

Gifts of Hope

Congregational Guidelines

1.0 Overview

Description of Gifts of Hope

Gifts of Hope is an alternative gift-giving program within the SC Synod ELCA that offers the opportunity to give gifts to family and friends that really matter. The gifts are represented by Institutions and Social Ministry Organizations affiliated with the SC Synod, as well as our companion foreign synods. Every penny of *Gifts of Hope* income will be distributed to help the poor, educate students from elementary school to seminary, and support the elderly here and throughout the world.

Below are Congregational Guidelines for offering *Gifts of Hope* in your congregation. Please review them and share them with other members of your committee. And please get started soon!

We have a Web site at giftsofhopesc.org

The fastest and simplest way for most people, especially those in the SC Synod's congregations, to purchase *Gifts of Hope* will be in person, at the *Gifts of Hope* sales event in the local congregation.

But, if you know *Gifts of Hope* customers for whom this is not the best option, encourage them to use www.GiftsOfHopeSC.org, which enables people to order *Gifts of Hope* from anywhere using the U.S. mail. Please encourage others to suggest to their family and friends, especially those far away, to purchase *Gifts of Hope* via the website.

Check out the Coordinators Corner

Don't forget that there's a special section on www.GiftsOfHopeSC.org especially for you, the Congregation Coordinator, called the Coordinator's Corner. Many of the items that came in this packet will be available for you to download from the Coordinator's Corner. While all are available in Adobe PDF files, the Order Form and Publicity Materials are also available in MS Word so that you can easily personalize it for your congregation, if you wish.

The Coordinator's Corner also has a collection of useful resources such as samples of articles for your church newsletter and short notices for the Sunday bulletin.

If you have any questions about the website or the program in general, please contact: GiftsofHopeSC@SCSynod.com.

2.0 What This Packet Includes

In this package, you should find the items listed below. Please check it carefully and if any of these items is missing, contact your Conference Coordinator or email at GiftsofHopeSC@SCSynod.com immediately. The forms and publicity materials are also available in the Coordinator's Corner on the Gifts of Hope website, www.GiftsofHopeSC.org.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1 Catalogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gifts of Hope</i> Catalogs in a 4 page-book format. This format is suitable for reproduction on letter-sized paper, using color or other decorative papers. A black and white version of the catalog is available on the Web site in the Coordinators Corner for better copying purposes.
2 <i>Gifts of Hope</i> Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each congregation receives a supply of cards appropriate for Christmas giving.
3 Gift Descriptions Inserts – MASTERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 sheets, describing gifts 1 through 36. • These are your MASTERS to photocopy, so please don't cut these up!! • Instead, make photocopies to cut. • Some congregations photocopy the inserts onto heavier bond or colored paper.
4 Order Form – MASTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is your MASTER Order Form to photocopy. • A copy of the 1-page form is needed to record each individual's purchases. • There is a space for congregants to enter his/her envelope or giving number. • Hint: Before photocopying Order Forms for your church, complete the line at the bottom that begins "Please make checks payable to:" • Make photocopies and distribute widely, including inside each catalog.
5 Deposit summary Form – MASTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Congregation Coordinators find this useful for weekly record keeping. • This is your MASTER to photocopy.
6 Synod Remittance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put this aside to use at the end of the campaign, when you and Congregation Treasurer consolidate your results and remit them with your funds to the Synod Office.
7 Guidelines for Congregation Treasurers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give these pages to your Congregation Treasurer before the campaign starts so he/she will understand his/her important role in the success of Gifts of Hope.
8 Congregational Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the 7-page document you are reading now! • The entire document is available as a PDF
9 Sample Publicity Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is sample publicity material that you can use or modify. They are available in MS-Word in the Coordinators Corner.

3.0 Where Do I Begin?

Congregations can have the best success with the *Gifts of Hope* program by beginning their planning and congregational organization long before their first sales day. Consider following the steps below during September and October so that you will be prepared for the actual sales events. Note: Congregations may hold *Gifts of Hope* sales in late fall if schedule conflicts during Advent dictate earlier sales.

