

## Celebrating Generosity Week in the wider community

Generosity Week is a celebration of God's generosity that is lived out in our churches and parishes. It gives us an opportunity to engage with and support the wider community as we celebrate the generosity found. This isn't a celebration of 'our' generosity but God's, which is found within the church and outside of it.

We can often be acutely aware of what we haven't got, focusing on the scarcity of some things, rather than celebrating what we do have, the abundance of God's generosity in our lives. This 'abundance' mindset provides real encouragement and a desire to grow the generosity we already see. These acts don't need to be big and dramatic acts of generosity and kindness, but the simple acts that add so much to our daily lives. Generosity Week can help us 're-set' our perspective, so we spend time celebrating the way God's generosity is seen in our churches and communities.

There are various ways churches can engage with their wider community during Generosity Week and here's a few suggestions:

- ≈ Organise a fundraising event to take place during the week for a community initiative or project. Act as a catalyst to enable people to show their generosity to their community and their care for it. Use the event to highlight the impact generosity is having in the community.
- ≈ Co-ordinate a group to make a practical difference to a part of your community. It could be by tidying up a community area, planting wildflowers or a litter pick. Anything that shows tangibly what generosity can do.
- ≈ Host a 'thank you' event for the local community for the generosity they have shown the church over the year. Have stalls showing the different areas of the church's work within the community. Encourage someone to sponsor it so you can provide some food and drink.



- ≈ Communities have remarkable stories of generosity to be told, and many can be unaware of them. Generosity Week is an opportunity to tell those stories, of historical generosity that have shaped the community we are part of. Why not have a daily story on social media which celebrates acts of generosity over the ages? Celebrate the amazing work of your school's PTA, or shine a spotlight on great benefactors who lived in your community. Explore legacies that have been given to local organisations and how they have helped them serve the community.
- ≈ Distribute thank you cards to the community, asking them to send them during Generosity Week to someone within the community who has shown them kindness and generosity.

You may well think of ideas that work better in your context, or these ideas could spark a conversation that leads to something that would work really well where you are. If you want to be inspired, you can see some of the inspiring stories from HeartEdge of how generosity has been shown and seen and there is also a 'mapping relationships' tool if you want to develop this further.

The most important thing is not the scale of what you do, or how polished it is, but that you are doing something. Setting something up for the first time is by far the hardest. So try something simple, and let it build over time. Generosity always encourages more generosity and it is so inspiring to see it grow.

