CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

God is with us
— Matthew 1:23

THE PERFECT GIFT.

2019 LEADER’S GUIDE DECEMBER 1–22
Thank you!

...for your energy, creativity and support in promoting the Christmas Joy Offering. For those of us gathered together in Advent expectation, we know that the only perfect gift ever given was the one we received in Jesus Christ — a perfect gift from a gracious God. In Matthew’s Gospel, one of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means “God is with us.” We know that in Jesus, we receive the perfect gift of God being with us. What a powerful gift, a perfect gift, the gift of... being with. Although we cannot give the perfect gift, we can give generously to support and be with our past, present and future leaders in their time of promise and their time of need.

QUESTIONS? You’re always welcome to contact us!

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING
800-728-7228, Ext. 5047
special.offerings@pcusa.org
presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy
Text JOY to 56512 to learn more or to give to the Christmas Joy Offering

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
EQUIPPING COMMUNITIES
OF COLOR
Tim McCallister
800-728-7228, Ext. 5230
tim.mccallister@pcusa.org
presbyterianmission.org/resc

BOARD OF PENSIONS
Rev. John G. McFayden
800-773-7752, Ext. 7224
jmcfayden@pensions.org
pensions.org

STANDING ORDERS
Customer Service
800-541-5113
customer_service@presbypub.com

THREE EASY WAYS TO STAY UP-TO-DATE
ON ALL THINGS SPECIAL OFFERINGS.

Blog | pcusa.org/blogs/weekly_offerings
Facebook | facebook.com/specialofferings
Twitter | twitter.com/pcusa_so
EVEN LEADERS CAN USE A LITTLE HELP!
Get the Most Out of Your Christmas Joy Offering Resources

When you’re busy, figuring out the best ways to share and promote the Christmas Joy Offering can be difficult. So, we’ve highlighted important facts, histories, statistics, and programs to make it easier to inspire your congregation to get involved.

In this guide, you will find a variety of materials to help you promote the Christmas Joy Offering and teach your members about the work supported by their gifts. This guide will walk you through these materials, as well as some effective ways to celebrate the Offering and motivate your congregation to give.

But this guide is just a start. We encourage you to add your own ideas and enthusiasm to create a unique Offering experience for your church.

CONTENTS


Using the Leader’s Guide Makes Things Simple

3. Promoting Christmas Joy: Before the Offering page 8
4. Promoting Christmas Joy: During the Offering page 9
5. Promoting Christmas Joy: After the Offering page 11
6. Minutes for Mission page 12
7. Suggested Litany for a Christmas Eve Candlelighting Service page 17
8. Resources Order Form page 19

Interested in an electronic version of the Leader’s Guide?
Find it at pcusa.org/resource/christmas-joy-offering-leaders-guide
THE PERFECT GIFT

Gifts are wonderful things. Giving them and receiving them, large or small, gifts can bring a smile, or even a tear of happiness. And the perfect gift for someone you love — well the perfect gift is more than just something they will like. The perfect gift reflects something about the person that receives it — it answers a deep need or recognizes something about them that perhaps very few people know or see in them. The perfect gift — that gift has power, the power to bring you closer together.

One of the most powerful things that Christians claim is that God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God’s perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ, offered the power of being with us. According to Matthew’s Gospel, one of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means “God is with us.” In Jesus, God shared our human experience, and chose to be with those who were often overlooked, left out, vulnerable, or in need. “God is with us” we proclaim. What a powerful gift, a perfect gift, the gift of “with.”

We offer our own gifts during this Advent Season through the Christmas Joy Offering. We give these gifts because God shows us how powerful it is to “be with.” Because God is with us, we see the potential of students of color who will become our leaders and we seek to come alongside them, to encourage them, to be with them. Because God is with us, we see church workers who have critical financial needs and we come alongside them, to assist them — we are with them. The power of “with” is the power God shows us in Jesus Christ. God’s perfect gift: Emmanuel, God is with us. Let us share our gifts and be with those who have need.
WE’RE ON A MISSION WORTH JOINING

It’s our goal to assist church workers in their time of need and students in their time of promise. Check out the Minutes for Mission and bulletin inserts for powerful stories of lives changed — all because of your gifts to the Offering.

YOUR ASSISTANCE GOES A LONG WAY

Research shows when church leaders like you encourage their congregants to support initiatives like the Christmas Joy Offering, their members give significantly more. Thanks to your commitment, we can continue to make, and keep, the vital promises of the Offering.

IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN MORE

Each year, we have more amazing reasons for you to continue your support of the Christmas Joy Offering. Visit our website to discover even more resources: presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy.

SHARE YOUR STORIES WITH US!

We’d love to hear the unique ways you promoted the Christmas Joy Offering, as well as any suggestions for us to improve your experience. Contact us via social media or email special.offerings@pcusa.org.
OUR GIFTS AT WORK:
SUPPORTING OUR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE LEADERS

By supporting the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions (BOP), the Christmas Joy Offering honors the faithfulness of current and retired church workers and their families in need. Thanks in part to support from this Offering, church workers can receive critical financial assistance to support them through life’s challenging circumstances. These generous actions bear witness to our faithful response to God’s charge to love one another as Christ commanded.

- $1.2 million of gifts from 2018 are being used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their times of need.
- Income supplements from the BOP helped nearly 325 households, assisting retired church workers and surviving spouses with the means to provide for themselves.
- Housing supplements from the BOP helped more than 262 households remain in their homes, afford assisted living, or long-term care.
- Shared and Emergency Grants from the BOP helped more than 291 households facing times of great financial need or uncertainty due to unforeseen circumstances.

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF THE BOARD OF PENSIONS
2000 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-3298
800-773-7752
pensions.org

“Central in my mind as to why give to the Christmas Joy Offering is that it is going to allow ministry to happen, and you just never know what that ministry is going to be.”

Rev. Shelley Wiley
First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Ohio

Shelley is grateful for the shared grant she received that allowed her to continue to minister to her church members after a scary automobile accident.

Read Shelley’s story on page 16 of this guide.
OUR GIFTS AT WORK:
PREPARING THE WAY FOR FUTURE LEADERS

The PC(USA), with its historic commitment to higher learning, has long promoted education and leadership development through the establishment and support of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Our future church leaders of color can receive much-needed assistance while they discover and pursue their professional goals at these schools and colleges. Your gifts allow these ministries to continue — sustaining a tradition Presbyterians have carried out for nearly 140 years.

🌟 $1 million of gifts from 2018 are being used to provide education and leadership development skills at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

🌟 Many of the students attending Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color are the first in their families to enroll in higher education.

THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING SUPPORTS THESE INSTITUTIONS

Menaul School | Albuquerque, NM menaulschool.com
- 98% of graduates go on to college
- Ranked best Christian High School and 5th best private school in New Mexico by Niche (niche.com) in their February release of “2016 Best Private Schools in America”

Presbyterian Pan American School | Kingsville, TX ppas.org
- 100% of graduates are accepted into colleges and universities in their home countries or in the United States
- Welcomes a diverse international student body, with 26 countries represented in the last 25 years

Stillman College | Tuscaloosa, AL stillman.edu
- 84% of faculty hold terminal degrees
- Ranked among top tier schools in U.S. News and World Report for more than a decade

“Thank you for the opportunities, they make a difference. And thank you for the scholarships, they make a difference.”

Devon Kelly
Graduate, Stillman College,
Graduate-student in social work, University of Alabama

The Christmas Joy Offering helps Stillman College and other Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color prepare future leaders like Devon to serve the church and society.

Read Devon’s story on page 13 of this guide.
PROMOTING CHRISTMAS JOY:
BEFORE THE OFFERING

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER

Ask the session to set a date to receive the Christmas Joy Offering. This is traditionally received on the Sunday before Christmas, December 22, though any time during the Advent and Christmas season is appropriate. Encourage the session to set a giving goal higher than last year.

* Develop your interpretation plan by reviewing the resources, tips, and updates on the Christmas Joy website at presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy.

* Once you receive your shipment of materials, review them and continue planning your Offering promotion. Order any additional materials you may need by emailing customer_service@presbypub.com or calling 800-533-4371.

* Begin planning events around the theme: “The Perfect Gift.” Choose the individuals who will present Minutes for Mission. Work with the worship committee to plan a special Christmas Joy Offering worship service as well as a suggested litany for a Christmas Eve candlelighting service (found on pg. 17 and online).

Visit 
PRESBYTERIANMISSION.ORG/CHRISTMASJOY
TO DOWNLOAD THESE OFFERING RESOURCES:

- Bulletin Inserts
- Poster
- Facebook photo
- Minutes for Mission (in large print for easy reading)
- Sample blog post or newsletter article
- Children’s Curriculum
- Christmas Joy Offering PowerPoint® slides, including customizable slides

THREE WAYS YOUR MEMBERS CAN GIVE

- Through your congregation
- Text JOY to 20222 to give $10
- www.presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy

If giving online, members should provide the name of their congregation so the church will receive credit for their gifts.
PROMOTING CHRISTMAS JOY:
DURING THE OFFERING

NOVEMBER

Display the Christmas Joy Offering poster in a prominent location, and feel free to order more if you need them!

