Joining together in the Transforming Mission of God

Young People



Giving for Life



What is "Giving and Young People"?

This is a five week course which aims to help young people as they think through their commitment to God, to their church and to the wider community. It will enable course members to –

- Think seriously about their giving of time, talents and money
- To consider carefully and prayerfully the effect that their decisions may have on others
- To learn more of God's generosity

The course is designed to be very hands on, creative, interactive, thought provoking and challenging but, most of all, it is designed to be fun!

Who is it for?

It is suitable for young people who already have some grasp of Christian teaching and some experience of church. However, that is not to say that young people who have no such experience should be excluded. All young people can benefit from part, or all, of this course.

It is designed with an age group of 14 – 18 in mind. However we believe that it also lends itself to mixed groups of both young people and adults. Post Confirmation Groups may also find it a useful focus to encourage participants to continue to meet and grow together. It may also be helpful to adult House Groups or for Lent Groups who wish to continue to meet.

The ideal group size for a group would be six to twelve.

How to run the sessions or the whole course

Each session is designed to be about 90 minutes long, though this timing is only a suggestion and we would encourage you to be as flexible as possible and to tailor the material to suit your group's needs and maturity level. The ninety minutes includes time for refreshments and socialising.

There are leader's notes for each session which give detailed explanations of how to run the activities and games and some pointers as to how to encourage any subsequent group discussions. Please do not feel that you have to stick rigidly to our suggestions – if you know a better game or activity do use it.

There are a number of resource sheets which can be photocopied for use during the sessions.

What do the sessions consist of?

Each session follows the same pattern and sections of the session are denoted by placing them in separate boxes.

The sessions are based on the series of five Giving for Life daily reflections.

What you will need

Please read this section carefully so that you can be prepared.

What is it about?

There is a brief statement detailing the hoped for outcome.

Let's get started

There then follows a brief warm up game which will also act as an ice breaker.

A word of explanation

This section gives you, or an invited guest to introduce the main activity of the evening. To explain what the outcomes may be and to get the group thinking about what they may achieve.

Main activity

This is the main activity of the session and full details of how this should be run are included. Time is also allowed to enable discussions on what the group may have discovered.

Reading

This is a bible reading linked to the theme of the session, with further opportunity for discussion.

Wrapping it up

This gives an opportunity to look back on what has been achieved and to look forward to subsequent sessions

Closing Prayer

Each session closes with a suggested prayer. Please feel free to substitute your own or to encourage member(s) of the group to come up with their own.

Who can lead this group?

Any church youth leader can lead this group but, because of the nature of the material it may be useful to call upon members of the church ministry team or Parochial Church Council.

It is important that leaders don't come with all the answers but can work, and learn, alongside the young people. The most important qualities are openness, value and love of young people and a willingness to be vulnerable as an adult.

Make sure that you are well prepared

Read the notes and the "You will need" section carefully and thoroughly. This course relies on people who are willing to share of themselves and their time. You will need to invite guest speakers in good time and be clear as to what you are expecting from them.

Please do serve good refreshments – young people are worth it! Refreshments can be served before, during or at the end of each session – whichever works best for you.

We recommend meeting in comfortable and relaxed surroundings with comfy chairs or big cushions. Be aware that some of the activities do require space in which to run them.

Safeguarding

The welfare of young people and their leaders is paramount. Each church or organisation will have its own safeguarding policy which needs to be strictly observed.

If you are in any doubt, please contact the person in your church who is responsible for safeguarding or, if you are still unclear, your Diocesan safeguarding advisor.

All adults working with the group need to have undertaken a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

Establishing the ground rules

We suggest using part of the first meeting to help to create an environment of trust, openness and respect. Get the young people to set some ground rules for the meeting. This might vary from not talking when others are talking to not laughing at others' suggestions or not talking outside the meeting about what people have said. There is no strict set of rules and each group will come up with their ideas which can be revisited at any of the subsequent sessions.

Getting the whole church on board

Running this course is a good time to ask the whole church to pray specifically about the group and the journey on which they are about to embark.

Specifically that they may hear, understand and be faithful to God's calling as they learn more about growing as disciples as they use their gifts for the building of the kingdom of God.

