has a background check** on file with ThereforeGo Ministries. More information can be found at thereforego.com/background-check-information
- **Have a leaders' meeting** to review the Leader Handbook (expectations), Spiritual Life Guide, and Expectations of a Leader document.
- **Have a students' meeting:** teach from the 2022 pre-trip theme lessons and review the Student Handbook.
- **Ask your congregation to pray.**



Downloadable resources to help you plan and lead a great mission trip!

Our SERVE Resource Box on our website contains many valuable resources for your church youth group as you are preparing to be a part of a SERVE mission experience. You will find a planning calendar, promotional ideas to build momentum, communication tools for your parents and students, registration information, and much more!

➤ ThereforeGo.com/resource-box

Creating a Mentoring Culture that is Lifelong and Life-Giving

by Lesli van Milligen

“Networks offer a supported learning environment where member churches learn from each other’s experiences.”

This fall, ThereforeGo Ministries along with the Faith Formation Ministries office of the Christian Reformed Church in North America have decided to partner together to respond to an issue that churches in Canada and the United States are facing: building a congregational culture that includes emerging adults. We have done some experimenting with both in person and on-line gatherings of churches to explore the area of mentoring. Here is what we have learned so far.

A congregational emphasis on mentoring responds to current ministry shifts.

Renegotiating Faith, Growing Young and other studies speak to changes in youth ministry. Historically, youth ministry has utilized an approach where there is one adult connecting with every 5 students or a 1:5 ratio. Best practices in youth ministry have changed to a model that suggests each youth and young adult is surrounded by a web of 5 to 7 adults who speak into their life and support their faith formation in various ways. Creating a mentoring culture helps to support

this kind of life on life interaction and encourages members to see themselves as significant parts of a young person’s faith web.

Secondly, there is a growing need to shift from an age and stage based model of ministry to an intergenerational model. Many congregations are finding aged based ministry to be an increased challenge as numbers of both youth and volunteers continue to decline. A mentoring approach is more inherently flexible and doesn’t rely on large numbers to be successful, it also allows for flexibility in meeting the individual needs of each mentee while inviting the entire congregation to share in mutual discipleship and faith formation.

So, why should my church consider joining a mentoring network?

Networks offer a supported learning environment where member churches learn from each other’s experiences. This is combined with a strong personalized coaching component which helps teams take risks they would not take on their own. We will be offering three opportunities for churches to join a network during the 21/22 ministry year and we pray that you would consider this as a next faithful step in your church’s ministry.



➤ More information about networks can be found at <https://www.thereforego.com/mentoring-networks/>

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF

AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

WRITE YOUR
NEXT CHAPTER
IN THE STORY.

ACT FIVE
by REDEEMER

ACTFIVE.CA



SERVING TOGETHER @Home

by Molly Honcoop



Well into our planning for the year, we knew switching to SERVE@Home was going to be a challenge, but we never could have predicted the incredibly positive response we got from our church afterwards.

Because the intergenerational aspect of our congregation at First CRC is so important to us, we wanted to make SERVE@Home an intergenerational experience as well. To do this, we decided to spread the experience out over two weeks (accounting for the busy schedules of families), encouraged family groups to sign up for the workdays, and even created devotional boxes for the younger kids that included a fun craft.

Once our SERVE@Home experience began, our pastor preached out of the typical SERVE “evening sessions”, and we sent the morning devotionals out to our congregation via email. On the workdays, it was so exciting to see family groups working together. Kids who are usually too young to participate were weeding and working with their parents and grandparents. It was also a unique opportunity for the people from our congregation to be able to go out to the worksites our SERVE teams have been working at these past few years and see what’s been done there and the difference our church can make for these organizations through SERVE.



We had such a great response to SERVE@Home these past two years that some of the church members have asked if we can do something similar next year when we have a full, traditional SERVE experience with students again. Our SERVE team and the congregation have really embraced and enjoyed SERVE@Home, and we can't imagine having not made the switch despite the challenges it posed!

Honcoop is located in Washington at First CRC Lynden.



You were created for something good
and your creator is calling you,
ThereforeGo!

ThereforeGo Ministries helps churches challenge youth and emerging adults
to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and transform this world for Him.



ThereforeGo.com