

OFFERING AND COLLECTIONS TIP SHEET



Offerings should be collected in secure receptacles near entrances and exits. We advise continued encouragement of electronic offering. A safe method for counting the offering must be implemented including the use of disposable gloves and masks.”

(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 5)

Why?

As churches take steps to ensure people's safety and wellbeing, managing expectations will be a vital part of reopening buildings and gathering well. The giving of tithes and offering is an important spiritual discipline. Even when people are not physically together, or when social distancing adds complications, the act of giving nurtures disciples and churches should enable generosity.

When?

During Phase 1, church leaders should nurture the practice of online giving. Tithing from a distance is a practice that should be encouraged on a regular basis, even after the pandemic, because it helps people be better stewards of their money. During Phase 1, the pastor and church finance leaders should create procedures for collecting tithes and offerings when in-person worship resumes in Phases 2 or 3.

Implementation Checklist

- Because passing collection plates is not safe during this time, the Re-entering Well Task Force and church financial leaders should select a location or two in the sanctuary where financial gifts may be deposited. The location and the receptacle should be secure.
- Recruit and train trusted volunteers to ensure that the receptacle does not get moved or money removed.
- Training of these volunteers should include:
 - An understanding of how this coronavirus COVID-19 is transmitted and why it is important for everyone to adopt the following wellbeing protocols:
 - Stay home if you or someone you are in contact with feels sick or has a temperature (to prevent the spread of the virus);
 - Maintain a six-foot separation from others not in your immediate family (to prevent the airborne spread of the virus among those who are symptom free);
 - Wear a facemask at all times when away from home (to protect others);
 - Do not touch your face, mouth, or eyes (to prevent the virus from entering your body); and
 - Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after using the toilet and use hand-sanitizer to clean hands after exiting the restroom or after touching other common surfaces (to kill the virus).
 - Teach offering/collection stewards how to wear masks properly:
 - Cover both nose and mouth and secure a close fit around the face.
 - Put masks on before leaving vehicles.
 - Once in the building, they should wash their hands, put on gloves, assemble needed supplies, wipe down surfaces they have touched, remove gloves and then sanitize or wash hands.
 - Learn about Wellbeing Guides and how they will be partnering with volunteers. (See “Enforcing Necessary Health Policies Tip Sheet” for details.)
- Time during worship may be set apart to announce the location of offering receptacles, to encourage people to give, and to thank God for the many blessings we have received. If your church is able to receive offerings or second-mile giving via text or mobile device, create a script with the information and share that information as well.
- Select a room for counting the offering that is large enough for counters to spread out and allow more than six feet between each person present.

Implementation Checklist (Cont.)

- Select a room for counting the offering that is large enough for counters to spread out and allow more than six feet between each person present.
- Select and train counters; see training instructions above. In addition, counters should adhere to the following:
 - At least two counters should collect the money immediately following the service.
 - All counters, and anyone else who comes in contact with the money, should wear disposable gloves before touching the money.
 - Masks should continue to be worn and social distancing maintained.
 - Counters should practice safe glove removal and avoid touching anything with the gloves after counting the money.
 - Counters should wipe down door handles as they leave the counting room and then wash their hands.
- The person opening any mailed-in checks to the church should follow the same procedures as the counters.



Additional Resources

- Collecting Tithes from a Distance, a BWC collection of resources
<https://www.bwcumc.org/article/collecting-tithes-from-a-distance/>

