

December is fast approaching, and with it comes Advent and Christmas. As part of our liturgy (remember this term isn't just about church, but about all our worship. A liturgy is a practice that organizes our worship or points us towards what we give worth to, it's like an arrow that points at a bullseye, and the target is the good life or what we think the good life is. It is what gets our time, energy, allegiance — our worth-ship) we give during this season. We give gifts to our kids, our spouses, our families, our kid's teachers, our co-workers, our neighbors, our friends. We give gift cards, mugs, ties, t-shirts, shoes, money, sweaters, video games, diamonds (Danette's forever Christmas wish), toys, candy, cookies, jerseys, hats, vacuums, grills, and balls. We also receive, sometimes all these things, sometimes bonuses, sometimes just more time and attention, as we have a chance to slow down and be together. It is a season of ordinary and radical generosity, and it can be beautiful.

At City Pres, we also give. We give to each other and we give to the church. We bless volunteers and staff. We love on one another. One aspect of our liturgy of giving is something called the Christmas Offering. We're asking everyone in the church – members and attenders – to be prepared to give. We're asking two things in this. You can give both or just one, but why not just go ahead and give both...we'd love for all of you to bring each of these things.

First,

Your Impossible Prayer Request

You'll receive a red envelope with a blank 3x5 card on it. Please write down your impossible prayer request, which is something you think God cannot ever do for you. Make it impossible! We've seen God answer so many of these prayers – houses, infertility, friends and family coming to Jesus and the church, loneliness, marriages, debt and many more.

We haven't seen all our prayers answered yet, so we're going to keep praying! We gather these things, and then over the course of the year, the staff, the elders, the prayer team prays for them. You can give these anonymously or with name attached, but this prayer is something that only God can do, so we pray and take the requests to him throughout the year. This year, we are hoping to collect at least 50 impossible requests.

Second,

Your Extra Christmas Offering Gift

This is above your normal tithes and offerings. This may be from a bonus you're getting, from your savings, or from something you've realized you don't need after all. It's great if we get some large gifts from those who have the means, as well as smaller gifts that add up. We'd like for everyone to give something, whether its \$50 or \$500 or \$5000 or any amount.

There are several ways to give. You can select "2018 Christmas Offering" from the dropdown menu on [EGIVE](#), you can write a check and indicate "2018 Christmas

Offering” on the memo line, or you can write down a pledge of what you plan to give by the end of the year or in the early part of 2019.

The Christmas Offering will be taken up during the service on Sunday, December 16th. We will have our normal offering at the beginning of the service and then we will also have our Christmas Offering at the end of service. You’ll come forward and place your envelope in the basket.

This year our offering will go to the following things, these are things that don’t fully exist apart from this special offering. In other words, the Christmas offering starts new ministry for our church, ministry that may become a regular part of who we are as a church or may offer temporary ministry to meet a certain need. Over the next 3 weeks, I’ll be sharing about each of these things in the newsletter:

- Redeemer City to City
 - Monterrey Mexico Church Plant - \$6,250
- Benevolence - \$6,750
- Part Time Ministry Positions
 - Faithful Presence Coordinator and Hope for ABQ - \$16,000
 - Children’s Director (nursery - 4th) - \$4,000
 - Admin and Youth Director - \$7,000 (As part of this, we are adding “youth director” to Taeler’s job and taking some of the admin off her plate. Some of this admin will be outsourced and some will stay in house)
- Total: \$40,000

This is a lot of money and can seem impossible. And yet, there is great hope involved in it too. Hope for new work both locally and abroad, hope for growing places of presence in the absence of our city, hope for faithful ministry to children and teenagers, hope for greater efforts of mercy to the broken and needy, hope for a growing church and future church plants in our city. We hope. And advent hope rests on a God who has come and is coming. A God who shows up in our absences and brings His presence. I hope this advent and Christmas season is a time of great ministry and giving and receiving in your life and in the life of City Pres, and we hope each of you can determine a place to give gladly and generously to the work here and to others in your midst, joining our good and generous God.

~ Rev. Justin Edgar