



TIPS TO *engage* YOUR CONGREGATION

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Encourage the members of your congregations to donate an item each week of Advent. Following the collections, you can donate the items to your favorite local agencies, including food pantries, after-school children's programs and shelters. When your church participates in a Reverse Advent Calendar the members of your church can transform lives here at home and around the world.

- **THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Collect boxes of cereal, peanut butter and canned soups and donate them to a local food pantry.

- **THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Collect toiletry items like deodorant, soap, toothpaste and shampoo and donate the items to a local shelter or free store.

- **THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Collect children's gloves and mittens and donate to an after-school children's program. You could also collect gently used winter coats and donate to a local shelter or free store.

- **THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Today is the Festive Day! Host your CWS Best Gift Offering.

- **CHRISTMAS EVE**

Make sure to bless the gifts you have collected as a congregation, using the responsive reading on the back page of this Leader's Guide.

OTHER CREATIVE IDEAS THAT WORK

- **SHARE FESTIVE BLESSINGS**

Download and print the Christmas Tree Coloring Sheet at cwsbestgift.org/downloads and invite children to decorate them and write how they want to bless others through your Best Gift offering. Display these Christmas trees all around your church!

- **DECORATE YOUR BEST GIFT DISPLAY**

Everyone loves Christmas décor like small Christmas trees and festive lights. Get creative with your Best Gift display and place your favorite catalog inspired gifts under the tree, like children's school supplies and books, seeds and small tools, hygiene kits, gloves and scarves and stuffed animals like chickens and pigs.

- **GET THE YOUTH GROUP INVOLVED**

Ask the youth leaders to set up gift wrapping services in exchange for a donation to CWS Best Gift! The kids will have fun (they are so creative!), the members of your church will get their presents wrapped and you will raise extra money for CWS Best Gifts.

- **PROMOTE YOUR BEST GIFT OFFERING**

Start promoting your Best Gift event the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Promote in your church bulletin and with announcements. Don't forget to promote your Best Gift Offering on all your church's social media outlets like Facebook, website and e-newsletter. It's a great way to share the word! There are Best Gift-themed graphics here: cwsbestgift.org/downloads

- **ENJOY THE LIGHTS**

Do you have a neighborhood near you that decorates with lights for Christmas each year? Gather some families and host a Christmas lights tour to support CWS Best Gift!