STEP	NOTES
1 Form Your <i>Gifts Of Hope</i> Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a team to assist with planning and sales. Your Social Ministry team is a great place to start.
2 Contact the Church Treasurer / Accountant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have provided a separate sheet of guidelines for that person: Guidelines for Congregation Treasurers. • Please give this new material to your church treasurer/accountant. It is important that he or she understands the program, especially the schedule for reporting and remitting the funds.
3 Decide Sales Venues/Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of course you will want to have materials available before/after services, but sales at church social events, after congregational meetings, and at special events (e.g., Christmas choir concerts) also work well.
4 Set Sales Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a minimum, plan to fully staff your sales table on the four previous Sundays before Christmas. • Consider starting your sale the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving, to enable folks going home for Thanksgiving to take their gifts with them and/or to share catalogs with family and friends. • If your congregation also has an Angel Tree, coordinate start dates. These programs have very different purposes, so they coexist very nicely, but starting two programs on the same day can be confusing.
5 Begin Advance Publicity in Your Church Bulletin in Early October!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize <i>Gifts of Hope</i> in a Sunday Bulletin as early as the beginning of October. • Write brief announcements for other Sunday bulletins letting folks know that <i>Gifts of Hope</i> is coming: include when, where, who, how, why. • Sample text is included in your packet.
6 Arrange an Adult Forum or Temple Talk About <i>Gifts of Hope</i> and Alternative Giving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk now with whomever schedules these activities in your congregation so that you get an appropriate date and have time to prepare. • Sunday School classes are also a great forum.
7 Publicize the Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize the Website so your congregation can pass along the URL (and hints about their gift “wish list”) to family and friends who can’t buy <i>Gifts of Hope</i> in your own or in another SC Synod congregation. • Website orders must be mailed with a check (no credit cards).

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8 Publicize in Monthly Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember to submit an article and copy of the order form for your November newsletter and another for your December newsletter. The November newsletter could mention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sharing the catalog with family and friends at Thanksgiving and - purchasing gifts now to give early at Thanksgiving. Is there room in your newsletter for a full-page article with a copy of the order form on the reverse side?
9 Prepare Announcements for the Sunday Bulletins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now while you aren't so busy, is a great time to get those announcements ready for every Sunday bulletin continuing through December.
10 Create and Place Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customize "Give Hope" posters with sales details. Consider using a Catalog, an Order Form and a sample card & Gift Description Inserts to make a banner or large poster. Place the posters strategically to grab the most attention.
11 Copy the Order Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sufficient copies of the Order Form so that you will have one form for each transaction. Catalogs do not include order forms, so insert one before you hand out catalogs.
12 Copy Insert Sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make copies of the 36 sheets of gift descriptions (card inserts). Using colored paper for the insert copies or even linen or other fancy paper gives a nice effect. Retain the 36-page set of insert MASTERS to make additional copies as needed.
13 Cut and Organize Insert Sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut each copied sheet of inserts into four equal parts and organize for easy distribution at the sales table. One method that works well is to file the inserts in separately marked envelopes with an insert stapled to the front or in a small file box with tabs noting the gift number from the catalog.
14 Prepare Setup for Sales Table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may want to include: Holiday tablecloth and/or lights, Posters mounted on Poster board, Box or basket of Catalogs. You will need: Catalogs, Order forms, Cards, Gift Description Inserts, Pens, tape and stapler for keeping everything together, and Cash box or envelope for receipts and accompanying order forms.

4.0 What To Do At Each Sales Event

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| 1 Explain the Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to explain the Gifts of Hope for use as Christmas gifts. • Use the catalog as a sales tool, demonstrating the wide range of gifts and the worthy causes that they represent. • If people ask, confirm that their purchases will be recorded on their year-end report of giving to the congregation. • For tax accounting purposes, <i>Gifts of Hope</i> “purchases” are tax-deductible charitable contributions to your congregation. |
| 2 Distribute Catalogs to Potential Customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your packet does not contain enough catalogs for every interested person, but if you ask, most people will return the catalog after they’ve chosen their purchases. Or feel free to make copies from the Web site Coordinators Corner. • Plus, you are also very welcome to make additional copies. • Be sure to keep a few catalogs on reserve at the sales table. |
| 3 Help Complete and Review Each Order Form | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review each Order Form received for completeness and accuracy of all amounts and legibility of the purchaser’s name. • Retain the Order Form. • Checks should be made out to your congregation. • Cash is acceptable. If a receipt is requested, fill out a second copy of the Order Form and add your signature and date. • Remember that when you turn in your congregation’s <i>Gifts of Hope</i> results at the end of the campaign, the totals must be for <u>whole gifts</u>. The <i>Gifts of Hope</i> accounting system cannot handle purchases of partial gifts. |
| 4 Give Items to Purchaser | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For each gift, the purchaser is entitled to receive two items: “Gifts of Hope” Card and Gift Description Insert |
| 5 Prepare Deposit Summary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of each sales event, prepare the Deposit Summary. (For details, See Section 5.0 below) |
| 6 Prepare for Next Sales Event | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double check to make sure you have enough material for the next sales event. |

