

“And here we offer ourselves, our souls and bodies...”

Celebrating the Offering

What happens at the offertory?

We offer to God ourselves, as represented by the gifts that are offered – bread, wine, water, food, clothing, offers of time, offers of skill. How are these offered in a way that acknowledges the various gifts?

What sometimes happens in congregations:

- **Bringing up the offering is routine, mechanical, and dull.**
- **It seems to be a part of the service to move through quickly.**
- **It is anxious and rushed – get finished before the hymn ends!**
- **It slows down the liturgy.**
- **Focus is on collection not offering because people collect the gifts.**
- **Offering is whisked away from the altar, not honoured.**
- **Some people leave the liturgy to count the money during the liturgy.**
- **Small altar can not accommodate offering plate or other gifts.**
- **Some clergy prefer “less clutter” on the altar**
- **Put a note about a good/charitable action from the past week/for the next week in offering plate**
- **BCP offering prayer, “All things come of thee...” Hymn “We Give Thee but Thine own...” have become routine**
- **Put all offerings on the altar**
- **Money offering goes on the floor under a chair**
- **Food box is brought up by the children**
- **Introduction of Pre Authorized Remittance means some people have nothing to put in the offering basket- seems to take some of the joy out of offering.**

How it could be:

- **Joyful celebration, not rushed.**
- **It could recognize the work of the people, the service offered, and food for those in need.**
- **Self offering, e.g. Sing hymn “All that I am...” at offering**
- **Bishop Fred’s story from Africa, where the offertory is a joyous occasion, singing and dancing as people bring forward their offering themselves.**
- **Sunday School children bring up their offering in a special plate/basket.**
- **Special space/low table in front of the altar for food/money/ gifts**
- **Sing offertory song with gusto. Is the song about offering? Does the song go with the readings?**
- **Liturgical Dance**
- **BCP offering prayer, “All things come of thee...” Teach about it. Mean it when saying it.**
- **Put all offerings on the altar**

- **Raise high the offering plate and joyfully sing the Doxology along with praying the offering prayer for the day.**
- **Include in the sermon, the principle of generosity as a cornerstone of spirituality.**
- **Acknowledge all acts of generosity by members of the congregation in the bulletin or on a poster.**

What needs to happen to change from routine to joy-filled?

- **Train sides people in this role of bringing forward the offering joyfully.**
- **Liturgical planning required**
- **Remind people that what they put in the offering is their gift to God. It is a symbol of their gratitude to God.**
- **Find a way to mark the Pre Authorized remittance offering.**