



*We are More than
the Sum of
Our Parts*

GENEROSITY

GENEROSITY KIT FOR PASTORS AND OTHER CHURCH LEADERS



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®

“More than the sum of our parts.”

—MATTHEW 25:14-30, CEB

Dear Church Leader,

The United Methodist Church, the world and our communities are in a time of transition. Together God’s church can be a beacon to navigate the ongoing global trauma of the COVID pandemic, the impact of a tumultuous political climate in the US and the anxiety of a looming denominational separation.

Now, perhaps more than ever, we are called to be part of extending healing and hope that can guide us to becoming a new creation in Christ. Through our gifts and support, we partner with God and God’s people to strengthen Christ’s loving presence in a hurting world. Together, we find that we are more than just the sum of our parts.

When the church community comes together to support the mission and ministry of the church, we invest in servant leadership, community building and ministries of peace with justice. Concentrating our resources to encourage generosity equips us to step into a grace-filled new beginning with faithful determination.

This kit includes strategies for nurturing a spirit of generosity in your congregation including worship resources, social media posts and children’s material. By incorporating a variety of members and small groups in leading different aspects of your generosity focus, you can deepen the involvement and excitement of the congregation’s participation.

We pray these ideas will help connect people more deeply with the ministries of the local and global church and spark new initiatives that reflect gratitude and generosity for the glory of God.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1: Getting Comfortable Talking About Money	6
2: Thank Servant Leaders	7
3: Connect Giving with Mission	8
4: Let People Know About the Impact of the Ministries in Your Congregation	9
5: Develop a Narrative Budget and Infographics that Tell the Story	11
6: Celebrate Every Success	12
7: Invite Testimonials from Pledgers	13
8: Make It Easy	14
9: Involve the Children and Youth	15
10: Regularly and Intentionally Pray	16

WORSHIP RESOURCES: MORE THAN THE SUM OF OUR PARTS

The offering is an act of worship. These worship resources are based on the parable of the talents according to Matthew 25:14-30.

In the parable Jesus told according to Matthew 25:14-30, the master entrusts valuable coins or talents in the care of three servants. What happens when we experience a new way of living that is not based in an economy of greed or mere survival but on trust and shared resources?

LITURGY

The liturgy is designed to connect with the scripture message while reinforcing the generosity theme. You can print the prayers in the bulletin or project them on screens, depending on your church's culture.

SERMON STARTER

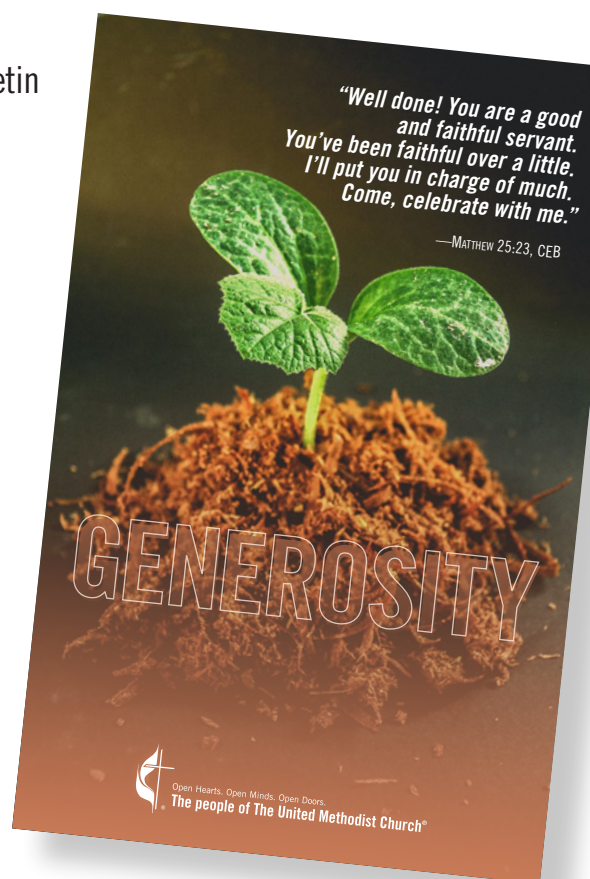
Use the sermon as outlined, inserting specific examples from your congregation or adapt it to fit the context of your community.

OFFERING TALK

Invite your stewardship chair or finance leader to extend an invitation during the worship service, noting the ministries and labors of love that are vital as a community of faith.

BULLETIN INSERT

The bulletin insert can be shared by email or in a paper bulletin to remind people that giving is an act of worship.

