Launch toolkit: contactless giving in your parish

For Episcopal parishes launching GoodBox. Four short guides to help your first month go smoothly: a launch checklist, ready-to-use announcements, a briefing for greeters and ushers, and a sheet for your treasurer. Print the ones you need.

1. Launch checklist

Two to three weeks before

- [ ] Agree where each terminal will go: the welcome desk in the narthex, a giving basket at the offering, or a podium in the entrance.
- [ ] Decide who covers the card fees: the parish, or donors on top of their gift.
- [ ] Name who looks after the terminals: who keeps them charged, who brings out and puts away any used in giving baskets, and who reconciles gifts each week.
- [ ] Tell the vestry and staff the launch date.
- [ ] Brief greeters and ushers (see the greeter and usher briefing).
- [ ] Give your treasurer the treasurer and parish office sheet.

The week before

- [ ] Unpack and charge every terminal, and make a test gift of $1 to check it works and that the gift appears.
- [ ] Check signal in each spot. If it is weak, the terminal can work offline, but test it in place.
- [ ] Put the announcement in the bulletin and newsletter, and send the email to members.

Launch weekend

- [ ] Terminals charged, switched on and in place before the first service.
- [ ] A short announcement from the front at every service.
- [ ] Greeters and ushers ready to point people to the terminals and help anyone who’s unsure.
- [ ] Afterwards: put away any terminal used in a basket and charge it. Terminals in stands and podiums can stay in place; if one isn’t plugged in, charge it overnight.

The first month

- [ ] Mention it briefly every week, not just at launch.
- [ ] Check the first Wednesday payout arrives and matches the gifts.
- [ ] Ask greeters what questions people are asking, and adjust where terminals sit if few people pass them.
- [ ] Share a short update with the vestry after the first month.

2. Announcement pack

Adapt these to your parish. Replace the words in brackets.

From the pulpit, short

> If you'd like to give by card or phone today, you'll find our giving point by the door. Just tap.

From the pulpit, launch Sunday

> From today, you can give to [parish name] by tapping a card or phone. You'll find the terminal [at the welcome desk / in the offering basket]. Choose an amount, tap, and you're done: no app and no sign-up. The plate and pledging stay just as they are; this is simply another way to give, especially for visitors and anyone who doesn't carry cash. Thank you for your generosity.

Bulletin

> **New: give by card or phone.** You can now give by tapping your card or phone at [the welcome desk]. Every gift supports [our ministry / a named appeal]. If you'd like a receipt, scan the QR code on the screen after you give.

Newsletter

> **A new way to give at [parish name].** Many of us no longer carry cash, and visitors often want to give but can't. So from [date], [parish name] has a contactless giving point [in the narthex]. Tap a card or phone, choose an amount, and your gift goes straight to the parish. The plate and pledging carry on as normal. Thank you to [the vestry / name] for making this possible.

Email to members

> Subject: A new way to give at [parish name]
>
> Dear friends, from [date] you'll be able to give at church by tapping a card or phone, as well as by cash, envelope or pledge. You'll find the terminal [location]. It takes seconds, needs no app, and you can request a receipt by scanning a QR code on the screen. With thanks, [name, role]

Social media

> You can now give at [parish name] with a tap of your card or phone. Find us [location] on Sundays, and thank you for supporting [our ministry].

Church website

> **Giving in person:** you can give by cash, envelope, or by tapping a card or phone at the giving point [in the narthex].

3. Greeter and usher briefing

Thank you for helping people give. You don't need to be technical: the terminal does the work.

How giving works

1. The giver chooses an amount on the screen, such as $5, $10, $25 or "Other".
2. They tap a card or phone on the terminal. Chip and PIN, and swiping a card, also work.
3. The screen says thank you. If they'd like a receipt, they can scan the QR code shown.

Helping a first-time giver

- Offer, don't push: "If you'd like to give by card, just choose an amount and tap here."
- Point to the amount buttons first, then where to tap.
- Never handle someone's card or phone for them.

Questions people ask

Question	What to say
Is it safe?	Yes. Payments are handled by Stripe, a highly certified payment company, and the parish never sees card details.
Can I get a receipt?	Yes. After you give, scan the QR code on the screen.
Do I need an app?	No. Just tap your card or phone.
Does it replace the plate or my pledge?	No. It's simply another way to give.
Where does the money go?	Straight to the parish, paid in each week.

If something goes wrong

- **The screen is blank:** check it's switched on and charged.
- **No signal:** the terminal can still take gifts offline; carry on as normal. Gifts are processed once it reconnects, so reconnect it within 24 to 48 hours.
- **Still not working:** put it safely aside, offer the plate instead, and tell [name or parish office] after the service.

Before and after the service

- **Before:** terminal switched on and in its place. Terminals in stands and podiums usually stay out all the time, plugged in.
- **After:** put away any terminal used in a basket and charge it. If a terminal in a stand or podium isn't plugged in, charge it overnight.

4. Treasurer and parish office sheet

When the money arrives

Gifts are paid into the parish bank account every Wednesday for the previous week's giving. You can see each gift and each payout in the GoodBox Portal.

Card fees

The fee is 2.75% plus $0.20 per gift. If the parish pays it, it is taken before the payout, so the amount paid in is the total given less fees. If donors cover it, the fee is added on top of each gift and the parish receives the full amount given.

Reconciling each week

1. After the payout arrives each Wednesday, compare it with the gifts listed for the previous week.
2. Record the total alongside the plate count for the same Sunday, as a separate line such as “Contactless giving”.
3. Keep a copy of the weekly gift list with your counting records.

Recording gifts

- Agree the approach with your vestry and auditor before launch.
- Anonymous taps are usually recorded as plate giving.
- Where a donor has given their details by QR code, record the gift against their pledge if they have one.

Receipts and acknowledgments

- Donors who scan the QR code after giving receive a receipt automatically.
- In the US, donors need a written acknowledgment from the church for any single gift of $250 or more to claim a tax deduction. Check that your receipts meet this requirement, and confirm the details with your accountant.
- Use donor details only to thank and receipt donors, and keep them under the parish’s privacy policy.

Who to contact

- Questions about payouts, receipts or the terminal: support@goodbox.com.
- Sales and adding terminals: sales@goodbox.com.

This sheet is general guidance, not tax or legal advice.