



CHURCHES PARTNERING TOGETHER

[www.UniteUs.org](http://www.UniteUs.org)

# Compassion in Action Project Leader's Packet

## October 3 & 4, 2009



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# Compassion in Action

## PACKET OVERVIEW

### Packet Purpose

The purpose of this packet is to provide CIA Project Leaders with helpful suggestions regarding the planning, preparation, and organization of their specific CIA Project during *Compassion in Action Weekend* (Oct. 3 & 4).

### Vision

The vision of Compassion in Action Weekend is to mobilize churches to serve the community together on October 3 & 4, with a vision for ongoing community service throughout the year.



As a CIA Project Leader, you will not only assist in mobilizing volunteers to serve other people in need throughout our community, but you will also be a primary “vision caster” to those same volunteers. You’ll read more about vision, mission, and goals on page 4 of this packet.

### What are the key “vision casting” ideas that CIA Project Leaders should communicate to volunteers?

1. As the Body of Christ, the reason we are serving people in our community is to make a difference, build relationships, and bring about **community transformation** that would be glorifying to God.
2. People, families, and communities experience physical, emotional, and spiritual transformation when they **experience Jesus through our words and deeds**, in the context of relationship.
3. As churches serving together, we are not interested in serving just one weekend per year, but **all year long**.



## Partnering Together to Serve Atlanta

### **Unite!, Hands on Atlanta, and Gwinnett Great Days of Service**

In 2007, Unite! Churches started a partnership with Hands on Atlanta and Gwinnett Great Days of Service. Since then, we've mobilized a combined 30,000 volunteers in more than 500 service projects throughout metro Atlanta!

This year, we look to do more of the same. On September 1, 2009, Compassion in Action service projects will be accessible for volunteer sign up at [www.cia2009.org](http://www.cia2009.org)

# The Gospel via Helping Hands

Devotional by John Fischer

It keeps coming up. Every time I'm around someone who is uniquely prophetic in their gifts, or every time I read a forward-thinking book or article I find someone saying that the future of evangelism in the world is going to ride on the wings of service. The gospel is going to go forth via helping hands. It's as we reach out to meet the needs of people that we will find opportunity to tell the simple story of Jesus and His love.

The Jesus movement of thirty-five years ago was all about Jesus and saving people's souls. It was about filling up the emptiness inside left by drugs, sexual experimentation, failed social utopia, and a great sense of disillusionment and helplessness. In the years since, Christians have become preoccupied with politics and power – as if we could usher in the Kingdom of God through the halls of Washington or hold back the forces of evil at the polls. All this came with lots of talk and attention in the media – attention that has come at a price in regards to the reputation of Christians, and by way of association, the gospel.

This is why I believe prophetic voices are urging Christians to stop talking and start serving humanity. Is it any wonder that its backbone is service involving among other things, eradicating poverty and illiteracy, healing the sick, and halting the development of preventable diseases? All of these are within our human powers to perform by merely marshalling the worldwide church to answer the call. We can do the work; God can fill our hearts and our hands with His love. Helping hands bring the love of Jesus in concrete ways. People are tired of talk. They distrust words. But unsolicited acts of kindness and love cannot be explained away or denied.

What this means for us in our daily lives is that we need to be looking for the same opportunities to serve in our local neighborhoods and communities. We do not need a worldwide network to reach out to those around us. We just need to be awake and looking for a chance to meet a need. That's the spontaneous part. For others it may mean taking up a position on a committee or a service organization – something that will put us in the daily line of service. God will show you; just be awake. It's the new wave: the gospel via helping hands. It's more than service; it's the love of Jesus lived out in real ways. It's what the world needs now.

