



PROJECT
Leader
RESOURCE

World
CAFE



WORLD CAFE



Recommend size: 5–25 people

Recommended age: Teens and adults

Event objective: The World Café event is specifically for small groups or audiences. It is less of a formal event and more of a gathering at a coffee shop or home. While its informal nature makes preparation extremely simple, this event is still a powerful way to inspire, equip, and connect with people interested in Operation Christmas Child.

Agenda:

40–50 minutes

- *10 minutes:* Guests gather and order/serve coffee.
- *10 minutes:* Icebreaker.
 - Have everyone introduce themselves and answer one of the following questions:
 - How long have you been packing shoeboxes?
 - What is your favorite shoebox item to pack?
- *10 minutes:* Distribute *Spiritual Impact Stories* (following), have guests read them aloud and discuss.
- *10 minutes:* Wrap up.
 - Share plan for packing and collecting boxes with your group and have a time of idea sharing or brainstorming.
 - Make sure all points have been covered from your *Wrap-Up Speaking Points* and close in prayer.

Location Suggestions:

- Local café.
- Living room/Dining room.
- Smaller room in church or community center.

Set up:

- Print *Spiritual Impact Stories*.
- Print *Wrap-Up* script.
- Bring a sample of 2018 Promotional materials and some shoeboxes.



Food and Decorations:

- Buy or serve guests coffee or tea and provide something to eat.

Sample Invitation Text:

Have you ever thought about the spiritual impact one shoebox can have on the life of a child? Come to a night of coffee and fellowship as we share stories and celebrate what God has done in the lives of children around the world.

Join us at the World Café

(date)

(location)

For more Information *(contact info)*

Welcome Speaking Points:

- Welcome to the World Café. Tonight is going to be pretty simple. We are going to chat, read some stories, and discuss what we have read and heard while enjoying some good coffee and snacks. Let's pray to get started and then I have a few questions for you. *(Pray)*
- First, does everyone know everyone? *(Have everyone introduce themselves and answer one of the following questions).*
 - How long have you been packing shoeboxes?
 - What is your favorite shoebox item to pack?
- I am so glad that you all could join us!

Wrap-Up Speaking Points:

- Emphasize that shoebox gifts are so simple yet so impactful.
- *Ministry Facts can be found at the end of this document.*
- Discuss your group's shoebox goal and plan.
- Provide information on how to pack a shoebox.
- Discuss how to involve others in your efforts.
- End with prayer, committing everything to the Lord.



Ukraine: Undergarment

Julie* is a pastor's wife who lives in Ukraine and is also an elementary school teacher at a school with 500 students. Seeing the need in her school she put in a request to receive 500 shoeboxes to distribute at the school. This request was granted and the school received shoebox gifts.

At the outreach event a teenage girl approached her and expressed her need for a personal article of under clothing, a bra. She is from a poor family and did not have the financial means to buy one. Julie said, "Let's pray about it."

They joined hands and committed this seemingly large request to God who hears all prayers. After the prayer Julie scanned the mound of boxes that had arrived previously and asked God to direct her eyes to the right box. She picked one out and gave it to the girl.

Once the boxes were distributed, the children sat down and listened to the Christmas story and the plan of salvation. They then opened their boxes together.

What happened with the girl who needed a bra? She opened her box to find a bra that was exactly the right size! What seems like a large prayer request to us, is small in God's eyes

Guyana: Guitar

Chilion is a six year old boy who lives in Patamona Village in Guyana. He loves music and had a boat paddle that he would pretend was his guitar. He would go throughout the house singing and playing his 'guitar.' Chilion's parents noticed his keen interest in music and hoped that one day he could buy himself a guitar. Their prayer was answered sooner than they expected.

Chilion was invited to an Operation Christmas Child outreach event where he received a shoebox gift. Inside his gift he found a small guitar! He and his parents were overjoyed and could only credit God for providing the perfect gift.

Serbia: Geometry Set

Nebojsa lives in a small village in Serbia. He has epilepsy and has to go to the hospital regularly for treatment. His family is very poor and this has put a great financial strain on them, they have to make sacrifices every day to survive.

During one of his stays in the hospital Nebojsa received a shoebox gift. When he opened it he found many things including; a hat and gloves and school supplies that had a compass and ruler. When he saw these gifts he began crying.

His mother explained that the children at his school made fun of him because he didn't have school supplies. In his math class he received an F because he told his teacher he had forgotten the necessary math supplies, the truth was his family didn't have money to buy them.

He held the supplies in his arms for a long time, with tears in his eyes.

*Name changed to protect identity



Brazil: Pencils

At a shoebox outreach event parents and children were overwhelmed by the gifts they received in their shoebox gifts but what stood out most to the National Leadership Team overseeing the event was an eight-year old boy named Gabriel. He received a beautiful shoeboxes full of precious gifts but when they asked him what his favorite item was he said "I really like the pencil."

When they asked him why this was his favorite item he said because he needed pencils to be able to do his school work but his mother couldn't afford them. Now he is able to do his homework after school.

Malaysia: Skipping Rope

A girl attended an Operation Christmas Child outreach event at a local church in Malaysia where she received a shoebox gift. One of the items she received in her shoebox was a skipping rope that she would bring to school to play with during recess.

One day while she was playing with her skipping rope some Muslim girls came up to her and asked where she got the skipping rope. She told them "it was a gift from Jesus" and proceeded to share the Gospel with them.

The skipping rope this girl received was not only an item that she received great joy in using but also became a tool to share the Gospel with.

Guyana: The Soccer Team

Like many countries in South America, Guyana is a country with many soccer fans. In the Marchushi village of Karasabi in Guyana there was an outreach event planned at one of the schools. This school had a soccer team but they only had one soccer ball to practice with. The Head Mistress of the school explained that it was not possible to get another one unless someone found enough money to purchase a ball and made the long trek to the city of Georgetown to pick it up.

