

United Thank Offering Ingathering Funds: Best Practices

Thank you for the ways that you shepherd the process of holding an Ingathering at Diocesan Convention. We know that it is a lot of work and a lot to organize. Since all Ingathering funds are fully granted, thank you to all the parishes, Dioceses and sponsoring organizations who carry any administrative cost of participating in UTO.

For Diocesan Ingatherings

1. Make sure to give plenty of notice regarding the date of the Ingathering, and give time after the Ingathering for anyone who might have missed the information to be able to contribute, and share ways to donate online via text to give, QR codes or the website. UTO offers cards to help those that donated online
2. In order to safeguard the offering, and lower the risk of a collection taken off-site, we strongly recommend that parish offerings be sent directly from the parish to [United Thank Offering, DFMS—Protestant Episcopal Church US, P.O. Box 958983, St. Louis, MO 63195-8983](#). When parishes send their checks in directly, we recommend a ceremonial Ingathering at Diocesan Convention similar to what is done at General Convention. In this case, a card is deposited as a symbol of what was sent it, it can even include the amount received by the deadline you provided to the parishes. Sample, blank Ingathering cards are available in the Coordinators section of our blog.
3. Follow-up with a report of contributing parishes in your Diocesan newsletter. Share the total Ingathering amount with your diocese and thank them in multiple places for participating.
4. The UTO Office will supply a bi-annual report of parish and individual donations for a Diocese upon request to designated Diocesan representatives.

Basic Reminders about UTO donations:

1. Funds are ingathered on behalf of the United Thank Offering, a ministry of The Episcopal Church.
2. Please send in your donation as soon as possible, because the interest gathered on the Ingathering is also granted and sometimes amounts to enough to full fund one grant.
3. Episcopal Church organizations fall under both IRS regulations and Episcopal Church canons.
4. No administrative expense can be taken from the Ingathering. Administrative expenses are to be paid by Episcopal Church Women (ECW), the local parish, or diocese, and are budgeted separately.
5. Once the United Thank Offering Ingathering is announced, all of the ingathered funds are considered designated and then transferred to the United Thank Offering account with the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (The Episcopal Church):
 - a. Make the check out to UTO**
 - b. Send it to: United Thank Offering DFMS Protestant Episcopal Church US, P.O. Box 958983 St. Louis, MO 63195-8983**
 - c. Include a note with the diocese/parish/list of donors.**

Handling “Out of the Ordinary” Donations

Sometimes you will receive donations out of the ordinary. Here are some tips for handling these situations.

1. If it is a check, ask that it is made out to UTO and send it in to the lockbox as described above. If the check comes from someone visiting, include the note to state you want it credited to your diocese/parish.
2. If it is cash, place it in an envelope, seal it and have them sign the seal. If an envelope is not available use a piece of paper and have two people sign it to confirm the amount. Then give it to your parish to process as a UTO donation with either the signed envelope or the paper with the cash in an envelope.
3. If they want to use a credit card, have them text INGATHER to 41444 to access the online donation system that can process cards or visit the [donation site](#).

Regarding Acknowledgements for UTO Offerings

Because the United Thank Offering is a gratitude ministry, we feel strongly that every intentional act of gratitude with a UTO Blue Box should be acknowledge. There are a variety of ways that this can happen, but below is the way we recommend if you do not want to acknowledge each gift individually. For Diocesan Ingatherings: If you receive checks at the Diocesan Level, please send us a list of parishes that contributed and their addresses so we can send acknowledgement cards to them. You can also email this list and reference the diocese and the check number that it goes with so we can connect them.