



Crafting the Offering Time for Weekly Worship (Continued)

Many churches no longer “pass the plate”. Instead, congregation members find a box at the back of the sanctuary for their offering. More and more congregation members are giving electronically. Fewer people carry cash for charitable giving and even fewer carry checkbooks. In some churches, the request for the “offering” and prayers of dedication are no longer part of worship.

Unfortunately, these changes have disconnected us from understanding generosity as an act of worship.

Congregations are in a time of transition between what “we used to do” and how we will recognize faithful generosity. What if we bring the “offering time” back in a new and compelling form? Each week, worship leaders can craft a “Generosity Moment” or “Gratitude Moment” that celebrates our gifts before God.

Is your congregation ready to reclaim the faith practice of generosity every Sunday? Here are some tips for intentionally re-introducing this important worship practice.

Preparation. Worship leaders can no longer ask congregation members to hand over their gifts as a matter duty. Faithful, generous people want to know why they should give and its impact. They want to be inspired. Each Sunday is an opportunity to carefully craft a message that tells the “why” of faithful giving and celebrates generosity.

Generosity and Gratitude. Consider exchanging the “Offering” with a “Generosity Moment” or “Gratitude Moment”. Take two-three minutes each week to celebrate how God is moving in the ministry of the congregation. This may include a brief story, a testimony of gratitude, a reminder of the mission and vision of the church or a thoughtfully chosen scripture. Use different voices from the congregation to share gratitude for the ministries of the church. Remind the congregation that generosity in all forms is an act of worship.

Invitation and Clear Directions. Always include an invitation to join in the ministry through giving. Offer specific directions for how people can give, even if “everybody knows already”. Is there a place for the offering in the sanctuary? Where is it? Do online worshippers know how they can give? What are all the ways that people can give money to the church? Consider using a screen image that lists ways to give.

Prayer. No matter how the funds for ministry arrive, it is still good to offer our financial gifts for God’s glory each Sunday. We can still dedicate what has been given, even if it does not sit in plates in front of us. [You’ll find prayers of dedication for each Sunday at the UM Foundation of Michigan’s website.](#)

If you would like to learn more about transforming your Sunday morning offering practices, please contact [Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker-Lewis](#), Sr. Director of Church Relations.