

Notice. Give. Make. Bless.



Why UTO

What if your personal spiritual practice of gratitude could impact thousands of people in life-giving ways?



UTO is a way to practice gratitude and change the world.

In 1889, two Episcopal women envisioned a way to collect small thank offerings in homes as a personal expression of gratitude, and from this, our modern day United Thank Offering (UTO) was born. Today, UTO members, through their daily personal spiritual discipline of gratitude, continue to make thank offerings, and every penny given in thanksgiving is then given away in grant funding to missions and ministries seeking to live Jesus' way of love. UTO is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. More than 5,300 grants have been awarded thus far by UTO (for a total of \$140 million) to support innovative mission and ministry throughout The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion.

United Thank Offering Prayer

Gracious God, source of all creation, all love, all true joy: accept we pray these outward signs of our profound and continuing thankfulness for all of life. Keep each of us ever thankful for all the blessings of joy and challenge that come our way. Bless those who will benefit from these gifts through the outreach of the United Thank Offering. This we ask through Him who is the greatest gift and blessing of all, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Notice

You are never too young or too old to start a daily spiritual practice and share your thankful spirit with others.



Notice the good things that happen each day.

Consider starting a new spiritual practice deeply rooted in our faith tradition. Pair your intentional gratitude with your spare change. Let the small blessings of your day – or the large ones of your year – grow in scope and impact by sharing them as a United Thank Offering.

From little things
like a good parking spot on a busy day,
sunshine for your family picnic,
or a note from a friend on a tough day.

To the big things
like recovery from serious illness,
a new job or family member,
or finishing a big project at work.

Notice all of the ways that God is blessing you each day. From moments of self-care to moments of interaction with people who are helping you, good things are happening all the time that we simply miss because we are rushing to the next thing. Today, we challenge you to notice all of the good things happening or simply start and end the day with a prayer of thankfulness.

Grow your own practice of gratitude...and grow your impact on the world.

What is gratitude?

According to Oxford Languages, gratitude is the quality of being thankful or readiness to show appreciation for and return kindness. Most importantly, gratitude is a Christian virtue. It helps us love more deeply and be more present to the Holy Spirit at work in the world.

Why is practicing gratitude important?

Evidence-based research has suggested that gratitude:

1. Drives out toxic emotions such as anger and envy
2. Reduces stress and increases relaxation
3. Promotes resistance to common illnesses
4. Increases self-esteem, willpower, and creativity
5. Deepens relationships and spirituality
6. Improves athletic and academic performance
7. It increases generosity—grateful people give more of their time, talent and treasure to their communities

For citations and more resources on the benefits of gratitude, please visit unitedthankoffering.org

“Gratitude begins in our hearts and then dovetails into behavior. It almost always makes you willing to be of service, which is where the joy resides. [...] When you are aware of all that has been given to you, in your lifetime and in the past few days, it is hard not to be humbled, and pleased to give back. [...] The movement of grace towards gratitude brings us from the package of self-obsessed madness to a spiritual awakening. Gratitude is peace.”

—Anne Lamott, *Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers*



“In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich.”

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Give

Through daily prayer and tangible offerings, lives are changed in very real ways.



Give thanks to God for your blessings.

Now that you are pausing to notice the good things happening in your day, make it tangible:

Write a letter

Feeling extra grateful for someone today? Write them a letter and let them know.

Go for a gratitude walk

Take a walk. Notice the beauty around you and within you. Give thanks for what you see and how you feel.

Keep a gratitude journal

Write down 3 things you're grateful for every day.

Start here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Notice good things on social media

Each time you take a break on social media, try to comment at least five times on photos or posts that you are thankful for and share why you paused to give thanks.

You can find more ideas and resources for practicing gratitude personally, in small groups, or as a parish at unitedthankoffering.org

Make

One act of prayerful, tangible thanksgiving at a time has a wider impact than you can possibly imagine.



