



# NOVEMBER

## World Thank Offering—Giving as an Expression of Our Faith

**FOCUS:** How does giving cultivate hope?



### MATERIALS

- Baskets holding markers in a variety of colors, pens, and pencils
- Construction paper
- Writing or lined paper
- Printouts of the reading or access to online versions
- Materials for a centerpiece consisting of a bowl of rice, a glass of water, and candle
- Keychain rings, one per participant
- Assorted beads, at least three different colors – United Women in Faith brand colors would be best
- Cord or string thick enough to support the beads cut into 12" lengths
- Printed templates of the World Thank Offering Bank available from [uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=10901&catid=2186](http://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=10901&catid=2186), one per participant
- Scissors, several pairs to share
- Art materials to decorate the banks
- A/V access to play video clips and music
- **For online gatherings:** Send reading material beforehand and invite participants to have paper, pens, and art supplies available



### GATHERING

Greet everyone entering and offer time to “arrive.” Give participants time to use the bathroom, grab some water or a snack, or send that one last text message so they don’t have to remember later. Take time to check in with one another as time and relationship allow.



### **CALL TO COMMUNITY: SACRED IS THE PATH LAID BEFORE US (5 minutes)**

Create a centerpiece for your group with a bowl of rice, a glass of water, a fan, and a lit candle. As participants sit around the circle, invite them to reflect on the interconnectedness our lives have with the elements of water, earth, air, and fire that are so present in creation.

When everyone has joined the circle, go around the group and invite each person to share something that grounds them in their faith, an experience that flows and adapts to different life stages, a force that has pushed them into new places, and something that ignites hope in their hearts.



### **SHARING THE SCRIPTURE (2 minutes)**

Invite a participant to read Mark 12:41–44 aloud for the group. Be mindful to rotate readers from month to month.



### **REFLECTION & SHARING (5 minutes)**

This month, we practice our gratitude in the spirit of hope. Living in a spirit of scarcity can prevent us from leaning into our community. It can be isolating, and the burden becomes great. However, like the widow in the story, the practice of giving from a spirit of abundance is a practice of faith, and a choice to hope. Program author, Nora Cunningham shares:

I have been shaped by the legacy of women who have come before me, guiding me, and teaching me how to more fully embrace the Spirit and calling of God.

When asked about the role of hope in the movement, my mother, Rebecca Asedillo shares:

I think it's a luxury to give up. It's not an option. Otherwise, *wala na* (no more/it's over). Hope fuels the movement because it has a goal, and the hope is to reach that goal. ... To resist evil and tyranny and injustice, you cannot give up hope. You must struggle, you must continue to fight—that is why you are human. That is the human spirit.<sup>1</sup>

This program year we have been reflecting on the people and experiences that have shaped our faith and faith communities and seeking a connection between the truths and values of existing generations and the changes coming in future generations. We know we come from a legacy of women who lead with joy and sisterhood, fighting to make a difference with the bold, audacious belief that contributing what they can to the collective can create real possibilities for change. Giving is an integral part of participating in the mission of our organization. By giving of your time or finances, you are a part of the legacy of the work.

Our past, present, and future are rich. The calling of Jesus to seek justice and abundant life is present and fulfilling. There is abundant hope present in our traditions, Scriptures, experiences, and reason. It is a hope that will inspire us to continue to live out our Christian mission for generations to come.



### INTERGENERATIONAL VOICES (12 minutes)

**Grace Okerson**, Candler School of Theology student, talks about Mission u, NOAH project, and asking questions, not pushing; **Emily Jones**, United Women in Faith executive for Racial Justice, discusses perseverance, not patience, and following the dream to continue doing the work; and **Minerva Briones**, 2023–2024 Rio Texas United Women in Faith president, and **Abby Gutierrez**, United Women in Faith director, discuss sheroes. Go to [bit.ly/2025ProgramResourceVideos](https://bit.ly/2025ProgramResourceVideos) to locate the video for this month.



