

“Thanks are the highest form of thought and gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder”

-G.K. Chesterton

Three cheers for teachers!

No education program would be possible without the dedication of our teachers. As the church school year draws to a close, we’re offering a list of ideas for showing appreciation for the teachers - and all formation volunteers - who help to shape our faith journeys.

We asked some colleagues at for their ideas, which are reflected below. One wise formation leader reminded us that the act of publicly thanking our teachers is itself an act of formation.

When to Thank?

- An official thank you should come during the service, particularly if you commission your teachers at the beginning of the school year.
- A special treat at coffee hour seals the thank you sweetly.

From Whom?

- The thanks should come not only from Christian education directors, but also on behalf of the congregation and the parents.
- Signing your card “From Director and People” tells your teachers that they are part of a larger story.

What to Give

- Any heart-felt thanks is lovely. Some of our friends add sayings and connect humor with thanks in their gifts.
- Many churches make homemade gifts: quick breads, cookies, cross-stitch bookmarks.
- Others give donations to charities in the teachers’ names and others give gift cards.

- Plants or flowers for the garden are a good idea. One church always gives a plant, to remind teachers over the summer that it is “green growing time,” and they should cherish time for their own growth.

Books are, of course, an excellent idea. Some suggestions are listed below.

Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers by Anne Lamott

Have You Filled Your Bucket by Carol McCloud

Learning to Walk in the Dark and *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor

God Went to Beauty School by Cynthia Rylant

Other Ideas

Think about your individual programs and people. Did you have a special focus this year? Was there an ongoing story or joke? Do you, or your teachers, love a certain flower, gummy bears, or something unique to your community?

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