**Because We Are Thankful**

**2014 Thanksgiving Offering for the**

**World Evangelism Fund**

**Planning Guide**

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**Introduction**

*Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love*

 *and his wonderful deeds for mankind.*

*Let them sacrifice thank offerings*

 *and tell of his works with songs of joy.*

*Psalm 107:21-22, NIV*

We give **because we are thankful**. The 2014 World Evangelism Fund Thanksgiving Offering theme comes from the thank offerings of the Old Testament. These offerings were a way for people to spontaneously express their gratitude to God for His gifts. This year, we want to continue this tradition of gratitude by offering up our own thank offerings to God through the World Evangelism Fund.

Included in the Planning Guide are:

* Tips on how to use the available resources to promote the offering
* Suggested timeline for talking about the offering with your congregation
* Customizable scheduling tool for pastors and church leaders

There are also many other resources available to you though nazarene.org/generosity, the official website of the 2014 Thanksgiving Offering:

* Video—“Because We Are Thankful”
* Sermon—“We Give…Because We Are Thankful”
* Personal stories of gratitude, generosity, and the World Evangelism Fund
* Children’s activity sheets
* Posters
* Bulletin Inserts
* Bookmarks
* Devotionals
* Logos
* [Children’s Quarter Collectors](http://www.nph.com/nphweb/html/nph/itempage.jsp?itemId=O-320&nid=srch&catalogId=NA&catSecCd=NA&subCatSecCd=NA&subSubCatSecCd=NA) (available for $9.99 (package of 10) through Nazarene Publishing House, 1-800-877-0700, [www.nph.com](http://www.nph.com))
* [World Evangelism Fund envelopes](http://www.nph.com/nphweb/html/nph/search.jsp?q=WEF+envelope) (available free of charge through Nazarene Publishing House, 1-800-877-0700, www.nph.com)

For additional promotional ideas, please see the September, October, and November issues of *Mission Connection*, NMI’s free electronic periodical sent to subscribers’ inboxes by the first of each month. To subscribe to *Mission Connection*, go to <http://www.nazarene.org/subscriber.aspx>, fill in the appropriate boxes, and reply to the confirmation that will be sent to your inbox.

**Planning Guide**

**Tips for How and When to Use the “Because We Are Thankful” Resources**

In 2014, the “Because We Are Thankful” offering for the World Evangelism Fund will be received on October 12 in Canada and on November 23 in the USA and globally. However, many regions and districts worldwide choose to have their offerings on other dates from September to December. If you are unsure of when your church should be receiving the Thanksgiving Offering, please feel free to contact your district.

By reviewing the available resources early and planning carefully, you can lead your congregation into a time of prayerful thanksgiving. This offering is not about how much we give; it is about our gratitude to God and our willingness to respond to His blessings.

There are many ways for you to use the available Thanksgiving Offering resources. Be creative! You can change your order of service on the day of the offering, distribute the stickers to your community, or create small group Bible studies for the month of the offering. Every resource can be adapted to fit the unique personality of your congregation.

Here is one potential timeline for promoting the offering in your church:

**Immediately**

*Explore*—Visit and explore [nazarene.org/generosity](http://www.nazarene.org/generosity), the official website for the offering. Note that at the top of the page there are links for resources in English, Spanish (Español), Portuguese (Português), French (Français), and Korean (한국의).

*Download*—Click on “Resources” or “Stories” tab to view the material available for download. You may download items individually or click on the “All-in-One Download” to download all the print resources. You can also view and download the available videos and stories. **Keep in mind that the “All-in-One Download” is a sizable download and will take a while, even with a speedy connection.** If your connection is slow, ask someone else to help you download the resources.

*Examine*—Read all of the documents and resources, especially those that pertain to leaders.

*Plan*—Gather your pastoral staff and your NMI council to begin planning. Look at the materials, watch the videos, and distribute the appropriate resources to the individuals who will be responsible for them:

* All leaders
* Planning Guide
* Pastor
* Sermon—“We Give…Because We Are Thankful”
* Planning Guide
* PowerPoint presentation
* Stories of gratitude and generosity
* “I am thankful for” stickers
* Children’s leader
* Children’s activity sheets
* “I am thankful for” stickers
* Children’s Quarter Collectors (available for purchase through Nazarene Publishing House)
* NMI council and other church leaders
* Devotionals
* Posters
* Bulletin inserts
* Bookmarks
* Logos
* WEF envelopes (available free of charge through Nazarene Publishing House)

**Early Preparation**

* Make plans for events using the customizable scheduling tool on page five.
* Print resources for distribution in the coming weeks.
* Pray for generosity and a heart of gratitude in yourself and in your congregation.

*Note: For churches with no access to a printer, we will be happy to print and ship the resources free of charge. Please contact Stewardship Ministries at* *stewardship@nazarene.org* *or 1-800-544-8413.*

**Month of Offering**

Week 1

* Video—“Give Your Heart” <http://medialibrary.nazarene.org/guide?q=give+your+heart>
* Distribute “For All God’s People” devotionals to congregation

Week 2

* Video—“WEF and Madagascar” <http://medialibrary.nazarene.org/guide?q=madagascar>
* Children’s activity sheets
* Distribute bookmarks

Week 3

* Offering day: “Because We Are Thankful“ - Thanksgiving Offering
* Video—“Because We Are Thankful” [nazarene.org/generosity](http://nazarene.org/generosity)
* Sermon—“We Give…Because We Are Thankful”
* Distribute “I am thankful for” stickers to children and adults

**Scheduling tool:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Person Responsible** | **Date** | **Location** |
| Bookmarks |  | Copy/Print on:Distribute on: |  |
| Posters |  | Copy/Print on:Display on: |  |
| Bulletin Inserts |  | Bulletin: |  |
| Stickers |  | Congregation:Children and youth: |  |
| Children’s Activity Sheets |  | Copy/Print on:Present on: |  |
| Devotionals |  | Copy/Print on:Explain and distribute on: |  |
| PowerPoint Presentation |  | Present on: |  |
| Video |  | Present on: |  |
| Generosity Stories |  | Present on: |  |
| Receiving the Offering |  | Receive on: |  |