### CREATIVE ACTIVITY: BEADS OF HOPE (10 minutes)

We will make beaded keychains as a reminder of the hope we find in our sisterhood of United Women in Faith. Each participant will need an assortment of beads in at least three colors, a pre-cut cord, and a keychain ring. Knot the cord onto the keychain and lay out the design for your beads. (See [youtu.be/D9vwf0f3Cak](https://youtu.be/D9vwf0f3Cak) for instructions.)

With each color of bead, reflect on one word of United Women in Faith, using the questions below as a prompt:

**Bead 1: United** – Why is unity important to you? How does it fuel your faith and your hope? What meaningful experiences have you had in service with others? What is the power of unity for our communities?

**Bead 2: Women** – How has your identity as a woman been uplifted and encouraged? Who has helped to shape you?

What skills and experience have you had that have empowered you as a woman? What role does sisterhood play in your life?

**Bead 3: Faith** – How has your membership with United Women in Faith brought meaning to your faith? What program or ministry is most exciting to you? How does God call United Women in Faith to show up in the world?



### Discuss:

Share with the group one of your reflections from this activity and how the work and sisterhood of United Women in Faith fuels your hope.

## OFFERING: BUILDING BANKS FOR THE WORLD THANK OFFERING (10 minutes)

Distribute the templates of the World Thank Offering banks (available from [uwfaithresources.org](http://uwfaithresources.org) item number 9758 in the webstore). Cut them out as a group, decorate them with colors and other accessories, and assemble them.

As you assemble your banks, go around the group and share:

- What are the ways you have given to the ministry of this organization?
- What are the ways you have received from the ministry of this organization?

When the banks are assembled, you are invited to collectively contribute to them in your first offering of gratitude, while watching this video prayer from United Methodist Communications: [umc.org/en/content/let-us-give-thanks-a-photo-prayer](http://umc.org/en/content/let-us-give-thanks-a-photo-prayer).

Photograph your banks and your sisterhood, then post them online using the hashtags **#WorldThankOffering2025** and **#UWomenFaith!**

**If you have brought your World Thank offerings, bring them and lay them at the altar to join the offering of others.  
Send your check to:**

United Women in Faith  
Church Center for the United Nations  
777 United Nations Plaza, 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10017

You can also give online: [bit.ly/3Di253b](http://bit.ly/3Di253b)



## CLOSING & COMMITMENT (2 minutes)

As we close, we will read creatively from Matthew 1—the Genealogy of Jesus—adding to the legacy with names from our community. We will go around the circle twice. The first time, you are invited to insert into the text the names of those who have gone before you. In the second round, you are invited to insert the name of the person to your right. Let us read the text together.

**Leader:** An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

Participants select and fill in:

\_\_\_\_\_ the mother/aunt/sister\* of \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Name

Example: And Esther, the mother of Rachel.

And [neighbor], the sister of [self].

\* Participants don't need to be a biological mother/aunt/sister to use the title, but rather these words can be used to recognize our relationship with one another.

**Leader:** Thus, there were 14 generations from Abraham to David, and from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, 14 generations. And 156 years of United Women in Faith, bringing a legacy of putting faith into action, fulfilling our gospel call to seek justice and love. Amen.

### WHAT IS THE WORLD THANK OFFERING?

The World Thank Offering is a way for members of United Women in Faith to show gratitude for God's blessings and find creative ways to raise funds to improve the lives of women, children, and youth. Some women drop a coin in a box each day to give thanks for their daily blessings, while others add coins and dollars on special occasions in their lives.

Through the World Thank Offering, you support the total program of mission carried on through United Women in Faith's national office in the United States and around the world.



### Endnote

1. Cunningham, L.A. (2023). "Decolonial Hope as Praxis: Pedagogical Strategies of Freedom in the Philippines," PhD Diss., (Drew Theological School, 2023), 182.