- Join in a webinar to discuss the offering and ways of promoting the Offering (if you can’t make this time, these will be recorded and added to our website).
  
  **November 19, 2019** – CJO for Mid Council Leaders
  Registration link: https://zoom.us/j/179606817

  **November 26, 2019** – CJO for Congregations
  Registration link: https://zoom.us/j/444419239

- Use the pre-designed art and graphics found at www.presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy in newsletters, bulletins or Facebook.

- Make a promotional board or display! If you don’t know where to begin, take a look at an idea from the Special Offerings team by visiting pcusa.org/cjo-display. You can also call 800-728-7228, ext. 5047 to speak with a staff member who can help you with ideas for your own promotional boards. Whether building on these ideas or coming up with your very own, remember to tag us on Facebook when you post pictures of your congregation’s Christmas Joy display.

- Use the children’s curriculum in Sunday school. Available for download are a Children’s Sermon, two lessons with activities, and ideas to connect worship and the congregation. Download these materials at presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy.

- Promote the Offering on your church’s website, and share your promotional ideas with other congregations through your Facebook page. Please remember to tag us too to reach an even wider audience.

- Remind your congregation about the Offering. Distribute coin boxes and promote the Offering through your church newsletter or other mailings. A ready-made newsletter article is available at presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy.

- Enclose the Offering brochure/self-mailer envelope in your mailings as a giving opportunity for those who may be out of town when you receive the Offering. Display the Christmas Joy Offering poster in a prominent location, and feel free to order more if you need them!
DECEMBER

Place an insert in the Sunday bulletin every week. There are two inserts this year, so each insert can be used for two Sundays.

- Ask individuals to present Minutes for Mission for three or four Sundays, including the Sunday when the Offering is received. The Minutes for Mission complement the stories in the bulletins, and can be found in this guide or downloaded from the website.

- Put Offering envelopes in the pew racks.

- Use Offering materials during a worship service, potluck, and/or other congregational gatherings.

- On the Sunday your congregation receives the Christmas Joy Offering, have your Sunday school children present to the pastor the stole they made using the new children’s curriculum. Visit presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy for more information.

- Receive the Christmas Joy Offering on December 22 or any time during the Advent or Christmas season.

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The Acabal family, Tony and Lilia, Marco, Celeste and Luis, has come a long way in a single generation, thanks in part to the generosity of Presbyterians around the country who come together through gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering. Read the Acabal’s story on page 15 of this guide.
PROMOTING CHRISTMAS JOY:
AFTER THE OFFERING

Thank your congregation for participating in the Offering.

- Report to your congregation how much was received and which programs, schools, and colleges will receive gifts from the Offering.
- Throughout the year, remind your members they can contribute to the Offering at any time at presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy.
- Make your congregation’s check payable to PC(USA). Send it through the normal receiving agency at your presbytery or synod. If your church does not have a receiving agency, the check can be sent to:

  **Mid Councils**
  Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
  PO Box 643751
  Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3751

  **Congregations**
  (through your normal receiving agency, usually the presbytery, or)
  Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
  PO Box 643700
  Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Stay Connected

Subscribe to the Special Offerings blog, “Like” the Special Offerings Facebook page, or follow Special Offerings on Twitter to stay up-to-date.

- **BLOG** | www.pcusa.org/blogs/weekly_offerings
- **FACEBOOK** | www.facebook.com/specialofferings
- **TWITTER** | www.twitter.com/pcusa_so
What was the most perfect gift you ever received? A bike or doll when you were a kid? A video game, perhaps? Maybe it was the day you met your husband, your wife — or looked into the eyes of the newborn baby that someone laid in your arms.

For most of us, the most perfect gift is not necessarily a thing, but something else. Something bigger, deeper, more meaningful.

One of the most powerful things that Christians claim is that God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God’s perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ, offered the power of being with us. According to Matthew’s Gospel, one of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means “God is with us.”

In Jesus, we receive the perfect gift of God being with us, and of being with those who are often overlooked, left out, vulnerable, or in need. “God is with us,” we proclaim. What a powerful gift, a perfect gift, the gift of … being with. Being with … think about it.

