




the  
**HOLIDAY CHEER  
CAMPAIGN**

*presented by*  
*Growing Kindness*

*How to Make Beautiful Centerpieces  
to Gift and Share in Your Community*





Dear friend,

We're so honored that you're joining us in this very special campaign of kindness.

Desmund Tutu said, "Do your little bit of good where you are: it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."

Kindness doesn't need grand, sweeping gestures. It simply needs us to show up, where we are, as we are, trusting and believing that that is more than enough to encourage another.

And that's exactly the heart of the Growing Kindness Project: we grow kindness by starting where we are, using what we have, and doing what we can. We're now a worldwide team, each of us using whatever little bit of dirt we have to plant and grow flowers for the purpose of giving them in kindness. All summer long we used those blooms to reach out and create moments of meaningful connection and encouragement in our community.

While the flowers have faded for the season for those of us in the Northern Hemisphere, we want to encourage you to keep reaching out.

That's exactly why we've created the Growing Kindness Holiday Cheer Campaign. We truly can grow kindness in any season. All it takes is a little creativity to glean bits of the beauty of nature that surrounds us, wrap them in love, tuck them in a simple vase, and hold them out in care.

Can you imagine if each of us reached out in kindness to an isolated neighbor, a lonely Veteran, a long term care resident, a family struggling to make ends meet, an unthanked community service provider?

All of our little bits together, friend, add up to something so powerful and beautiful. Whether you share a sweet centerpiece with a single neighbor or give hundreds to your local food bank, whatever bit you have to share is more than enough to grow kindness in your community this holiday season.

We're here to cheer you on and support you each step of the way!

In Kindness,

*Deanna Kitchen*

Founder, The Growing Kindness Project

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# GET READY TO LEARN WITH US!

Give us **12 minutes** and we'll teach you how to design an evergreen arrangement like a pro!

## Holiday Cheer Floral Design Tutorial Video



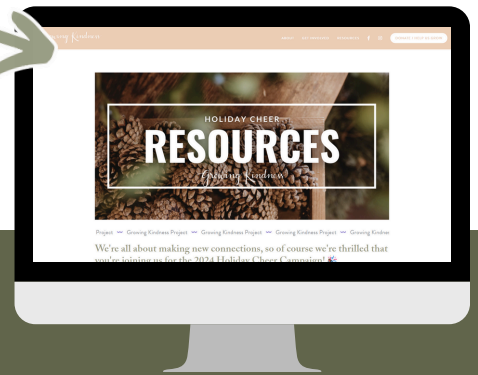
## Holiday Cheer Floral Design Workshop LIVE

**Join us LIVE** on November 23rd as floral designer **Erin Shackelford** leads you, step by step, through designing an evergreen arrangement.

Connect with Erin on her website: <https://www.camadesigns.com>

**Missed it live?** No problem! The link will be available anytime after November 23rd.

**Bookmark the Resources page**



## Don't miss these great resources!



- [Growing Kindness Bouquet Tags](#)
- A Holiday Cheer Badge to share on social media: [Red](#) - [Green](#) - [Cream](#)
- [Can Drive Graphics](#)
- Giving trackers to inspire and celebrate your giving:
  - [Give 20 Bouquets Tracker](#)
  - [Give 10 Bouquets Tracker](#)
  - [Give 9 Different Ways Bingo](#)



# WAYS TO GIVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

*Ideas for sharing and connecting in your community*

There is no shortage of people who could use a little extra cheer this holiday season. Simply follow your heart: it will lead you to just the person who needs your kindness.

*A few suggestions and considerations:*

**Always declare your intent.** Over the years, we've found others (especially senior citizens) can easily mistake the intention of your gift. Always clearly communicate that the arrangement you're giving is a gift with no expectation of anything in return. We've found attaching our **bouquet tags** is a simple way to let the receiver know the arrangement you're holding out truly is a gift, no strings attached.

**Make plans early, if possible.** If you're giving to an organization, especially health care, be sure to contact them as early as possible to understand any guidelines and limitations that may be set as well as to set a delivery date. When contacting an organization, explain your purpose (to freely donate holiday arrangements) and ask for any guidelines that you can follow to help keep patients/clients safe. It's best to contact community organizations as early as possible to allow enough time for them to plan for your arrival.



## ***Another way to give: GIVE TWO***

One of our favorite ways to give, is the “Give Two” method. This is not only a great way to reach farther in your community, it’s a beautiful way to invite someone into the joy of giving. Simply hand one bouquet to a service-based employee like a receptionist, cashier, therapist, librarian, or barista—someone with frequent interactions throughout the day. The first bouquet is theirs to enjoy, and the second is for them to pass on to someone they serve who is in need of extra kindness and care.



