

# A Little Book of Blessing

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9 Simple Ways to Love Your Neighbour



Christmas is a wonderful time of year filled with opportunities to love, serve and bless our neighbours. The Little Book of Blessing is designed to help groups, families and individuals engage with our neighbours through the art of blessing.

In this book you will find tips, hints and suggestions designed to get you thinking about the possibilities. Some ideas are catered for groups and others for individuals. The ideas are simple and easy to follow; start with them, but have fun thinking outside the box.

For leaders wanting to participate with their group, we've included a simple "start to finish" process of how to lead your group in the art of blessing.

In all we do, let's remember that it is more blessed to give than receive (Acts 20:35). Freely we have received, so, freely we give without any expectation of return (Matthew 10:8).

Have fun blessing your neighbours and friends this Christmas.

# The 4 D's of Blessing

## **Discuss**

What could you, your group or family do to bless your neighbours? Start by sharing ideas, inspiration and passion. Imagination is key – what would you love to see happen? Connect the dots between various ideas and see where you land.

## **Discern**

The difference between good ideas and God ideas is discernment. As a group ask God for clarity. Pray into what you've discussed and discern where God is at work. God ideas will leave people feeling blessed (no strings attached), but also create room for ongoing relationship.

## **Do**

It's a no brainer – but all our planning and prayer must lead us to engagement in God's mission. Go for it. Bless your neighbour and be extravagant. Enjoy it and have fun!

## **Debrief**

The benefit of engaging as a group is the opportunity to debrief. How was your 'blessing' received? Take time to share good news stories. Reflect on the process and personal growth. As a group, pray and give thanks for those you've blessed. Continue to discern how you can love and serve them in the future.

# Parties

**Creating spaces to connect and have fun.**

## **Host a Dinner Party**

Host a dinner party or a BBQ at your home. Invite your neighbours and seek to create a non-threatening space to mix your friendship circles. Invite people others might not.

## **Organise a Picnic**

Organise a picnic somewhere local. This is a great idea for families with young kids. You could even organise an activity for the kids like a scavenger hunt.

## **Host a Games Night**

Invite your friends or neighbours round for some nibbles, drinks and games. Create a welcoming and approachable space where people can get to know each other.

## **Things to consider...**

- Who will help organise? How can we do this together?
- Who will you invite along?
- Are there existing relationships that you need to consider?
- What space/location works best?

# Presence

**Partnering with local services, businesses and initiatives.**

## **Bless a Local Business**

Bless a local business by intentionally investing in it. This could include your whole group by organising a dinner out; choosing a day to buy local take-away; or getting everyone to buy gift cards from the same place. Do you know a local business owner? Don't forget to tip!

## **Help your Neighbour**

Help a neighbour in their garden or around the house. With more time on our hands over Christmas, it's a great time to serve a neighbour with their DIY projects. Is there anyone who could join you?

## **Bless a Public/Essential Service**

Bless an essential service worker, public service or school. This could include the local fire department, hospital or primary school. Do you know an essential service worker? It's been a big year!

## **Questions to Ask:**

- What business do I/ we love? How could we bless them?
- What are my neighbours up to? How can I join them in their work?
- What local service or essential workers do/ we know? How can we love them?
- Who can I do this with?

# Presents

**Give a gift to show you care.**

## **Christmas Hamper/Groceries**

Not everyone finds Christmas easy. It can be expensive and difficult for people. Make a hamper for a friend; or do their groceries. Be extravagant and buy the best produce and items.

## **Home Cooked Meals**

Nothing says 'we love you' like a home cooked meal or some freshly baked cookies!

## **Gifts**

Who doesn't love receiving a present from a friend! Let's be people who give the best presents possible!

### **Questions to Ask:**

- What are the needs of my neighbours and friends?
- Who has had a difficult year?
- What will show others that I've really thought about them?
- How can I add a personal touch?

## COVID Safe Guidelines

It is essential that groups and individuals meet the standards set out by the NSW government for activities in groups. More than that, we need to be considerate of each of each other and be responsible members of the community. See [nsw.gov.au/covid-19](https://nsw.gov.au/covid-19) for up to date details.

### Non-negotiables:

- Maintain 1.5m distance between people
- Wash hands thoroughly and often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- Stay home if you have any symptoms of COVID-19. The main symptoms are fever (temp over 37.5C, cough, sore or scratchy throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, loss of smell or taste)
- Maximum of 20 visitors to a home or 20 people total at an outdoor gathering. The total includes children of any age. (Current as of 7/10/20)

**There are some further recommendations for providing a safe environment in your home or outdoors:**

- No physical greetings or exchanges such as handshakes or hugs
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Sneeze or cough into your elbow
- Ensure that seating arrangements comply with the 1.5m physical distance rule

**Food Preparation and Service:**

- Anyone preparing food must wash hands using proper handwashing technique.
- Avoid having a buffet style food table. Attendees should be individually served. The person serving food should wash hands, wear gloves and avoid touching their face or other surfaces while serving.
- Encourage people to observe social distancing protocol while queueing for food or socialising.