This devotional is from the Purpose Driven Life Daily Devotional.  
[www.purposedrivenlife.com](http://www.purposedrivenlife.com)



# Unite! & Compassion in Action Fact Sheet

## Who is Unite!?

Unite! is a network of churches (110 churches, to date) from a wide variety of denominations, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, working together to serve the community through Word & Deed ministry. Unite! is not an organization and does not have paid staff. Leadership is provided by senior pastors, missions pastors, and church staff. Currently, there are 15 churches providing leadership to the Unite! effort. Two separate leadership teams have formed in northeast and northwest Atlanta, with additional leadership teams forming in other parts of the city.

## What is Unite!?

The heart of Unite! is for churches to join together to serve our communities in such a way that God would transform our city for His glory. Unite! might best be thought of as a relational network among churches to better enable "The Church" of Atlanta to combine efforts of prayer, serving, and celebration for maximum influence and impact throughout our city.

## What is Compassion in Action Weekend?

Compassion in Action Weekend occurs on the 1st weekend in October each year where churches throughout metro-Atlanta plan service projects and partner together to serve the community in a spirit of unity, sharing the love of Jesus Christ to those in need. In 2007, Unite! Churches joined with Hands on Atlanta and Gwinnett Great Days of Service to mobilize more than 30,000 volunteers serving in more than 500 service projects.

## Vision for Community Transformation

The vision of Unite! Compassion in Action Weekend is to mobilize churches to serve the community together on October 3 & 4, with a vision for ongoing community service throughout the year.

# **Compassion in Action PLANNING CALENDAR**

- August 21 CIA Projects Submitted (go to [www.UniteUs.org](http://www.UniteUs.org))
- September 1 Volunteer Registration Starts (at [www.cia2009.org](http://www.cia2009.org))
- October 3 & 4 Compassion in Action Weekend!

## **CIA Coaching for Leaders**

If you would like to talk with someone about casting vision, communication, mobilizing volunteers, coordinating logistics, or anything else, contact Jackie Dieter 678-405-2122 or [jackied@perimeter.org](mailto:jackied@perimeter.org).

# Compassion in Action

# PROJECT LEADER OVERVIEW

## Pre-Project Preparation

1. Be sure to register your project at [www.UniteUs.org](http://www.UniteUs.org) by Friday, August 21
2. Be ready to explain the purpose and vision of Unite! and Compassion in Action.
3. Contact, schedule an appointment, and meet with your partnering agency at least 2-3 weeks prior to your service project.
  - a. Tour the facility
  - b. Review the service project purpose
    - i. What is our purpose?
    - ii. What difference will it make that we're here?
    - iii. What are some "next step" possibilities towards ongoing serving?
  - c. Define "success" as it relates to your service project (and a vision for ongoing mobilization)
  - d. Invite an agency representative to be there in order to give a tour, share the agency's vision and ongoing serving opportunities for the volunteers.
  - e. Discuss ongoing serving opportunities to share with your volunteers
  - f. Discuss what tools and materials may be needed for the service project.
  - g. Discuss restroom availability, water provision, trash disposal, first aid kit availability, and location of nearest hospital.
  - h. Discuss a rain day plan (just in case).
4. Recruit task leaders to help oversee details of the service project. You can't do it all!
5. As you plan your project, make sure everyone has a meaningful role to fill as they serve. Don't overwork or under work your volunteers. It's better for volunteers to feel like they've had an "appetizer" serving experience rather than a "full meal" serving experience, because then they'll want to come back and serve again throughout the year.
6. Offer clear and frequent communication with your volunteers, from the time they sign up through the day of the project.
7. Be sure that your directions to the project location are clear and easy to understand. Include landmarks, if necessary. Be sure they have your cell phone.
8. Contact your CIA Project participants ahead of time to communicate:
  - a. Where and when do volunteers need to meet?
  - b. What do volunteers need to wear & bring?
  - c. What is the project purpose & overview
  - d. Can participants bring their children?
  - e. Are meals provided?