Taking young people seriously

Young people and children are often not taken seriously either in society generally or in Church. In the community young people are often perceived as a problem to be dealt with, or resented, and in church they may only be valued as "the Church of the future" rather than the church of the present. It is always worth considering how young people can gain a higher profile both in church and in the wider community.

It must be remembered that Christian young people are of equal value to adult Christians. Indeed, God always has spoken to children and young people and still does today. The church has much to gain from all they have to offer.

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes 1

You will need:

- Jam doughnuts- enough for most members of the group to have 1, some to have 2 or 3 and a minority to have none.
- Invite the church treasurer or gift aid rep to visit the group to give a very brief explanation about what happens to the money that people put in the collection plate and giving campaigns.
- Bibles

This session encourages the group to think about what they have to share and to consider how much more God might do with that.

Enable the group to set some ground rules.

To help establish those rules invite the group to quickly make a poster to put up each time they meet.

Game: Have the group standing shoulder to shoulder, facing towards each other, in a circle.

First, instruct everyone to lift their left hand and reach across to take the hand of someone standing across the circle. Next, have everyone lift their right and take the hand of another person standing across the circle. Make sure that no one is holding hands with someone standing directly beside the person.

The group must figure out how to untangle the knot (forming a circle of people) without ever letting go of any hands. When you are done with the Human Knot activity, you can ask some debrief questions if you wish, such as "How well did you group work together? What strategies did your group adopt?"

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes 1

Explain a little about what happens to money put in the collection plate at services, giving campaigns and why it is helpful to spend a few sessions thinking about giving.

God is the creator of all good things and we want to recognise that everything we have comes from God. It is right that we should give thanks to God for all that he gives us. And we want to ask for God's blessing on what we give back to the church and to charities to be able to do God's work in the world.

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes 1

Activity:

Explain that you are going to have some doughnuts but that to eat the doughnut you cannot bend your arm and the doughnuts can only be held in their hands. Then distribute the doughnuts but give one or two members of the group more than one and some members of the group none at all. However, do ensure that there are actually enough doughnuts for everyone to have one each.

Discuss what happened.

How quickly did they decide to share?

Did people pair up or was it a whole group solution?

Did anyone not get a doughnut?

Did people have to ask for doughnuts or were they offered?

Read John 6:1-14

Discuss how different characters in the story might have felt.

Consider in particular how the boy might have felt when he gave his own food and then what he might have been thinking as he saw all the food being given out to the groups of people.

Encourage the group to think about how God takes what we offer and can use it to meet the needs of other people. Help them to think about how God might multiply our scarce resources to provide plenty for everyone.

Have they discovered anything new about God? Have they viewed God as a God of plenty before? How will they see God now that he has an abundance to share with us?

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes 1

Think about what they have that they already share- perhaps in the family or with friends

Have they ever considered asking God to bless what they share?

Does this encourage them to share more & can they think of anything else they might like to contribute?

Give each member of the group a postcard.

Ask them to write on one half of the back something they can share with others, it could be a skill or their time, money or something they possess that they know someone else would like to borrow.

On the other half ask them to think of someone they would like to encourage in sharing a gift or talent that they have such as being a great teacher, having a cheery smile, or being a good listener.

Then ask them to cut the postcard in half so they can give the half to the person they want to encourage and keep the other as a reminder for themselves.

In this way they share the same picture postcard.

Lord we thank you for all the great things that you have given us,

For the feeling of having plenty and sometimes even more that we need.

Help us to share all that we have willingly with others,

And to see what and when we can share

Amen.

Giving to God enables Mission and Ministry

Leaders' notes 2

You will need:

- 2 or 3 packs of playing cards- shuffled.
- A number of wrapped presents (about half as many presents as there are people in the group)
- · Gift tags and pens
- An A3 or bigger picture of a present
- Several toilet rolls!
- Information about the missionary organisations and activities and both the lay and ordained ministers that the church supports.

This session will help the group to find out what church funds and parish share pay for and to consider the range of mission and ministry opportunities we can reach.

Remind the group of the ground rules they set last time.

Warm up game:- Give each group a roll of toilet paper and ask them to wrap their largest member to make an "Egyptian mummy" When they have all completed this the results can be judged – should you wish! You can also then have a race to see which group can un-wrap their victim and tidy away all the paper.

