

AFFIRMATION 2026

Affirmation marks the transition from one OCC Season to the next. In many ways it is the finale of the previous years' experience, allowing us to acknowledge both participation and the impact of their involvement, together with providing a strong foundation for ongoing engagement in this new OCC season.

Affirmation is more than saying 'thank you'. It is about directly connecting participation to the missional impact that initially invited the group's participation and inspiring and equipping for ongoing involvement. Affirmation is a relational strategy where the volunteer or staff member who engaged and supported a group in their participation, returns to connect and continue the relationship building journey.

Affirmation also provides the opportunity to discern who God may be calling into greater involvement with OCC. This may be by growing their own group's participation or even through exploring other possibilities for volunteer service with Operation Christmas Child.

Make the most out of every opportunity

Each affirmation call provides an opportunity to continue to build on the relationship with our church partners, recognising their kingdom impact, creating expectations for the next season and inspiring future participation.

To help support you in having fruitful and meaningful conversations we have developed a few talking points that you may find useful when making your calls.

Each call should:

- Express Gratitude
- Learn and ask questions
- Inspire
- Ask about future participation
- Encourage and pray



Express Gratitude

A key goal of affirmation is to express gratitude and affirm the church for their participation. It's not just a 'thank you', but rather, connecting their partnership in the ministry to the mission of Operation Christmas Child.

Examples of how you might express gratitude:

- We feel so privileged that your church has made Operation Christmas Child a part of your missions and outreach plans! Your church's participation means that children around the world have the opportunity to hear the Good News of the gospel.



- We are so thankful for your church's participation in Operation Christmas Child last year. Because of your church, _____ children and their families will hear the gospel.
- We have been so encouraged by the work that your church is doing to reach children with the Good News of Jesus through the collection of shoebox gifts. Through your partnership we are seeing the gospel shared in some of the hardest to reach places and seeing the growth of local churches in those areas.



Learn and Ask Questions

Ask questions that allow your Project Leaders to share about their church's involvement

Examples of questions you might ask:

- I'd love to know some of the things you've found successful in getting people involved. Were there any resources, videos, stories, printed material that were helpful in supporting your church's involvement?
- Can you share what you did last year to collect shoeboxes?
- I would love to hear what your church does to get people excited about Operation Christmas Child.



Inspire

By sharing something inspiring from the past season you help to connect the church's participation to the greater missional impact, encouraging future participation.

Ideas of things that you may want to share (ideas and information can be found in the Special Impact Report - [Operation Christmas Child 2024 Special Report - Operation Christmas Child](#)):

- Last year 12,205,900 shoebox gifts were packed and donated globally. This represents over 12.2 million children around the world who will hear the gospel for the first time.
- Every one of those _____ shoebox gifts you collected represents a child that will hear the gospel for the first time. Not only that, but their families and friends will also hear the Good News. These shoebox gifts have an eternal impact that goes far beyond the shoebox.
- Discuss The Greatest Journey 12 week discipleship program and the decisions for Christ that come as a result. In 2025, 6,040,488 million children enrolled in TGJ.

- Share a story that you have read or heard about that demonstrates the life changing impact a shoebox gift has had (ie. Daniel and Katarina's story from the OCC Fundamentals training course found on the OCC Connect Development Platform)
- Share something from your local area that really encouraged you this season. (ie. Did you meet someone that had received a shoebox as a child, have you heard about a group that had a fundraising event that exceeded their expectations, etc.)



Ask about Future Participation

Affirmation provides the opportunity to discern who God may be calling into greater involvement with OCC, either by growing their own group's participation or even through exploring other possibilities for volunteer service with Operation Christmas Child. Project Leaders who are passionate about OCC may be interested in being involved beyond their church.

Ideas on how you might enquire about future involvement:

- Do you think your church will participate again this year? *If yes* – have you considered what goal you might set for your church this year? (*Encourage them to register on our website so that they receive all important communication about the upcoming season*).
- It has been so great working alongside you this year, will you be the project leader again this year. *If no*, is there someone that is willing to take over this leadership role that you could introduce me to?
- It's been such a joy to hear the heart you have for OCC and how you have loved inspiring your church to get involved in sharing the gospel in this way. I wonder if you might be interested in expanding your impact by helping other churches get involved with OCC like you have done with yours. OCC has a variety of volunteer opportunities where you could serve.



Encourage and Pray

As you close your time together consider other ways that you can encourage them. Is there a Celebration or Connect day or a Project Leader gathering that you would like to invite them to? Let them know about the resources available to them – Project Leader Hub, Project Leader Q&A's later in the year, Project Leader Workshop, etc.

Let them know that you will touch base again a bit later in the year.

Finish the call by praying together for the upcoming year and that God will do amazing things in and through this church!