## WAYS TO GIVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



*Groups or organizations to give to:*

- Women's or homeless shelters
- Long term care or assisted living facilities
- Food banks/food pantries or Meals on Wheels
- Hospice homes/facilities
- Social workers
- School teachers and staff
- First responders
- Local libraries
- Youth centers
- Independent living programs
- Oncology centers
- Veterans hospitals
- Grief support groups
- Refugees
- Dialysis centers
- Respite care programs



## ***CREATING COMMUNITY: GATHER YOUR TEAM***

### **Let's turn this into a party!**

The purpose of the Holiday Cheer Campaign is to create meaningful opportunities for connection. The only thing better than making and giving fresh bouquets in your community is gathering your friends or family to join you in the creative process and the joy of giving.

Whether you invite a few of your dearest friends, create a multi-generational family tradition, or use this as opportunity to connect in with a whole new group of people in your community - we promise you, the joy will grow exponentially.

### **Your team might be your:**

- Mom, grandma, sisters and cousins
- Best girlfriends
- Book club
- Child's sports team
- Team of coworkers
- Group from church
- Neighbors
- Fellow garden club members
- Pickle ball team
- Or anyone you'd love to connect with!





## SUGGESTED PARTY TIMELINE

Two to Three  
Weeks Before

- Pick a date to gather.
- Decide number of centerpieces you'd like to make
- Invite friend and ask them to bring clippers and if possible, boughs, berries or branches to share.
- Decide on a location to gather (Your place? A friend's heated shop? A shared community space?)
- Plan for two feet of table space for every person that is helping.
- Begin collecting vases or containers (See page 9)
- Make plans for delivering your arrangements.

One Week  
Before

- Begin gathering evergreen foliage and bare branches (simply store in an area outdoors or in a cool space such as a garage)
- Plan for transportation: gather boxes for carrying finished centerpieces.

Day Of

- Harvest tender herbs or greens that need to be kept in water.
- Bring branches/foliages in to dry (a sheet helps keep the mess contained).
- If you decide to add fresh flowers to your centerpiece, pick them up from your local florist or grocer today. Re-cut the stems and let them rest in cool, fresh water.
- Cover work surfaces with paper or old tablecloths to prevent tree sap from damaging surfaces.
- Set out boxes or bags to collect trimmings and scraps to compost.
- Welcome your team and start the party!!

\*\*While this is a great timeline for the planners out there... it doesn't mean you need two weeks to prep! If you're like some of us, you simply decide the night before you're hosting a Holiday Cheer Campaign Party, call your friends, pool your resources and jump right in! Whether you're a planner or a winger, it's gonna be great!



## GATHERING WHAT YOU'LL NEED: VASES

The best part of this giving project is that you truly can start where you are with what you have: no fancy supplies are needed!

Simple vases, like mason jars or tin cans, make gathering and giving easy. Plus, recipients feel more free to accept your gift when they don't feel they need to return the vessel.

Many of our team members have found up-cycled soup cans to be the perfect vessel for evergreen arrangements: they're a great size for giving, cost nothing, and are easy to gather.

If you'd like to use tin cans, we've made it easy to host your own Can Drive to collect all the cans you might need! We've created [printable flyers](#) and [social media graphics](#) for you to personalize and share.

### Other options for vases or vessels:

- Shop your local thrift store for vases, cereal bowls or large votive holders
- Purchase cereal bowls from a discount/dollar store.
- Purchase affordable glass candle holders
- Up-cycle pint size canning jars

7

### Save empty tin cans

Save medium size cans (standard size soup or bean cans are ideal).

Wash the cans and remove the labels.



## GATHERING WHAT YOU'LL NEED: MECHANICS

Depending on the size and shape of the vessel you choose, you may need some type of floral mechanic(s) inside the vase to help keep the stems in place. A design mechanic helps ensure that stems stay where you put them - both as you're designing and during transport. Shallow, wide vessels require a design mechanic to keep stems in place; a taller, narrow vessel (such as an up-cycled soup can) is fine without one.

### VASE MECHANIC OPTIONS:

- Compostable foam (such as [Agrawool](#))
- chicken wire
- [floral tape](#)



**Floral tape** is an easy to use, affordable option to create a grid over the top of your vessel to help hold stems in. This option can be used on its own or together with foam/wire.

**Floral foam** functions similarly, holding stems in place. We encourage you source a compostable, plastic free foam such as Agrawool. Floral foam must soak in a bucket of cool, clean water until it is fully saturated before being placed in a vessel.

**A small piece of folded chicken wire** creates a sturdy mechanic inside wide vessels to help keep stems in place. Use in conjunction with floral tape.