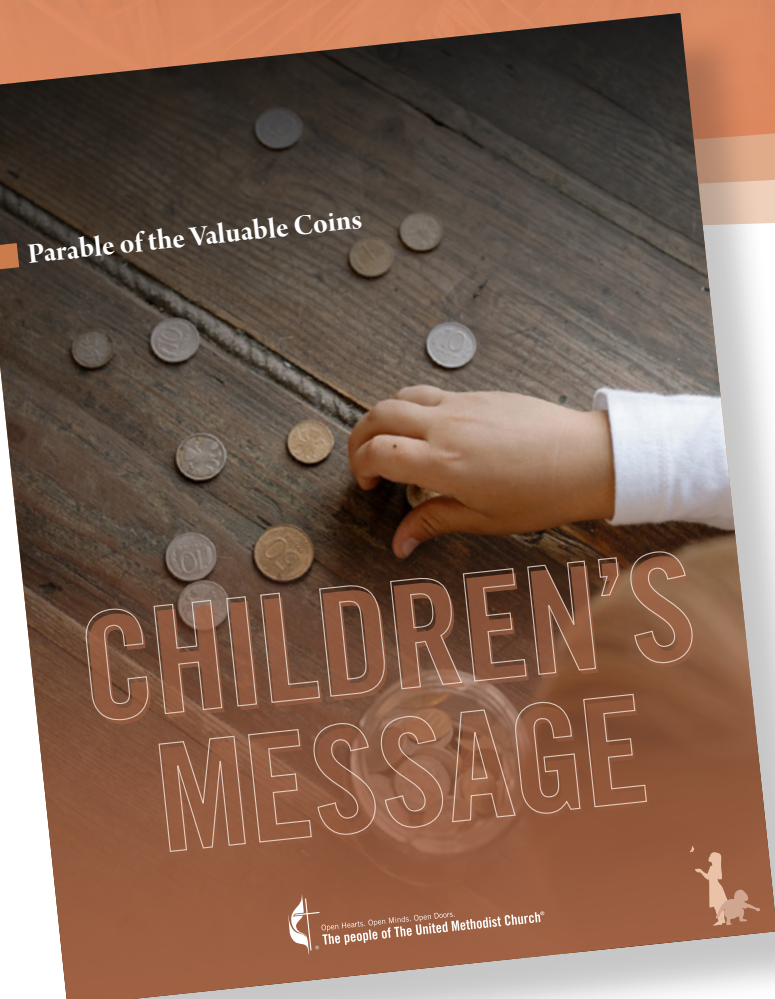
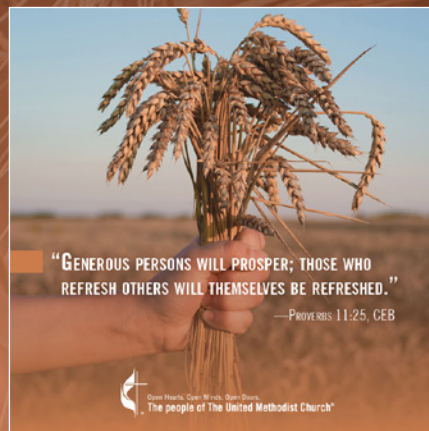


WORSHIP RESOURCES CON'T

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a great way to easily maintain an online presence in your community. Include the icons with your social media address on all graphics and material.

Scripture and quotes about generosity have been designed as ready-to-post graphics and wallpaper for congregants to download and share through their networks.



CHILDREN'S MATERIAL

A children's message, activity and bulletin help the youngest in your congregation grow with an expectation that generosity is part of being in a church community. Adapt the material to fit your context and the age of the children in your congregation.

1 GET COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT MONEY

Start a small group study like “Saving Grace: A Guide to Financial Well-Being,” which helps participants learn about such topics as saving, earning, giving, spending, and debt, along with helpful strategies for achieving a sustainable financial life. This study is adapted from the best-selling *Freed Up Financial Living* from the Good Sense Movement, is based on Wesleyan values and provides text and tools to help participants address life concerns and reach personal financial goals.

This exciting new partnership between Wespeth and Abingdon Press draws on the expertise of United Methodist leaders across the connection through videos, a workbook, a leader guide and devotional materials. With study sessions for both pastors and laity, participants will explore money management from a Wesleyan perspective, helping congregants reach personal financial goals as well as address life concerns.

2

*Thank
you*

THANK SERVANT LEADERS

Be sure to publicly and regularly thank the servant leaders in your congregation. It encourages them and also shows the variety of people required to keep the ministries strong.

At each staff meeting, ask staff to name someone in the congregation whom they want to thank and why. Write a thank-you note that is signed by all of the staff.

Thank first-time givers and pledgers, those who increase their giving and those who make special gifts. Even if you prefer not to see amounts, acknowledging these gifts is encouraging and appreciated.

