

Gifts that help the World!

Rev. Dr. Fran Bogle MBA Just Peace Coordinator

These ideas are intended to spark your thinking and encourage you to imagine “new” gifts to share with family and friends. I welcome suggestions!

1. Make a gift to Church World Service to help survivors of disasters at home and around the world.
2. Give the gift of time! Create an IOU for a trip to the movies, dinner, the Science Museum, Art Museum, Whale Watching, brunch after church etc, and then do it!
3. Use the Heifer Project to send rabbits, chickens, pigs, goats, sheep, cows, llamas other farm animals to families around the world in your loved ones name.
4. Give a plant or blooming bulbs that can be planted outside and will bloom yearly.
5. Find old pictures of loved ones, restore, frame and give them as gifts. These memories will be keepsakes all will treasure.
6. Create a cookbook of favorite family recipes and stories.
7. Give away a book you have enjoyed reading. Tell the recipient why you want to share it with them.
8. Mark a calendar with a special day each month that you will do something wonderful with your loved one and give it to that person.
9. Count the gifts you give to loved ones and give an equal number of gifts to a battered women’s shelter or program for families of people in jail.
10. Make a donation in your loved ones name to a local animal shelter.
11. Give a membership to the Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, National Geographic Society, Sierra Club or similar groups. Recipients get a monthly reminder of ways to help the planet. They will think of you when their magazine arrives.
12. For the more politically inclined consider giving a membership to Amnesty International, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the ACLU, PFLAG, UNICEF, Doctors Without Borders, Pine Street Inn, Boston City Mission Society, On The Rise, (a program for homeless women) etc.
13. The United Church of Christ offers many opportunities for giving in someone’s name including: the UCC Coalition for Lesbian/Gay/ Bisexual and Transgender

Concerns, Justice and Witness Ministries, The MBA Just Peace Ministry, and The Way of the Cross Fund for retired ministers, Sponsor a Child programs and Our Churches Wider Mission.

14. Hold a fair at church featuring products from Church World Service. They will send handcrafted gifts made in developing countries. You set up the tables, collect the money and return the very few unsold items to them.
15. Take your family shopping for the City Mission Society Annual Christmas Shop. Use half the money you would spend on gifts for each other to get gifts for people in need. Talk about why you are choosing to spend you money this way.
16. Use the money you might have spent on party decorations to help the homeless.
17. Create handmade cards and write a favorite memory inside. When you give them to someone you love you share the memory twice.
18. Give a bird feeder and seeds. It helps the birds and can be enjoyed for years.
19. Bake cookies or make crafts with your children so that they have special gifts for family members and friends
20. Use materials that can be recycled for gift-wrapping and holiday parties. It's a gift to the earth and to the future.
21. Give Equal Exchange or Fair Trade products including coffee, tea and chocolate.
22. Invite family members and friends to make small gifts for nursing home residents and spend an afternoon sharing your gifts with the residents.
23. Start a cutting from your favorite houseplant and share it with a loved one.
24. Subscribe to tickets to a concert or play series and take a loved one with you to each event.
25. Give environmentally friendly presents such as low watt light bulbs and low use water faucets! If you give them with a smile folks will laugh with you and help save the planet.
26. Give a blessing. Find or write a prayer for the special people in your life.
27. Take time to say a prayer of thanks each time you gather with loved ones and share a funny story about holidays past.