Explain a little about what we mean by ministry such as local lay readers, pastoral carers, youth and children's leaders and clergy, in the parish, cluster or deanery, and the training, expenses or stipend they receive to support them.

Perhaps invite a local lay reader or clergy person to tell the group about the wide range of activities across the community that make up their week.

Describe the mission organisations and work that the church contributes to in a year and any people that benefit in particular. Help the group to understand how the financial gift enables those people to share the good news of Jesus in words and actions.

Giving to God enables Mission and Ministry

Leaders' notes 2

Activity:

Everyone is seated in a circle and the presents placed in the centre. Deal one pack of cards around the circle. If there are a large number of players then you may need two packs of cards so that each person has at least 6 or 7 cards.

You then use half the spare pack of cards to call out each card in turn. The person with that card collects a present from the middle until all the presents have gone. Continue calling out the cards and invite players who have that card to take a present from someone who already has one. Players are not allowed to hide their presents or refuse to give them away. Continue until all the cards have been called out.

Those people fortunate enough to still have a present at the end of the game can open them and see what they have received. They can decide what they would like to do with the present, to keep it or give it to someone in the room who could make better use of it.

Whatever their decision they must explain their reasons to the rest of the group.

Let the group discuss what happened.

When the presents were still wrapped how hard was it to take a present from someone or to give the presents away?

How did people feel when they opened the present and was it of any use to them?

How did it feel to give away a present to someone who valued it?

Giving to God enables Mission and Ministry

Leaders' notes 2

Read Luke 8:1-3

Help the group to think about the women and how they saw that their gifts of service and support could help in the mission and ministry of Jesus and his disciples.

How might Jesus and the disciples have felt as they travelled and preached and healed? Could they have travelled as far or reached as many people if they did not have help from others?

Look again at the people and groups supported in their mission and ministry by your church.

You may like to show a dvd clip of a missionary organisation or use other resources to help tell their story in more detail.

Help the group to be inspired by the passion that the ministers and missionaries have to reach new people with the love of Jesus.

Now encourage the group to think beyond financial gifts to other ways that they can bless ministers and missionaries.

Use the gift tags to help the group to each make a new commitment to support and pray for ministers and missionaries and stick them to the large picture of the present as a reminder.

Giving to God enables Mission and Ministry

Leaders' notes 2

Prayer

We pray for all those who give of themselves to support others in their communities.

We pray particularly for the work of our local clergy and ministers.

We ask for your blessing on all those that we have come in contact with today.

Amen.

Worthiness

Leaders' notes 3

You will need:

- A number of images of items from catalogues or supermarket brochuressuch as electrical items, larger household goods and everyday food items and a copy of the prices for you to check against.
- Pens and paper for each member of the group.
- Bibles.

In this session the group will look at the value of things, how they spend their own resources and how King David used a nation's wealth to worship God.

Everyone sit in a circle. Tell them the words and responses below. You start by jumping up, pointing at another player and saying one of the following:

Alleluia! answer Amen! Amen! answer Alleluia! Alleluia - Amen! Alleluia! Amen- Alleluia! Amen- Alleluia! Amen!

They must respond quickly with the right answer and play continues at this pace until someone slips up and it's their turn to start it off again.

Alleluia means Praise the Lord

And Amen means I agree

God is the creator of the earth and Genesis tells us how God enjoyed what he had made, spending time to look at it at the end of each day and living amongst his creation.

But do we take time to acknowledge what God has provided and enjoy what God has given us?

Are we motivated to give back to God in response to what he has done for us?

Worthiness

Leaders' notes 3

Activity:

Let the group see each advert or picture and ask them to write down how much they think the item costs.

They can either work individually or in small teams. If you have a mixed age group then, on this occasion, it may be interesting to ask them to work in their own age group, as you will see marked differences in who knows the prices for particular items which will make for interesting discussions.

Alternatively you could give them three budgets of £1.50-£1.75, £20-£45 and £200-£350 and ask them to choose three items from the entire range for each price bracket to fit within that range, using each item only once.

When the group have priced all the items see who has the most right answers and give them a prize of a shopping bag.

Discuss how much they knew about prices.