As the children opened their shoebox gifts five boys from the soccer team received shoeboxes with soccer balls in it. They and the other children were overjoyed because they could now use these soccer balls to practice and play with.

The school soccer team did better than they ever had in soccer competitions that year and it was thanks to the soccer balls received in the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.

It is amazing to see how these shoebox gifts bring a community together as the contents of the shoeboxes are shared for the greater good of everyone.



Philippines: Canadian Missionary

In a mountainous remote region in the province of Cebu in the Philippines some local Christians reached out to the Operation Christmas Child National Leadership Team (NLT) in the country to see about the possibility of doing a shoebox outreach event in the community. Even though it was a far distance from the highway, making access into the community difficult, the team recognized the need and agreed to do a shoebox outreach event and follow-up The Greatest Journey Discipleship (TGJ) class.

There was a resident who worked among this group who was a missionary from Canada and she expressed to the NLT after the distribution that she participates each year in packing shoeboxes in Canada and has been praying that one day shoebox gifts will come to this community that she is working in. Her prayers were answered and she has promised to continue working among this group and helping support them.

She returned to Canada and raised money for a church building in this community. Once the funds were raised the parents of the children who attended TGJ built the church in a span of three months.

This community that previously had few Christians and no church building now has a church building, a pastor and a children's outreach program!

Costa Rica: Crocs

Costa Rica is one of the countries Canada sends shoeboxes to and sometimes sends Canadian volunteer teams to participate in shoebox outreach events. On one of these trips there was a Canadian volunteer who was handing out shoeboxes to the children. She picked up two boxes but one was significantly heavier than the other. She became nervous that she would be giving a box that was mostly empty to the child and this upset her.

After she handed out the two boxes she stood in front of the boy who received the shoebox that was really light. When he opened the box she couldn't see what was inside but saw his face completely light up and he began screaming really loudly. He kept saying; "I have some crocs, I have some crocs, I have some crocs." The boy had desperately wanted a pair of croc shoes and there in his shoebox was a pair of crocs that fit him perfectly.

Columbia: Cups

Juan is from a very poor household in the region of Uraba in Columbia. He had prayed to God and asked him for cups for his family because there are five people in his family and they all share one drinking glass. He was invited to an Operation Christmas Child outreach event where he received a shoebox gift.

When he opened his gift can you guess what was inside? Five cups! He gives thanks to God for answering his prayers and blessing his family.



Malawi: Safe Haven

A young man from Malawi, Frank, had a vision to create a safe space for children to learn about Jesus in his community. He created a space and called it 'Haven of Transformation' and hoped that he could change the culture of violence, stealing and vandalizing that is present in the children of this community.

Frank heard about Operation Christmas Child's work in a neighboring community and got in touch with the Regional Leadership Team to see about the possibility of getting shoeboxes for 50 children that were coming to his 'Haven of Transformation.'

A shoebox outreach event was held and he was trained to become a teacher of The Greatest Journey Discipleship classes. His ministry grew exponentially following the outreach event and now 135 children attend his discipleship class.

Frank had the passion and vision to reach the children in his community and Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes provided a vessel to reach these children of violence and corruption and change their behavioral path.

MINISTRY FACTS



Purpose: The world's largest Christmas project of its kind, Operation Christmas Child, uses gift-filled shoeboxes to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world.

Scope:

- Since 1993, the Samaritan's Purse project, Operation Christmas Child, has collected and delivered more than 157 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 100 countries.
- For many of these children, the gift-filled shoebox is the first gift they have ever received.
- In 2018, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoeboxes to reach another 11 million children.
- 2017 global collection total: more than 11 million shoeboxes.
- 2017 Canada collection total: more than 615,000 shoeboxes.
- Shoebox gifts are collected in Canada, U.S., Australia, Finland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Japan, New Zealand, Spain and the U.K.
- More than 500,000 volunteers worldwide—with more than 20,000 of those in Canada—are involved in collecting, shipping, and distributing shoebox gifts.
- Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief and evangelism organization headed by Franklin Graham. Samaritan's Purse currently works in more than 100 countries to provide aid to victims of war, disease, disaster, poverty, famine, and persecution.

Process:

- Individuals, families, churches, and groups fill empty shoeboxes with a "wow" item—like a doll or soccer ball—and other fun toys, school supplies, hygiene items, and notes of encouragement.
- During **National Collection Week** (November 12-18, 2018), gift-filled shoeboxes will be collected at over 450 sites across Canada.
- You can find out how to pack a box and where to drop it off by visiting SamaritansPurse.ca/OCC.
- Operation Christmas Child also offers a year-round opportunity to pack personalized shoeboxes online. Go to SamaritansPurse.ca/OCC to select toys and gift items, write a note of encouragement, and "pack" them in a shoebox. These gifts will go to children in some of the hardest-to-reach countries around the world.
- Shoebox gifts are prepared for overseas shipment at two processing centers in Canada—Calgary and Ontario. They are then shipped overseas to Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Ukraine.

Discipleship: More than 11.1 million children have participated in The Greatest Journey—Operation Christmas Child's follow-up program that is offered to many children who receive shoebox gifts.

The Greatest Journey is implemented through a global church network. This 12 lesson discipleship program teaches children about God's amazing love and guides them through what it means to faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

*Follow Operation Christmas Child on Facebook ([Facebook.com/OCCcanada](https://www.facebook.com/OCCcanada)), Instagram (@occ_canada), and Twitter (@OCC_canada). Share pictures from your event using the hashtag **#ilovepackingshoeboxes**, **#occ_canada**.*