This is one of the reasons we share gifts during Christmas. We, too, want to share the power of being “with” those we love and those in need, by offering gifts like those we give to the Christmas Joy Offering.

When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we step forward to be with the young people attending Stillman College, Presbyterian Pan American School, and the Menaul School, recognizing their potential and rejoicing in their talents. We offer the gift of being with them in support of their education and leadership development, knowing that the students of color who attend these schools will soon lead the church and world, receiving our gifts and offering their gifts in return.

We also step forward to be with church workers and their families who have faithfully served the church but find themselves in critical financial need because of changing health situations or an emergency. We offer the gift of being “with” them by giving a gift to the offering to help restore hope through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions.

We give these gifts because God shows us how powerful it is to “be with.” The power of “with” is the power God shows us in Jesus Christ. God’s perfect gift: Emmanuel, God is with us. Let us share our gifts and celebrate our church leaders — past, present and future.

Let us pray,

God, you are indeed with us.
Because of your son, Jesus, we are inspired to be with those who lead your Church but find themselves in need.
And we are inspired to be with students at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color, who have the potential to lead your church and world in the future.
In the name of the Christ, Emmanuel, we pray.
Amen.
MINUTE FOR MISSION

THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING HELPS A STUDENT
MOVE FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HOPE

As a high school senior, Devon Kelly had no place to call home and little hope.

Beginning at age 14, he slept wherever he could find a place to lay his head. He stayed with cousins, friends, his grandmother, and his aunt. Sometimes he spent the night outdoors on a park bench. His mother’s struggles with mental illness and other medical issues had diminished her ability to care for Devon and his brother.

“Growing up on Chicago’s South Side was really tough,” he said. “By the time I was 18, I had lost several family members to gun violence. I had lost other family members to the judicial system. Honestly, I thought I was going to be another statistic.”

However, his entire outlook, and his life, began to change when he encountered an admissions representative from Stillman College, a historically black college in Tuscaloosa, AL, affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), at his high school.

Devon assumed he “didn’t have any hope of going to college.” However, his mind changed after a “heart-touching conversation” that started with ... POP TARTS®. Devon bumped into a Stillman admissions representative at a POP TARTS® vending machine in his school.

“At this time, I didn’t like POP TARTS®, but now I believe this was the Lord’s way of leading me to a bigger plan for my life,” Devon said.

And as we all know, the Lord moves in mysterious ways ...

That said, Devon began to imagine Stillman as a place where he could succeed. And he did.

He found hope. He found his future.

Today, Devon is pursuing a master’s in social work at the University of Alabama, and he has his sights set on helping children and youth, who like him, have faced severe adversity.

“Stillman has made me the person I am today, the desire I have for other people to do well, the professionalism I carry, and the desire to show the love of God, the love of Christ.”

Devon’s life-changing journey to Stillman was possible because of its relatively low tuition and generous financial aid packages. Gifts to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Christmas Joy Offering help Stillman reach out to students like Devon.

The Christmas Joy Offering helps others like Devon find hope, and perhaps a better future. The Christmas Joy Offering is a reflection of the perfect gift — the love of God, the love of Christ.

Let us pray,

Lord, you moved toward us when you gave your son, Jesus. Through Christ, you drew near to us and lifted us up to you in him. May the gifts we share in this offering honor your perfect gift to us, and may the students who are supported have their potential lifted up while they know the church’s presence and yours. Amen.
MINUTE FOR MISSION
CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING HELPS RETIRED MINISTER LIVE WITH JOY AND DIGNITY

Grocery shopping had become an anxiety-filled experience for the Rev. Gloria Casasus-Urrutia. Ten years after her 2006 retirement as organist at her church, Porta Coeli in San German, Puerto Rico, she found herself thrust into severe financial hardship. “I had to write down the price of each item and add everything up to make sure I had the money.”

“I bet there are probably people in this room who know what that feels like, and it’s not good.”

Her situation forced her to move four times over two years, and she struggled to find a safe and affordable place to live. Then, to make matters even worse, Hurricane Maria struck.

As we’ve all heard, much of Puerto Rico was devastated, and it isn’t hard to believe that Gloria was beset by a bevy of mental anguish and physical problems. “I had a panic attack, I had bronchitis, my arm was dislocated, and as if that wasn’t enough, my puppy had to be hospitalized for several days.”

But as a woman of faith, she was never in total despair. “I suffered a deep depression, but there was something that was not affected — my faith and trust in the God of love and mercy that we preach so much.” She prayed for people who suffered severe setbacks from the storm and gave thanks for the meager provisions she had.

