

# PREPARING THE OFFERING SCHEDULE



Giving is an expression of our thanksgiving response to God for His gift to us in Christ (Romans 12:1). Creating the offering schedule is a serious exercise intended to help those who come on Sunday to cheerfully present their offerings in the context of celebration and worship of God.

The offering schedule must mirror your church's stewardship plans and reflect the direction of the congregation in ministry.

## DO

- ensure each offering has a purpose
- base each offering on need
- research each offering before selecting it

## DON'T

- repeat last year's offering schedule
- base offerings on tradition
- plan offerings for miscellaneous causes

**DECIDE** which deacons will plan the offering schedule. Include 1-2 members of the congregation.

**ANNOUNCE** the offering schedule preparation to the congregation and invite input.

**DETERMINE** the number of offering opportunities in *your* church, as each one varies. In addition to regular Sundays, factor in special services: Prayer Day, Thanksgiving, Good Friday, Ascension, Christmas, New Year's Eve/Day.

**SORT** the requests into categories: denominational & diaconal ministry shares, community ministries, Christian education, and others. Check the CRC Yearbook for [causes recommended by Synod](#).

**REQUEST** additional information on ministries and organizations that ask for your support (mission statements, descriptions, financial statements, etc).

*It is clear that the offering is more than a collection. And the preparation of the schedule is more than an administrative task. It is a careful plan to help God's people "excel in the grace of giving". (2 Cor. 8:7)*

# GETTING TO WORK

## Here are some basic steps to remember:

1. Make a list of all offerings (*based on the guidelines/suggestions below*)
2. Use a calendar-the CRCNA Communications Office provides one for you or [find it online](#).
3. Identify on which Sundays specific offerings are requested: these are listed on the [offering calendar](#).
4. Identify special Sundays in your own congregation (i.e. Lord Supper Sundays, benevolent funds, diaconal causes, World Renew, Mission Sundays, Christian education etc). Deduct those from the total yearly offering spaces.
5. Touch base with the pastor, worship committee or others in the congregation who plan the church's activities.
6. Use creativity in completing and assigning the balance of offerings (those may include specialized ministries like local food banks, Shalem, Beginnings, Disability Concerns, a Christian university or chaplaincy ministries, or a specific community need.
7. Plan an effective way of informing the congregation and explaining each offering. Make an announcement during the service-possibly even the week before.
8. Pray for the ministries you support, before and after the offerings. Be as specific about the ministry's needs as you are able.

## Keep in Mind!

- Keep the congregation's ministry priorities clearly in mind.
- Base the benevolence offerings on need, not tradition (i.e. 1 offering/month for the deacons)
- Budget for both diaconal and denominational ministry shares-and know which ministries do not receive shares (i.e. World Renew)
- Budget for local congregational activities (i.e. faith formation, GEMS, cadets, youth and senior programs, Coffee Break, small groups, outreach). Funds for these activities may or may not come from offerings.
- Develop a policy for support offerings (i.e. Christian education) and be very specific in informing the congregation of the amount required and which organizations are recipients.
- Others? Create your own guidelines...