Were the young people aware of the cost of food and household items or gym membership?

Did others know the cost of text messaging, monthly wifi, computer games and electrical gadgets?

There may be a strong debate on what is worth paying for and what someone else wouldn't consider as important.

Can any of the group agree on what are priorities and what are luxuries that may have to be sacrificed in favour of something else?

Worthiness

Leaders' notes 3

Read 1 Chronicles 29:1-20

Explain how King David and the leaders gave the very best that they had.

They gave willingly and with devotion to God.

Encourage the group to think about what they have to give to God.

It may not be riches like King David but we can give praise and worship to God.

You may want to play the Alleluia Amen game again or choose a worship song or hymn to sing together.

Help the group to think about other things they can offer to God as a form of praise and worship such as how they share their time and talents, resources or money.

Give each member of the group a piece of paper and an envelope and ask them to address it to themselves. Ask them to write to themselves about what they pledge to give to God and why. Tell them that you will post it to them in a couple of weeks as a reminder of their pledge.

David's Prayer

Praise be to you, Lord, the God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.

Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honour come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

To Give and Receive

Leaders' notes 4

You will need:

- Resource sheet 1 copied for each group member.
- Monopoly money or print out mock chequesresource sheet 2.
- Film clip from Pay It
 Forward or description of the story.
- Pens and paper for each member of the group.
- Bibles.

This session challenges the group to consider how hard it might be to make wise decisions about giving. It will also help them reflect on short and long term outcomes of giving which can include them being recipients as well as givers.

Quick warm up game about multiple end results/outcomes or giving & receiving

There is a cycle of generosity. Giving to others can often result in others wanting to give and sometimes we may even receive more back than we gave.

Giving and receiving is not all amount money but it is often about building community and relationships. To help one another often means we find out more about other's circumstances and our own character.

If you have the facilities show a clip from the film Pay It Forward otherwise tell the story of Trevor McKinney.

To Give and Receive

Resource Sheet 1

Activity:

Ask four members of the group to promote a particular charity. They can role play as much as they wish but must stay to the facts below.

- Catherine Towers is a former member of the congregation who is working as a teacher and houseparent at a primary school in rural Brazil. The Christian ethos is an integral part of the function of the school, and Catherine feels that God has called her to this work. She receives very little payment from the school for her work.
- 2. Water projects- a major Christian relief charity is working in partnership with a number of poor African villages to bring running water to the villages. They need a minimum of £3500 to bring clean water to each village which is vital in combating disease.
- 3. An orphanage in Romania needs funds to care for children who have either lost their parents, or whose parents cannot look after them. The money is used for food, healthcare and to pay staff at the orphanage.
- 4. Local mission. A local project, which is part of a national UK mission agency, is working to bring the good news of Jesus to the community. The money is used mainly for the salaries of people who work on the project.

The rest of the group are members of the church mission committee and have been asked to allocate this year's mission fund of £5000. They must report back to the church PCC or elders explaining their decisions. They can make suggestions of other support they might give to the charities and how they would encourage the wider church to get involved.

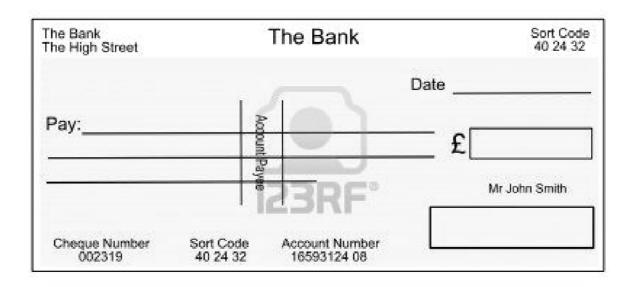
Encourage the group to work hard to find a suitable outcome without just splitting the funds equally between all four projects.

Help them to consider all the possible outcomes for themselves as well as others.

To Give and Receive

Resource Sheet 2





To Give and Receive

Leaders' notes 4

Discuss what happened.

Was it a difficult decision to make?

How many creative ways did the group find to give?

How far reaching were the possible outcomes and how did that affect their decision making?

Would it be easy to communicate their decisions to the rest of the church?

How would they inspire them to be more involved and think about how they give in the future?

Would any of the group consider being more involved in decision making or funding campaigns in the church now?