But soon, God opened a door. Isn’t that so often the way? Gloria became aware that help might be available when she contacted the church’s Board of Pensions seeking an income certification letter so she could apply for government benefits. Her pension was small because she entered ministry later in life and served small congregations with limited financial resources. Maria Perry, a Board service specialist, took note of Gloria’s extremely modest income and urged her to apply to the Assistance Program.

“I saw light at the end of the tunnel,” Gloria said. Her life was about to become less of a struggle thanks to a grant from the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. The Assistance Program is supported by gifts from congregations, just like ours, to the Christmas Joy Offering.

Gloria says her life “has taken on a new turn.” The grant enabled her to get her car fixed, and her grocery shopping is no longer such a worrisome chore.

Gloria is so grateful for the gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering and for the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions they support. Gloria especially wants her Presbyterian family to know that she faithfully places her tithe in her congregation’s offering plate to share the blessings that she received. She said the generosity of Presbyterians and the work of the Board of Pensions bears witness to the care of the “Good Shepherd.”

The offering also supports Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!

Indeed it does.

Let us pray,

From a humble birth,
your perfect gift was given.
We offer our humble gifts in response,
that your power and grace might
magnify them to meet the needs
of those who serve your church
and your world.

Amen
MINUTE FOR MISSION

MENAUL SCHOOL PUTS CHILDREN ON A NEW PATH

Tony and Lilia Acabal carried deep memories of the struggles they faced as new immigrants years ago.

Tony’s family escaped violence-riddled Guatemala in 1987 when he was 15. A decades-long civil war, which claimed the lives of 200,000 people, posed danger at every turn. Lilia’s family came to the United States from Mexico when she was 14.

For Tony, getting a good education in his home country was difficult at best, compounding the challenges of learning a new language and culture. Lilia still remembers the loneliness she encountered when she started high school in the U.S.

For their own children — Marco, Celeste and Luis — Tony and Lilia considered the sacrifices they would have to make and decided to send them to the Menaul School, a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)-related secondary school in Albuquerque, New Mexico. And they couldn’t be happier! Their children are growing up with enriching experiences on all levels: educationally, spiritually, culturally and socially.

“Our children feel like they belong to the community, and we feel like that as well,” Lilia said. “They build close relationships with other students as well as their teachers.”

Their son Marco, a 2019 graduate, acknowledged that Menaul is “a challenging experience,” but he said the concern of teachers and small classes help students succeed. He added that Menaul, much more than most schools, offers classes where “they talk about spiritual things.”

While Tony and Lilia sacrificed financially to send their children to Menaul, they know their children’s school would not have been possible without the generosity of others. Gifts to the PC(USA)’s Christmas Joy Offering help Menaul extend scholarships to the 60 percent of their students who need assistance.

In gratitude for their children’s opportunities, Tony and Lilia are among the school’s most faithful volunteers. They are frequent chaperones at dances and other school events, and Tony, a nurse, accompanies students on school-sponsored camping trips, medical supplies in tow.

“We really want to give something back because Menaul has done a lot for us,” Tony said.

The Acabal family has come a long way in a single generation, thanks in part to the generosity of Presbyterians around the country who come together through gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering. These make a difference in the lives of young people who have been enriched by the Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color over the years. Your gifts help not only with their education, but also with their spiritual awakening and faith formation as church leaders of the future.

They also help church workers — past and present — and their families with critical financial assistance. Please give generously.

Let us pray,

Faithful God,
we pray that you will strengthen
and encourage parents who are striving
to afford their children a better life.
We give thanks that you are opening doors
of opportunity for a new generation.
May our children and youth be able to
become all that you have created
them to be.
Amen.
MINUTE FOR MISSION

“IT MADE A HUGE DIFFERENCE”

After her car went flying off the road and rolled over in a stubbled cornfield, first responders believed the accident had taken the life of the Rev. Shelley Wiley.

She had fallen unconscious while driving because of an epileptic seizure, a condition that had been diagnosed years earlier and, until her accident, had been under control. The good news is that she recovered and her new medication works well, but Ohio law requires people who suffer seizures to cease driving for six months.

Rev. Wiley worried that her inability to drive would compromise her efforts to serve the congregation she pastored at that time, Honey Creek Presbyterian Church in New Carlisle, Ohio. How would she be able to connect with the people she loved? Six months seemed like such a long time.

