NEIGHBOR CARE:
HOSPITALITY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Small touches can make a big difference.

Although we're still experiencing hot summer days, the holidays will be here before we know it! The holiday season can be a wonderful and meaningful time at our partner organizations. There may be extra food, more volunteers, special meals, and an outpouring of generosity.

At the same time, the holidays can be a difficult season for many of our neighbors. Some may be worried about providing a holiday meal for their family. Others may be experiencing financial stress, loneliness, grief, or uncertainty.

This is where hospitality matters. Hospitality doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive. It is often simply the way we make people feel. A few simple touches can create a welcoming atmosphere:

- Add a small amount of seasonal décor.
- Play quiet holiday or seasonal music.
- Create a holiday food table where neighbors can choose a few special items.
- Offer coffee, water or a small refreshment.

Hospitality in Action



East Nashville Care Market collects and distributes warm coats to neighbors during the cold winter months.





Hands of Hope in Portland decorates their entrance in the fall with mums and pumpkins, creating a warm, welcoming entrance. They also have children decorate their Thanksgiving boxes to add a little extra joy for the recipient.



Trevecca Community Church loves on their neighbors at Trevecca Nazarene University by opening a monthly Neighbor Stand for students. The monthly event includes a choice food market along with fun activities for the students, like pumpkin painting, growing herbs, and a ramen bar.

Nashville's Metro Social Services holds a holiday food-and-toy giveaway each December. Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus greet all of the guests, and they serve around 130 families with food boxes and red bags filled with toys.



Hospitality ideas to borrow

- Create a Children's Decorating Station: Invite children to make handwritten cards, holiday placemats, ornaments, or small treat bags for neighbors receiving a food box. These personal touches turn a standard food box into something special that says, "Someone prepared this especially for you."
- Spread Holiday Cheer: Invite volunteers to offer cheerful greetings and hand out candy canes. Play holiday music to create a festive, welcoming atmosphere that brings a little extra joy to the experience.
- Share Warmth Beyond Food: Ask supporters to donate gently used coats for neighbors who may need them. If storage space is limited, consider requesting new winter gloves or hats to distribute during the colder months.
- Create a Holiday Choice Table: Set up a market-style holiday table where each neighbor can select an item or two they would enjoy. Offer options such as baking mixes, hot chocolate, coffee, or tea. Giving neighbors a choice adds a personal touch and helps everyone select something meaningful for their holiday celebration.

The holidays give us an opportunity to do more than provide food. They give us a chance to remind our neighbors that they are welcome, valued and cared for. None of these things has to cost much, but each one can communicate something meaningful: You are welcome here. You matter. We're glad you're our neighbor.