



2023–2026 National Offering Guidance for Congregation Participation

In order to minimize the promotional costs of the 2023–2026 National Offering, and in lieu of mailing promotional kits and fulfillment materials to all 5,900 LCMS congregations, the LCMS is providing the following guidance to congregations that wish to participate. This guidance includes instructions for delivering the congregation's gift to the 2023 LCMS national convention in Milwaukee or mailing it directly to the LCMS. (Additional guidance is available by calling or emailing LCMS Mission Advancement, the unit responsible for conducting the National Offering.)

PROMOTING THE OFFERING TO MEMBERS

LCMS congregations are invited and encouraged to plan a Sunday to promote the National Offering, followed by a Sunday to receive offerings from congregation members. It is recommended that those two Sundays are separated by a week (or more), so that households, individuals and families can plan and prepare to contribute their gift to the congregation.

Promotional information and resources, including a downloadable bulletin insert and brief text for the church's newsletter or website, are available at lcms.org/convention/national/offering. This information describes why congregation gifts are important and how they will advance the spread of the Gospel. The webpage also includes links to additional resources, such as a KFUO Radio segment about the National Offering.

We encourage pastors and leaders to speak openly and positively with their membership about the opportunity this National Offering provides for a congregation to express its support for reaching non-English speakers with the good news of Jesus.

As the Lord alone allows, the goal is for each participating congregation to provide its own special gift to support the focus of the National Offering. Such gifts will be recorded in the name of the congregation. The LCMS desires to report publicly on the total number of member congregations who have supported the National Offering both during and after the convention.

Other groups, as well as individuals, couples and families, who wish to give directly to the National Offering are being afforded that opportunity as a “both/and” option, which is in addition to helping their congregation supply a meaningful gift.

RECEIVING AND GIVING THE CONGREGATION'S OFFERING

For the congregational gift, please encourage individuals and families to make their personal checks payable to the congregation and note “For the 2023 National Offering” on the memo line.

For those who choose to give cash (currency), please take appropriate measures to keep National Offering gifts separate from the primary worship offering. For example, the congregation might receive a door offering before or after the worship service where bills and coins are clearly separated from regular offerings and directed to the National Offering. This should make the accounting easier for the church treasurer or financial secretary. Congregation leaders may also specify the use of any special, uniquely identifiable offering envelopes provided to individuals and members, if they are already part of the congregation's box of offering envelopes.

Congregation members may use a standard offering envelope, inserting both their regular tithe/offering for the support of the congregation as well as a check for the National Offering, and give both gifts on a Sunday other than a designated National Offering Sunday. Should this happen after the congregation's designated National Offering Sunday, treasurers may elect to hold the funds until it is evident that no other National Offering donations are expected. The treasurer can then remit a follow-up congregation offering on a date most convenient for the congregation. This National Offering will remain open through the end of the 2026 calendar year.

Church treasurers should accurately record and report to congregational leadership the total received from members. After deducting any costs to the congregation for the promotion and receiving of member gifts, the net amount received should be provided as a single gift from the congregation showing its participation in the 2023 National Offering.



There are two convenient options for sending the congregation's gift for the National Offering:

1. Deliver the congregation's gift to the 2023 LCMS national convention.

Prior to the convention, the congregation can convey its gift to either of its circuit delegates (clergy or lay) for hand-carrying to the convention. Delegates will have the opportunity to place all congregation gifts into offering baskets at the convention's opening worship service. (There will also be a receptacle for National Offering gifts at the LCMS main exhibit area in the convention exhibition hall.) To aid the delegate, the congregation should:

- a. Make the check payable to: *The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*.
- b. Write "2023 National Offering" on the memo line.
- c. Be sure the congregation's name is on the checking account used, or include a note clearly identifying the congregation by its name and mailing address.
- d. Seal the offering in an envelope, ideally bearing the congregation's name and address. The envelope can be addressed as below as a precaution should the delegate not be able to hand-carry the gift to the convention.
- e. Convey the offering to your delegate, asking for a receipt or note confirming that the envelope is in the possession of the delegate.

2. Mail the congregation's gift directly to the LCMS.

Before, during or after the convention, the congregation can mail its gift to the LCMS.

- a. Items 1a–c above apply.
- b. Address the mailing envelope to:
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
PO Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Special Note

If it is the congregation's preference to give electronically, such as through a debit or credit card, please call the LCMS Contributor Care line at 888-930-4438 rather than giving online. A representative will make sure credit is given to the congregation if the credit/debit card being used is NOT in the name of the congregation.

Every congregation's situation is unique. This guidance document cannot address every question, so LCMS Mission Advancement stands ready to assist your congregation with any questions or concerns that remain unanswered, or to discuss creative ideas for how your congregation might participate. LCMS Mission Advancement representatives are available to speak or present to a congregation and its leadership in person or by Zoom, if a direct conversation is desired.

May our loving, gracious God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — direct and bless the work that will be accomplished in His name and to His glory through all those who participate in the 2023–2026 National Offering! Thank you for being interested in helping make this work possible.