5.0 After Each Sales Event –

Preparing Deposit Summary and Other Accounting Duties

The accounting and cash handling procedures are crucial to a successful *Gifts of Hope* campaign. The proceeds must be safeguarded and properly handled, and accurate records of purchases must be maintained. This is to ensure that after Christmas the correct amount can be sent to each recipient organization by the synod and the giving records of the purchasers in your congregation will be properly credited. The following steps should be followed after each sales event or once per week.

STEP	NOTES
1 Complete the Deposit Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Order Forms to complete a copy of the Deposit Summary form. • Remember to not use the MASTER form. • This form aggregates the number and value of gifts purchased. • Verify that on the Deposit Summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the number of gifts times the price equals the line item total; - the subtotal is entered for gifts 1 – 36; and - the grand total agrees with the total amount of the checks and cash for deposit.
2 Transmit the Order Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After you have used the Order Forms to complete the Deposit Summary, make copies of the Order Forms and give them to the person in your congregation who keeps the records of members' giving, to permit him or her to record the purchases in the usual manner. • Retain the Deposit Summary for use later.
3 Transmit Checks and Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give checks and cash to the person in your congregation responsible for making bank deposits. • Do not hold the proceeds until the end of the campaign, but ensure they are deposited regularly, at least once a week, according to your congregation's regular procedures.
4 Notify Your Treasurer / Accountant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify your treasurer/accountant of the amount of each deposit for Gifts of Hope, using your congregation's usual procedures. • This will permit that person to make an accurate record of the amount that will be transmitted to the Synod for further distribution when the <i>Gifts of Hope</i> campaign concludes.

6.0 After The Campaign Is Over – Preparing Remittance Report and Other Accounting Duties

Our goal is to get the funds to the benefiting organizations as soon as possible after Christmas. The Synod cannot make disbursements until all remittances are received from the participating congregations. Please do not let your congregation hold up the distribution of funds. Try to see that your congregation's check and Remittance Report are sent to the Synod as soon as possible after the last sales event, at the very latest by January 15.

STEP	NOTES
1 Prepare Remittance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When all your sales events are over, use the Deposit Summaries to complete the Synod Remittance Report. • This form accompanies the check for the total of all gift sales to the Synod, and summarizes the total number and value of purchases of each gift. • As with the Deposit Summary, verify that for each line, the number of gifts times the price equals the line item total, and that the subtotal for lines 1-36 and the grand total are correct.
2 Include Congregation Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have printed this 3-digit number on the remittance form for you. • If you lose your form and get a new copy from the website, please obtain this number from your Congregation Treasurer or your Conference Coordinator.
3 Verify Amounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm with the Congregation Treasurer/Accountant the amount to be remitted to the Synod according to their records. • Investigate and resolve any differences between your records and the treasurer's.
4 Include Your Contact Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the Remittance Report to the Synod in final form, making sure to include your name and telephone number in the appropriate places.
5 Request Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request that a check be made out to the Synod for the total remittance of gifts 1-36, as indicated on the report. • To ensure that the check and Remittance Report are mailed as quickly as possible, you may wish to request that they be given to you to mail.
6 Copy Report and Send to Gifts of Hope Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a <u>copy</u> of the final Synod Remittance Report to B. J. Hodge (address on the form) for the Gifts of Hope Committee's use.
7 Mail check and Report to Synod	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail check and original final Remittance Form to the Synod Office. • Return unused cards to the Synod Office.
8 Thank your Congregation for their Generosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure to thank your congregation and let them know how much money they raised. • When the Synod-wide Gifts of Hope results are announced, publicize these also.