Make an offering for each blessing.

What can you give thanks for today?

Whenever you pause to give thanks, make it tangible:

- Put a coin in a UTO Blue Box
- Write down your thanksgivings in a journal or place them in a Blue Box to “cash in” later
- Download an app that tracks your immediate thank offerings (utoblueboxapp.org)

Through the United Thank Offering, your private thank offering gets invested with collective purpose. Your thanks-givings yield a greater return when combined with the gratitude gifts of your Episcopal sisters and brothers.

1. Change given in gratitude for your children became a Children’s Rehabilitation Center in Kenya
2. Change given in gratitude for your healthcare became a Pre-Natal and Birth Clinic in South Sudan
3. Change given in gratitude for electricity in your home became a laundry service for the homeless in Michigan
4. Change given in gratitude for the ability to work from home during the pandemic, became clinics and feeding ministries around the globe to support those suffering from COVID-19.

Donate

Please mail checks to:

United Thank Offering
DFMS - Protestant Episcopal Church US
PO BOX 958983
St Louis, MO 63195

To donate online, please visit:

unitedthankoffering.com/give/

Bless

“Gratitude turns what we have into enough.”

–Anonymous



Bless: Your Blessing becomes a blessing for others.

Once all of the thank offerings are collected, the UTO Board gives them away as grants. UTO grants often focus on urgent human needs – meaning your individual gratitude gift helps with racial reconciliation efforts, ending poverty, and much more.

Have you ever wanted to help but not known how?

The thank offerings that you put into your Blue Box combine with others to fund innovative mission and ministry in The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. UTO Grants can be used for startup funds for new ministries, or take a current ministry in a new and exciting direction.

The possibilities are endless for the ways in which UTO thank offerings will go on to bless communities working to love like Jesus through justice, advocacy, outreach, and presence. You can see a list of every grant awarded by UTO at unitedthankoffering.org, from an airplane to help the Bishop of Alaska visit the far-reaching areas of the diocese to creating a coffeeshop and playground where community members can gather and engage with The Episcopal Church.

How to apply for a UTO Grant

Application materials come out each summer and are due in the early spring. We offer a variety of webinars and support because we know that many of the innovative things the church is doing, come from people who have a heart for mission but perhaps not a background in grant writing. So be sure to read through all of the materials when they become available.

Encourage & Invite

“It is the thank offering of all [Episcopalians], the expression of our gratitude for the Christian privileges we enjoy; and while it expresses our thankfulness, it also kindles our thankfulness.”

—from *As If We Didn't Know*,
a 1913 UTO pamphlet



While UTO is a personal spiritual discipline of gratitude, we do encourage you to invite others to join you in this important practice.

The United Thank Offering is led by an amazing network of grassroots organizers within parishes and dioceses. UTO parish organizers/coordinators encourage, teach and celebrate gratitude within the parish, while UTO diocesan organizers/coordinators connect, promote and inspire gratitude practices throughout the diocese.

If you would like to get more involved in UTO:

- Visit unitedthankoffering.org to learn more
- Reach out to UTO Staff Officer Heather Melton at hmelton@episcopalchurch.org to get connected to monthly newsletters, webinars and other formation events around gratitude.

To order free materials to promote UTO in your congregation:

- Visit shimaoonavajoland.com/collections/united-thank-offering
- Many UTO materials can be printed locally for free from either unitedthankoffering.org or episcopalchurch.org/uto

UTO

UNITED THANK OFFERING

NOTICE

THE GOOD THINGS THAT HAPPEN EACH DAY

GIVE

THANKS TO GOD FOR YOUR BLESSINGS

MAKE

AN OFFERING FOR EACH BLESSING

BLESS

YOUR BLESSING BECOMES A BLESSING FOR OTHERS

100% of all funds given to UTO are granted the following year to support innovative mission and ministry in the Episcopal Church.
To learn more visit: www.episcopalchurch.org/uto