

Hosting an Alternative Giving Market with the Presbyterian Giving Catalog



What is an Alternative Gift?

An alternative to traditional *giving*, alternative gifts support a wide variety of cause-based work and ministry and make wonderful gifts for friends, family, and loved ones. Alternative gifts are signs of our gratitude for God's grace that moves us to join with ministries of love and justice, reconciliation and peace—ministries that feed the hungry, comfort the broken-hearted, and share our faith with young and old.

What is an Alternative Giving Market?

An alternative giving market is an event where people can support nonprofit, cause-based work with ministries that support clean water, agriculture, or relief and assistance projects, and when doing so, honor friends and family. When making a donation to a project, it is customary for the donor/shopper to receive a gift card that can be completed and given to a recipient as a gift, identifying that a gift was made in their honor.

Why should my church host an Alternative Giving Market?



- Alternative giving means less stuff on holidays, allowing friends and family to focus on the true meaning of a particular holiday—especially Christmas.
- Alternative gifts are timeless—their impact goes beyond the season or year. The families and communities that benefit directly from alternative giving benefit for a lifetime.
- Alternative giving allows people to engage in intentional gift giving with no need or concern for how the gift is manufactured—*no sweatshops here!*
- It can start a family tradition of alternative gifts in which a family can spend Christmas morning reading aloud examples of the good works done in their name.
- It provides an opportunity to connect more specifically to the work done through ministries of participating nonprofits.

When should I hold the Giving Market?



An Alternative Giving Market can be held at any time throughout the year; however, many people choose to host them during Advent as they are preparing for Christmas. Some churches offer multi-day events, while some offer only a one-day event. Advent is a popular time because people are in the mindset of gift giving, and the newest version of the *Presbyterian Giving Catalog* is available!

How do I start?

- Approach the session or mission committee of your church and ask them to consider hosting a giving market.
- Talk to members of the church and form a group of inspired volunteers who will help you plan your event or see if a youth group or Sunday school class would like to take on the project.
- Set a date and time for the event.
- Consider inviting neighboring congregations to participate.
- Order *Presbyterian Giving Catalogs* by calling 800-524-2612 and asking for item 12112-15-925.



- Think about ways to make your event memorable:
 - Set up booths and make posters for each of the items you want to highlight, or one for each item category: livestock, water, agriculture, people, or kits and tools perhaps. Include pictures or objects related to those areas or items—like a booth for agriculture where you display garden tools, seeds, and plants along with the items from the *Presbyterian Giving Catalog* that will assist families all over the world.
 - Consider a theme—A church in Nashville had a “Superhero” theme, complete with a cardboard cutout of their pastor in full Superman regalia!
- Food—should you have a bake sale with proceeds benefiting your mission budget? A “coffee shop” area would allow shoppers to take a break and catch up with friends without leaving your event.
- Determine how gifts will be represented:
 - Some churches prepare printed, physical descriptions of items that can be tucked into a gift card. Others simply offer gift cards at checkout for those who would like to write a personal note.
 - Start with what makes sense for your context and then let it grow!
 - Consider adding *items* to the market that connect to mission initiatives or ministry needs of your specific church or local nonprofit organizations.
 - Download and display *Stories of Impact* at presbyterianmission.org/pgcimpact related to the items you’re highlighting and share them at your event and every chance you get! **People love to hear how their individual GIFT combines with others to make a BIG IMPACT.**



How do I set it up?

Consider the space needed and available for your event, such as a gym or fellowship hall. Decide how many booths will fit in your space. Allow room for tables and chairs, as well as space for shoppers to move around the room.

How should I promote the event?

Invite everyone you know.

Communicate early and often about your upcoming event. Invite everyone in your church and ask them to spread the word in the community. Include a reminder each week in your church announcements or e-newsletter. Create a Facebook event and update it often with organizations or causes your guests can expect to learn more about. Let the whole community know by hanging banners or distributing fliers. There are many people who like to support charitable causes who live close to your church—invite them in for a cup of hot cocoa and a chance to support great causes.

Post-Market Celebration

Celebrate your accomplishments in church bulletins and on the church’s website:

- Provide information on each nonprofit that was included in your market and the gifts that will be sent to each.
- Consider including pictures of donors *shopping*, enjoying their community, and giving back.
- Share stories of how children and youth learned about social justice and global challenges.

Share your success with each nonprofit when submitting the gifts, sharing the same stories you tell to members of your congregation.

Have questions? Need more materials? We’re here to help.

To order catalogs, additional promotional materials, or to arrange catalog mailings to all of your members: call **800-728-7228 x 5026** | email specialofferings@pcusa.org | visit presbyterianmission.org/pgcresources