3

CONNECT GIVING WITH MISSION

If your church hosts fundraisers that bring in people from the community, put up posters around the building that show photos of ministry in action. Include text that thanks guests for supporting the different ministries. Remember to tell people how they can be involved.

Don't limit these posters to only when fundraising is happening. Throughout the year print out poster-size images from ministry events, global and local mission experiences and worship highlights. Hang up the posters throughout the church building and post on social media.

This gives a visual reminder to congregants and visitors about the impact of tithes and offerings.

Some sample language for the poster: Thank you for supporting (church name's) local and global ministries.

4

PUBLICIZE YOUR CONGREGATION'S MINISTRIES



Let people know about the impact of the ministries in your congregation.

MINISTRY NUGGET

In each newsletter, highlight a ministry of your church and the people who make it happen. Make sure to include a phone number and information about how people can get involved or support the ministry with practical or financial gifts.

MISSION MOMENT

Each week in worship invite a church leader to share what is happening in their area of leadership or program. What are the partnerships and who is impacted by the work that is happening? Be sure to schedule a mission moment on the Special Sunday offering days as well as regular Sundays throughout the year.

USING VIDEO

MINISTRY VIDEOS

Interview ministry leaders about one thing they are excited about. Post the video on your website and social media. Include information about how people can be part of the ministry.

UNITED METHODIST GIVING VIDEOS

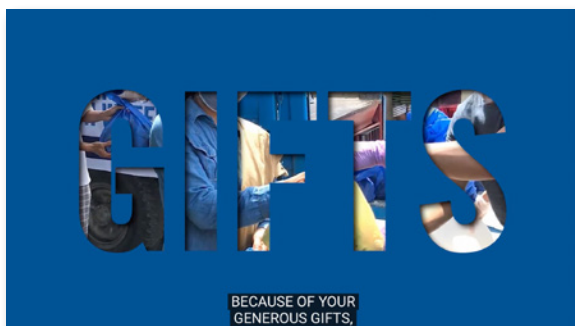
Share these videos as part of the offering, as people gather for small groups, in newsletters and on social media. Giving through The United Methodist Church allows us to have an impact throughout the world in ways that are not possible on our own.



▶ <https://youtu.be/HxLvrlmHW4s>



▶ <https://youtu.be/uAnxGOA5gyU>



▶ https://youtu.be/6xvLouRqQ_E



▶ <https://youtu.be/zGrr59IEKIY>

5

VISUALLY EXPRESS THE STORY

Develop a narrative budget and infographics that tell the story.

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6

CELEBRATE EVERY SUCCESS

Don't take blessings for granted. Find ways to share the joys of church life as they happen. Consider starting church meetings with each person sharing something that happened in church since the group last met that made them smile.

At the beginning of each year or before the end of the programming year, come up with a top-ten list that gets shared with the congregation. Consider making this a dinner celebration or other annual event.

7

INVITE TESTIMONIALS FROM PLEDGERS

Why do people give to the church? Invite people who regularly give or have made a pledge to talk about why it is a priority for them. A template they can follow might look like:

Name: _____

How long they have attended: _____

Why they are a member of this church: _____

Brief examples of how they support the church through their prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.

8

INVOLVE THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH

As part of your generosity campaign, children can join their parents in pledging their gifts, prayers, presence, service and witness. Design a special pledge card that helps them make a promise to care for the church, share from their allowance and participate in worship and other parts of the life of the church.

Older youth can make a financial pledge and commit to serving in different ministries. As they serve, they begin to make the connection between money raised in the church and how it translates to ministry.

Children and youth can also lead seasonal fundraisers that capture the attention of adults and raise funds for specific ministries and mission.

9

MAKE IT EASY

People are used to making cashless payments from buying their morning coffee to making regular bill payments. During the pandemic, many people moved their church giving online.

When giving is automated, the church benefits, particularly if congregants set up a monthly or weekly recurring gift. Providing multiple channels of giving is helpful as people are less likely than before to carry cash or a checkbook.

Still, it can create an awkward moment when the basket is passed and the member has nothing to put in the basket. Consider providing cards that can be placed in the offering plate to say they have given online. The card can also indicate next steps or other ways that the parishioner feels led to give.

10 REGULARLY AND INTENTIONALLY PRAY

In our membership vows, United Methodists commit to supporting the church in specific ways, including with our prayers.

Reflecting the direction to pray without ceasing, develop a congregational prayer team that rotates each week. The team commits to pray daily for the health and strength of the congregation and the global church. Remembering that all that we have comes from God, the prayers recognize and give thanks for abundance, pray for guidance and lift up the specific needs.