Read Matthew 6:19-21 and Philippians 4:14-20

Encourage the group to think about the possessions they have and how important they have become. Some will be for sentimental reasons and others out of need or desire for them. Some people may even admit to being hoarders.

Ask them to consider how much time and energy goes into all that they have here on earth but how much time do they proportionately put into being with God?

Consider the enjoyment of being able to help someone else and the relief or pleasure it can bring them. Reflect on how grateful Paul was when gifts were shared with him.

Discuss with the group how Paul says that he was 'amply supplied' and that the gifts were not only a blessing to him but also 'pleasing to God'. Think about how much it pleases God when we give to others.

To Give and Receive

Leaders' notes 4

Ask the members of the group to think about something that someone has done for them recently.

Take time to give thanks for it.

Invite the group to take a fake cheque or piece of money used in the activity earlier.

Help them to reflect on how often we need to be prompted by a request in the media, instead of making time to find out for ourselves at any time, about situations that need our help.

On the back of the cheque or money ask them to write about how they will take time to find out more about a project, an aspect of church life, a charity or someone who needs their help and how they will put that into action.

They can take this away as a reminder.

Prayer

For all You have given, Thank You God.

For all You have withheld, Thank You God.

For all You have permitted, Thank You God.

For all You have prevented, Thank You God.

For all You have forgiven me, Thank You God.

For all You have prepared for me, Thank You God.

For all you have taught me, Thank you God.

For the place you are keeping for me in heaven, Thank You God.

For having created me to love You for eternity, Thank You God. Amen

Growing through Giving

Leaders' notes 5

You will need:

- Resource sheet 3 copied for each group member.
- Monopoly money or print out mock chequesresource sheet 2.
- Pens and paper for each member of the group.
- Bibles.

This session challenges the group to consider not only the best use of resources but also the impact that these decisions may have on others.

They will also be asked to adapt quickly to changing priorities and demands.

Warm up game:

The group is divided into male and female participants. Now decide the 'value' of each male and female participant. For example, the male participants will be worth £5 and the female participants will be worth £10 each.

When the game begins call out a value:" Form... £25", the group have to get partners to form a group which will add up to £25.

For example, 5 boys at £5 each would have to group together or 2 girls and 1 guy, or 3 boys and 1 girl, and so on.

The participants who fail to join a group to form their £25 would have to perform a forfeit after the game is over. Continue with different amounts to be formed.

Growing through Giving

Leaders' notes 5

Invite the Church Treasurer to join the group and ask him to talk through how church finances work and how a church budget is prepared.

Discuss with him how the PCC decides which payments must be made and which are of less priority.

Do they have a policy on Giving to Missions and Charities?

Do they have a "wish list" should additional funds become available?

Growing through Giving

Leaders' notes 5

Activity:

With the help of your Church Treasurer prepare a draft church budget using headings such as –

Expenditure

Church worship

Music

Youth Work

Giving to Missions and Charities

Church Running Expenses – Heating, Lighting, Insurance etc.

Parish Contribution towards ministry provided throughout the Diocese.

Income

Give the group a finite amount of money and ask them to divide this between the categories listed.

Part way through the activity change the priorities by telling the group that the church roof is in need of major repairs or that the PCC wish to employ a second Youth Worker, that there has been a natural disaster in India or similar. Ask them what changes, if any, they would make as a result of the changing demands.

A little later, announce that the Church has received a legacy of £50,000.00p. Again, what changes, if any would they suggest? What other items of expenditure not already listed may they wish to fund?

Growing through Giving

Resource Sheet 1

Read Matthew 25: 14-30

Discuss with the group the implications of not making best use of the talents and resources that we have been given. Ask them to think back to session 4 and discuss with them what their next step in growing as a disciple of Jesus may be.

Ask the group for their views on the statement in verse 29 that everyone who has, will be given more. In particular, ask them to consider how this fits in with rest of the parable. The man going on the journey distributes his wealth among three servants, apportioned to them on the basis of their abilities.

The outcome of faithful service, and of unfaithful service, in this parable can also be discussed. What were the implications of their actions? How were they rewarded? How can we learn from this and use this knowledge in our daily lives?