**\*Step-by-step instructions using each design mechanic are on page 10.**



## YOUR GO TO

# GREENS LIST

### EVERGREENS

FIR  
PINE  
CEDAR  
JUNIPER



### HEARTY FOLIAGES

BOXWOOD  
LAUREL  
DUSTY MILLER  
HEAVENLY BAMBOO  
IVY  
JAPONICA PIERIS  
SALAL



### BRANCHES & BERRIES

ROSE HIPS  
HOLLY BERRY  
ILEX BERRY  
HAWTHORN BERRY  
VIBURNUM  
RED TWIG DOGWOOD  
BLUEBERRY BRANCHES  
HUCKLEBERRY BRANCHES



### FRAGRANT GREENS

BAY  
SAGE  
ROSEMARY  
THYME  
EUCALYPTUS



## OTHER

# INGREDIENTS TO USE

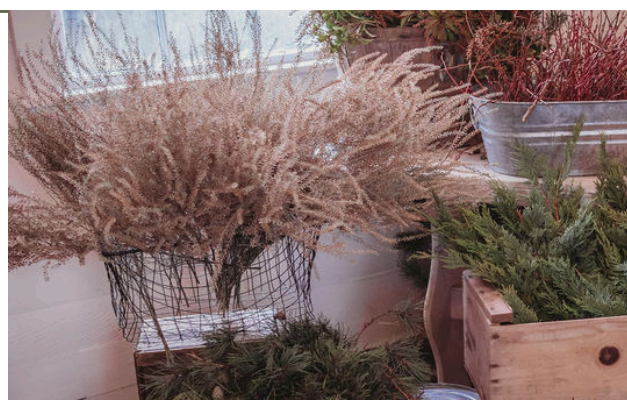
### TEXTURAL BITS

DRIED ORANGE SLICES  
PINE CONES  
MOSS COVERED BRANCHES  
SEED PODS  
FERNS: FRESH OR DRIED



### DRIED ELEMENTS

DRIED GRASSES  
DRIED FLAX OR CRESS  
DRIED SEED PODS  
DRIED BLOOMS SUCH AS:  
• LARKSPUR  
• STATICE  
• FEVER FEW  
• STRAWFLOWER  
• GOMPHRENA



The true beauty of this project rests in using what you have. This isn't about creating a complex floral design. As da Vinci said, "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

To source your ingredients, first take a look in your own backyard. Next, consider common areas: you'll be surprised what you'll find growing alongside the road or in an abandoned parking lot. If you're able to forage for branches and greens, be sure you have permission first. Never cut more than 20% of a plant's branches to avoid stressing the plant.

Use sustainable harvesting methods. (Always cut lower branches-never the tops of trees, and never cut more than you can use.) Or enlist help: invite your neighbors to take part in the project by donating branches or berries from their yards.

This time of year, one of the best ways to find evergreen foliage is by visiting a local tree farm, nursery, or home improvement store—anywhere Christmas trees are sold. As customers buy trees, they often ask to have them trimmed, leaving behind piles of beautiful boughs that would otherwise be recycled. Let the staff know you'll put those boughs to good use through the Holiday Cheer Campaign, and they'll almost always invite you to take as much as you need!



## DESIGNING A HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE

Use a design mechanic to hold your stems in your arrangement. Here's three different mechanics you can try:



**1** Using waterproof floral tape, create a grid on the top of your vessel. A smaller container only needs a few pieces of parallel tape to help stems stay in place.



**2** Cut a piece of chicken wire as wide as your vessels opening and three times wider. Fold the wire like an accordion and tuck securely in your vessel. Secure with 1-2 pieces of floral tape across the top of the vessel.

**3** Cut a brick of compostable floral foam to fit the vessel snugly, but with enough room remaining to be able to add water. Secure with one or two pieces of floral tape across the top of the vessel.

## DESIGNING A HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE

- 1** Prepare your greens by cutting boughs or branches into smaller, usable sizes.
- 2** Fill your vessel  $\frac{2}{3}$  way to the top with cool, clean water.
- 3** If you're using a design mechanic, secure it in your vessel.

- 4** As you cut stems, strip all leaves or needles that will fall below the waterline in the vessel. Be sure that every stem is placed deeply in the vase, ensuring that it can reach the water. If you're working with floral foam, only insert  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch of the stem into the foam.



- 5** Begin by placing “bulky” foliage near the rim of your vase; this starts to fill the vessel and add shape. It helps to work in threes, turning the vase as you add stems, looking at all sides of the arrangement. Add stems in alternating patterns, placing some stems high and some low and others to the front and to the back.

- 6** Add “lighter” stems such as cedar and rosemary. Use these stems to add height and shape to your design. At this point, your arrangement can be complete and simply beautiful. Or...