While she struggled with how she might adapt, the Presbytery of the Miami Valley suggested a plan to pay drivers to take her to work-related duties — church, presbytery meetings and pastoral visits — at the same rate as Uber drivers in the area. It involved a shared grant between the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, the presbytery, and her congregation. Gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering support the Assistance Program, which helps current and past church leaders and their families who are in critical financial need.

What a relief, and a blessing.

“People who spent a lot of time driving me talked about how good it had been for them to get uninterrupted time to sit in the car with the pastor, chat and get to know each other better personally, and have occasional conversations about theology, polity and the future of this small church,” Wiley said.

One driver discovered a passion for ministry with homebound church members. She became an elder and coordinates the congregation’s ministry with these members. “She found a whole new ministry for herself visiting with shut-ins,” Wiley said. “She discovered she loved it.”

Rev. Wiley said she had long known about the Assistance Program and the critical help it provides, but her experience helped her see another dimension of the program’s usefulness.

“Central in my mind as to why give to the Christmas Joy Offering is that it is going to allow ministry to happen, and you just never know what that ministry is going to be,” she explained. “The church I was serving is a small church, and it didn’t have a lot of reserve funds. It really made a huge difference.”

And isn’t that what we always say: “When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.”

Let us pray,

In Jesus the world received your perfect gift, your presence with humanity.

May the gifts we share be with those who need creative support to continue their ministry and live out their call.

Amen
Some congregations receive the Christmas Joy Offering in the context of a candlelighting service. Whether or not that is your congregation’s practice, you may find the following litany a helpful resource as you celebrate this season in your faith community.

**Leader:** In the beginning and in the midst of darkness, God spoke.

**All:** Let there be light.

**Leader:** In the beginning was the Word. And the Word came and dwelt among us. And the Word was the light of all peoples.

**All:** Let there be light.

**Leader:** We light our candles, knowing that the One who is the source and promise of all light is the One whose birth we celebrate.

**All:** Let there be light.

**Leader:** We are here to seek a little light by which we can see, by which we can live, by which we can love.

**All:** Let there be light.

**Leader:** We need to know that we are part of something greater than the flicker of our own little candles. We long to be assured that the light of Christ is with us even in the moment.

**All:** Let there be light.

**Leader:** So we light our candles in gratitude for the love and light that shine through the babe born in Bethlehem who became the Redeemer of us all.

**All:** Let there be light.

**Leader:** May we be so emboldened as to share the love of God with a world longing for light and hope, purpose, and love. May our actions and generosity shine in a world under the shadow of despair.

**All:** Let there be light.

**Leader:** We join the chorus of those whose carols have echoed through the years—“O come to us, abide in us, our Lord, Emmanuel.”

**All:** Let there be light.
The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s.

The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families.

Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

Thank you for your support of the Christmas Joy Offering!

Text JOY to 56512 to learn more or to give to the Christmas Joy Offering or visit pcusa.org/christmasjoy.
2019 CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING ORDER FORM

If you find you need additional copies of resources...

- Contact PC(USA) Store at 800-533-4371 between 9:00 am – 5:00 pm EST
- Email customer_service@presbypub.com
- Fax this order form to 800-541-5113

Mail this form to Presbyterian Customer Service, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202.
Download at presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy

ALL CHRISTMAS JOY MATERIALS ARE FREE unless otherwise noted.

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<td>P25</td>
<td>Bulletin Inserts – God Is With Us</td>
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<td>Offering Envelopes</td>
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<td>Children’s Coin Box</td>
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SPANISH MATERIALS

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KOREAN MATERIALS

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SHIP TO: (Please use a street address—UPS cannot deliver to a PO box.)

CHURCH: 

ATTENTION: 

ADDRESS: 

CITY: _ STATE: _ ZIP CODE: _

PHONE: _ PIN/CUSTOMER I.D.#*: _

*Permanent Identification Number. See General Assembly Statistics Book.

☐ Check or money order enclosed (include 10 percent of the order total for priced items: $5.25 minimum, $65 maximum).
Thank you for your support of the Christmas Joy Offering

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!

QUESTIONS?
Feel free to contact us at 800-728-7228, ext. 5047
or email special.offerings@pcusa.org.
PC(USA) Office of Special Offerings
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202

The Christmas Joy Offering is one of four annual special offerings. The four church-wide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) — One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost Offering, Peace & Global Witness Offering, and Christmas Joy Offering — play an important role in defining what it means to be a connectional church. Over the years these offerings have provided ways for individuals and congregations to join together with each other and in partnership with other Christians in responding to a variety of concerns; and offer opportunities for partnership, learning, and witness that profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ’s love for the whole church.