Prayer

Thank you for the talents and gifts you have given to us all.

May we recognize them and build on them. May we know the satisfaction of dedication, of mastering a skill, and of excellence.

May our work serve you and bless others. May we remember humility, and give you the glory. May we love and follow you all our days.

Amen.

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes

You will need:

- Visual aids showing the following:-
- Food
- Money
- Open Hands
- Smiling People
- TV Remote Control
- Your favourite meal
- X Box 360
- Your Home

This is a suggested order of service suitable for All Age Worship and based on Session One – A God of Plenty. The other four sessions can be used in a similar way.

Songs and Hymns (chosen from KidSource)

Thank you, Lord, for this fine day

Give thanks with a grateful heart

God is good, God is great

Father God, you love me

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes

Thanksgiving Prayer

Use some simple actions for the response: 'God / you' – one finger pointing upwards, 'good' – both thumbs up, 'us' – both hands open move from body outwards

You give us what we need, you give to all your people

God you are good, you are good to us

You offer us so much, you offer beyond measure

God you are good, you are good to us

You share with us your world, you share without question

God you are good, you are good to us

You give of your plenty, so we have plenty too

God you are good, you are good to us

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes

Activity 1:

Ask the congregation to split into groups of 6-8, making sure that there is a range of ages in each group. Encourage the adults to allow and support children in participating, and to listen to all contributions.

Say each of these things in turn, asking the groups to discuss one good reason why they would not be willing to share it with others. Allow time for discussion before moving to the next thing. If possible show or project images as you say each one.

The TV remote control

Your favourite meal

Your dream holiday

The X Box 360

Your home

Once the discussion is over get a little feed-back from some of the groups. Explain that it is easy to talk about sharing, but the reality can be much more difficult!

Activity 2.

Move among the congregation, asking anyone to have a go at answering the question

'What is the best thing someone has shared with you?'

Try to get a range of voices and ages in the responses.

Readings

Matthew 10:1-8

John 6: 1-14

The John passage is the feeding of the 5,000, and lends itself to dramatic re-telling using the dramatised Bible or by being told rather than read

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes

Talk

These are the key points for the talk, to encourage the congregation to recognise that God is a God of plenty, and calls us to share that plenty with others. The key phrase is: 'God gives plenty, we have plenty to share'. It will help as you go along to ask the congregation to repeat the phrase every time you say it, and even put simple actions to it.

- We know that God gives plenty
- We know that because God gives plenty, we have plenty to share
- We also know that it's not that easy!
- When Jesus told his 12 disciples what to do, he also told them how to do it
- He told them to travel from place to place and help people
- He reminded them that God gives plenty, we have plenty to share
- He told them to give as generously as God had given to them
- They knew that God gives plenty, we have plenty to share
- When 5,000 or more people gathered to hear Jesus the disciples were worried, It was past lunch time and the people were hungry
- They knew that **God gives plenty**...but weren't sure how it would work!
- A boy was there with some lunch. He know that God gives plenty, we have plenty to share. He offered the lunch to the disciples to share
- Jesus prayed, and a miracle happened!
- The disciples and all the people saw that God gives plenty, we have plenty to share
- We all have things that we find special and precious, given to us by God
- God gives plenty, we have plenty to share
- Jesus told his disciples to give because God gives plenty, we have plenty to share
- The disciples saw that as the boy shared his lunch God gives plenty, we have plenty to share
- So the way we live should remind everyone we see and share with that God gives plenty, we have plenty to share

A God of plenty

Leaders' notes

Confession

This should be said slowly with a pause after each phrase, with suitable images as indicated in italics projected or held up.

(*People*) Generous God, you have given us life, and yet so often we take it or granted, expecting to be healthy not giving thanks for healing.

(Food) Generous God, you have given us all we need, and yet so often we have been greedy and wanted more than we should have.

(Money) Generous God, you have given us enough, and yet so often we want to have more and to spend more.

(Open hands) Generous God, you have given us your example of sharing, and yet so often we keep it all for ourselves.

(Smiling people) Generous God, forgive us for not being as generous as you are, and help us to offer, to give, and to share as willingly you do.

Closing Prayer

May God, who offers, gives and shares everything with us, make us willing to share his goodness with others. And the blessing.....