

The Benefits of Gratitude

Thanksgiving and the [upcoming holiday season](#) can be a joyous time, filled with family gatherings, religious celebrations, and feelings of optimism as 2023 approaches.

But some members of your congregation and community may struggle this time of year. Overloaded schedules, unrealistic expectations, and the inability to be with family and friends can leave them feeling stressed and lonely.

Practicing gratitude can make a positive difference. It can help decrease depression, help you feel more optimistic, boost your immune system, lower your blood pressure, and provide [numerous other health benefits](#).

To inspire gratitude in your faith community, try these activities:

Place a gratitude board in your house of worship. Have paper and pens nearby and encourage members to post something for which they are grateful on the board.

Create a gratitude jar or box. Whenever something good happens or you feel thankful, write it down on paper and place it in into the jar or box. See related story: [Gratitude Jar Project Makes an Impact One Blessing at a Time](#).

Distribute gratitude rocks to members of your congregation. Ask them to carry the rock in their pocket, leave it on their desk, or wear it on a chain around their neck or wrist. When they see the rock or touch it, they can pause to think about at least one thing for which they are grateful.

Organize a gratitude challenge for your congregation, using the [Thnx4](#) online gratitude journal and other [gratitude apps](#).

Include gratitude prompts in your bulletins, newsletter, or social media sites. The prompts can include: I'm grateful for three things I hear...I'm grateful for these three friends...I'm grateful for these three things in my home...etc.

Encourage your members to incorporate gratitude into their daily lives by keeping a gratitude journal, doing something kind for someone in their life, giving thanks through prayer, and meditating on things for which they are grateful.



For additional ideas, see [13 Most Popular Gratitude Exercises & Activities](#)