# **Working with Your Volunteers**

## **Day of the Project**

1. Offer Clear Directions & Communications by using yard signs, helium balloons, name tags, and a sign in sheet.
2. Smile, be energetic, and be yourself! Your attitude and enthusiasm will set the pace for the group.
3. Welcome volunteers when they arrive, give clear instructions about how and when your project will start, and what they need to do to prepare.
4. Gather the volunteers together (if possible) for 10-15 minutes, and do the following:
  - a. give an overview of Unite!, Compassion in Action, and Hands on Atlanta partnership
  - b. give an overview for your particular project
  - c. cast vision for the project (How does it relate to making a difference in the bigger picture of community transformation?), the agency, the Kingdom of God, and for ongoing serving
  - d. Pray for the partnering agency, the volunteers, and the people you're serving.
  - e. Service Project (1-4 hours)
  - f. Debrief & Discussion (15-30 minutes)
    - a. What was the highlight of your day today? Why?
    - b. What did you learn today?
    - c. What do you think your next steps will be in ongoing serving?

## **1 to 2 Weeks after the Project**

Follow up with volunteers by contacting them (within 2 weeks) to find out how you can encourage them to continue serving in the community.



[www.UniteUs.org](http://www.UniteUs.org)

## Compassion in Action REGISTERING SERVICE PROJECTS

In preparation for Compassion in Action, Unite! churches are asked to **please register your CIA service projects on the [www.UniteUs.org](http://www.UniteUs.org) website by or August 21**. The sooner your project is online, the better! This will be helpful in that all churches and volunteers can sign up online with their own church's projects or a partnering church's projects.

Unite! Compassion in Action projects will be posted and made available on the Compassion in Action website starting Tuesday, September 1 at [www.cia2009.org](http://www.cia2009.org).

### Project Registration

Go to the [www.UniteUs.org](http://www.UniteUs.org) website, click on PROJECT REGISTRATION, fill out the form, and click SUBMIT. It's as easy as that! Your project will be sent to the Unite! office, loaded online by Unite! volunteers, and then will appear for sign up (through the Unite! webpage) at the Hands on Atlanta webpage.

### Project Leader Trainings a MUST for all CIA Project Leaders

Everything you'll need to know about CIA Project Leader Training will be available online at [www.UniteUs.org](http://www.UniteUs.org).

# Compassion in Action FAQ

## Purpose

### **1. What is our purpose?**

To serve the community as churches together on October 3 & 4, with a vision for ongoing community service throughout the year, so that our community experiences the love of Christ relationally through our words and deeds, in hopes that God would bring about community transformation.

### **2. How is Unite! partnering with Hands On Atlanta?**

Since 2005, Unite! and Hands on Atlanta have discussed partnership, but had not been able to bring it to pass until 2007. Hands on Atlanta is excited about the added numbers of service projects and volunteers. Unite! is excited about the opportunity to add a "faith initiative" to Hands on Atlanta Day, and about the greater opportunity to serve and serve with both Christians and non-Christians.

## Interacting with Others

### **3. What should our attitudes be as we serve?**

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. - *Philippians 2:3-5*.

### **4. What happens when we serve others in love?**

#### **a. We're escorting people forward.**

Our job isn't to see everyone we encounter come to Christ on the spot. The apostle Paul said we are to plant and water seeds (1 Corinthians 3:6), but ultimately God is the one who does the harvesting work. Paul also said there is great power unleashed as we plant seeds of good deeds with the power of Christ's kindness - that this kindness, in fact, leads others to repentance (Romans 2:4).

#### **b. We're answering their questions.**

In this age of selfishness, it's startling for someone to do a deed of kindness with no apparent strings attached. It's only natural for people to ask, "So, why are you doing this?" After we serve, we simply answer the natural questions that come up. We don't have to be experts in defending our faith to answer the typical questions people ask during servant evangelism projects.

#### **c. We're loving them into a relationship with Jesus.**

These "Show the Love" projects are happening to love our community into relationship with Jesus Christ. In our quest for tending to our church community, and growing into the kind of people God wants us to be, we can't forget about the world that God so loved that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for it. With each act of love and generosity, we can make a difference.