## DESIGNING A HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE

**7** Tuck in a few branches; twigs or berries are great, if you have them. Branches can be clustered together to create a focal point or sprinkled throughout your design. For a fun twist, try removing leaves from your stem of berries to really highlight the berries.



**8** As an optional “finish” tuck in a few pine cones. To attach a pine cone, wrap an 8-12 inch piece of floral wire around the base of a pine cone, tightly twisting the wires together to secure it. Tuck the wire into the vessel along with the stems.

**9** Attach a bouquet tag. Hole punch the tag and double back a loop of string or jute. You can also use a rubber band the same way. Then simply loop the string or rubber band around the vase.



**10** As you finish each arrangement, tuck it into a box or bin for safe storage and easy transportation. You'll find the closer together you pack bouquets, the more securely they'll travel. It can be helpful to transport centerpieces with less water in the vessel (so it doesn't splash out), just be sure they're filled with water when you deliver your designs to their recipients.



## Growing Kindness

Grown and shared  
with love & the hope  
that these flowers  
brighten your day!

In kindness,

[www.growingkindnessproject.org](http://www.growingkindnessproject.org)  
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## WHY USE A BOUQUET TAG?

Unexpected kindness seems to be a rare gift these days. And because of that, many people feel hesitant to accept it. All too often, what appeared to them as kindness, was sugar-coated manipulation.

Over the years of giving flowers, we've noticed the only times people decline accepting flowers given in kindness is if they feel uncertain about the motive behind the giving: is there a cost? Do I have to sign up for something? What do you want from me if I accept these?

Thankfully, there is a simple solution and that is to declare your intent. Some of our team members simply state, "I'm a member of The Growing Kindness Project and our mission is to spread kindness. I grew (or gathered) these flowers (or greens) and I'm giving them to you as a gift."

We've found that adding a bouquet tag, making it clear your kindness is a gift, no strings attached, is another simple way to ensure your gift is accepted as it is intended.

### Ganjana's Story



Four years ago, Ganjana was a client at a local food bank where hundreds of Growing Kindness Holiday Cheer arrangements were donated. Along with her box of holiday meal ingredients, she received a small centerpiece with a Growing Kindness bouquet tag attached.

She was so moved by the gift that she immediately signed up to become a Growing Kindness Gardener. At that point in her life, Ganjana had been struggling with a debilitating anxiety disorder and had never grown anything.

Through the project, she learned to grow flowers, made friends with GK teammates, gifted flowers and slowly, steadily healed and grew. Ganjana shares, "**Because of Growing Kindness, I'm not just surviving, I'm thriving.**"

Her story reminds us the power of connection and how a simple little tag can connect another to the hope and joy of growing and giving flowers and being part of a like-minded community of women. Read Ganjana's full story [here](#).

# CELEBRATE THE JOY OF GIVING!

Whether you share one or one hundred arrangements, this holiday season: **your kindness changes lives: both the recipients and yours too!**

When we take the time to document the moments in our lives that bring us the most joy—those instances where we've challenged ourselves, achieved something outside our comfort zone, or simply experienced profound happiness—it's like turning up the volume on that joy. Whether it's keeping a log of books we've read, collecting corks from memorable wines, or tracking our hiking miles on an app, recording what brings us joy has a magical way of magnifying that joy. It's as if by documenting it, we're creating a timeless record that enhances the joy we feel and inspires us to continue.

That's why we've created these fun giving trackers for you to use to record your Holiday Cheer giving. Whether you use them as inspiration, use them as motivation, share them on social or tuck them away in your journal: feel free to use them in whatever ways amplifies your joy in giving.

Giving Bingo:  
Give 9 Different Ways



Giving Tracker:  
Give 10 Bouquets



Giving Tracker:  
Give 20 Bouquets



## SHARE YOUR STORY OF JOYFUL GIVING

- 1** Share your Holiday Cheer story; the world needs it! Stories of giving and kindness inspire, encourage, and give us hope. As you create and share your holiday arrangement(s), please share your story! Your example will inspire and encourage others to do the same!
- 2** By tagging the [@growingkindnessproject](https://www.instagram.com/growingkindnessproject), you can help others connect to resources that help them grow and share flowers. You can also use the hashtag [#gkholidaycheer](https://www.instagram.com/gkholidaycheer) to follow along with the happy stories of giving all across the world!
- 3** Want to do even more to give back? When you support The Growing Kindness Project, you help us provide resources and education to help even more people so they can grow and give flowers as acts of kindness in communities around the world. [Click here to donate](#) and support our 501c3 organization in our mission to spread kindness!

#gkholidaycheer

#growingkindness

@growingkindnessproject

*Growing Kindness*

Photos credited; Jessie Bennett Photography, Bareroot Photography, Rylea Foehl Photography

