

Nine Steps to organize an Offering of Letters

(adapted from Bread for the World, bread.org)

1. Pray for the Offering. Reflect on Scriptures which call for justice in the world. Ask God to show you how to interpret this call.
2. Create your team. Who in the congregation might be helpful in planning and publicizing an Offering of Letters? pastor? CE director? mission committee? youth group leader? session? Invite them to join your team.
3. Gather resources. Check with the presbytery's Outreach Mission Team, with websites that deal with the issue, with local organizations, with PCUSA website.
4. Develop a plan. Gather the team and resources to brainstorm how to integrate the Offering of Letters with worship and educational activities. Decide when and where to hold the Offering of Letters, and keep pastor informed.
5. Get the word out. Ask the pastor to lift up the Offering of Letters in a sermon. Write an article for the church newsletter. Put a bulletin insert or announcement in the Sunday bulletin. Offer a "Minute for Mission" during worship. Create and display a poster.
6. Conduct and bless the Offering. Letter-writing can be done at a special time during worship in the pews, or in narthex after the service, at fellowship hour, in a class or youth group-- anywhere people gather. Provide paper, envelopes, pens and a sample letter. Invite anyone who prefers not to write to be in prayer for those suffering from the injustice targeted by the Offering.
7. Gather the letters. Offer the letters up to God for a blessing during worship. Count and note the number of letters written to each elected official. Stamp and mail each letter individually; do not bundle them in one envelope.
8. Give thanks--to God, to your team, to your letter-writers, and to those who prayed. Follow up. Bring the team together to consider how to let people know the results of their labor. Will you publish monthly updates in your church newsletter?
9. Celebrate!! Identify victories, large and small, and rejoice!