### **5. What do we say when interacting with those we serve?**

It's important for you to just be yourself. You can say something like, "I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm out

*serving today to let you and others in our community know that you matter to God. He cares about you, and we do, too!"*

**6. Should we verbalize the Gospel to those we serve?**

If God gives you a natural opportunity to verbalize the gospel to someone you're serving, then by all means, do so. However, our goal primarily is just to serve and show people the love of Christ through our actions. We encourage you to share your faith in a spirit of "servant hood." We hope that through our actions, God will establish relationships, through which we can verbalize the Gospel. You'll also receive "You've Been Served" cards as a Gospel resource to give to those you serve, that will explain your motivation for serving.

**7. What should we communicate to those we're serving?**

It is very important that we communicate as representatives of Christ in love, kindness, and humility. DO NOT make any promises or commitments. A promise not made can't be broken. **Compassion**

**8. Will I be able to build relationships?**

It is our hope that we'll leave *Compassion in Action* with a connection to one person (in the community or from another church). Community transformation happens through relationships.

**9. What if things go wrong during our service project?**

You can pretty much expect something to not go as planned. Don't worry! God's in control, and He's ultimately in charge of all the logistics (rain or shine). It's best to have a flexible, teachable attitude as you reach out. And don't forget to practice smiling as you do it!

## **Logistics**

**10. Are meals and drinks provided?**

Check with your church congregation as to what their plans are regarding meals.

**11. What should my team bring / wear to the project?**

Leaders, contact your team members to find out what tools they can bring (if necessary). Leaders need to have a cell phone and driving directions for team members. Depending on the project, you may want to bring a water bottle, a snack, a smile, and a heart to serve. Dress appropriate to your project. We suggest you dress comfortably. Wear comfortable shoes. Jeans, shorts, t-shirts are acceptable.

**12. Should we take pictures?**

We would like for you to have at least one person on your team taking pictures. A digital camera would be preferable. We'd love to have a Picture CD of any pictures that are taken. Email 1-3 of your best photos to [jackied@perimeter.org](mailto:jackied@perimeter.org)

# Flunking Witnessing

Devotional by John Fischer

I heard a story once about a girl who flunked witnessing. Though this was an actual course she failed at a Bible college, I think we can all identify on some level with flunking witnessing as not a course, but a reality in our daily lives. I've flunked witnessing numerous times by simply not making myself available to the Holy Spirit for the job. Others have probably flunked witnessing by not feeling prepared enough. We have all kinds of ways of disqualifying ourselves for this job. We wouldn't know what to say. We wouldn't know how to bring up the subject. We haven't taken the course, much less passed it.

But telling others about Christ is one of the great purposes in our lives. Why do we often find this so hard? Partly I think it's because we've made such a big deal about it. In some circles it's not one of our greatest purposes, it's our only purpose, and it's usually presented as if we were at a sales conference getting pumped to sell our product.

I don't know about you, but I'm a very poor salesman. I'm the kind of guy whose sales pitch would be, "You don't want to buy this, do you?" I don't like interrupting people. I don't like infringing on their space. I hate it when people do that to me, so why would I engage in it myself? Plus, I don't like pretense. I don't like being nice to someone just to make a deal. I wouldn't want anyone to think they are a means to an end.

That's why I've been very encouraged to find out that true witnessing doesn't involve any of these things. It doesn't even involve having a memorized speech. Witnessing is really nothing more than befriending people and telling them your story at the right time (usually when they ask you).

Witnessing is being so in love with God that you eventually end up talking about Him. Witnessing is being so overwhelmed by the undeserved nature of your salvation that you can't contain your joy. Witnessing isn't coercing someone; it's quite the opposite. It's having someone coerce the gospel out of you, because they can't stand not knowing what's going on with you anymore.

If you want to prepare for anything, think about your own story, how you can tell it, and how you can connect it to the events that are happening around you, and the things that are going on in the world that you know people want to talk about. But don't worry about not being prepared. Probably some of the best witnesses around are people who would flunk a witnessing course, but make excellent friends.

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