

GOD'S GIFTS

ENTRIES FOR OUR ANNUAL CONTEST WERE A SHOW-AND-TELL ABOUT HOW KIDS USE THE GIFTS THEY'VE BEEN GIVEN.

How are you using the gifts (time, talents and treasures) God has given you to help others around you?

That was the question we posed for our 7th annual Kids' Contest. Children from preschool through high school could enter. There were prizes at stake—up to three \$100 awards were given for each medium in each age category.

A panel of judges made up of Thrivent employees pored over all of the entries to determine the winners, which you'll see on the following pages. That process made us realize that we were winners too, because the heartfelt essays and drawings the kids submitted in response to the question warmed our hearts and inspired us.

You can see all of the entries, including the full essays, videos and artwork, at Thrivent.com/contest. Keep in mind that what you see here in excerpted form and online is exactly what was submitted, including grammar and spelling slip-ups.

PRE-K/KINDERGARTEN



▲ DRAWING
I Can Help My Friends at School

ALEXANDRA M., 5, CHASKA, MINNESOTA
In this picture, I am sharing some food and toys with my friend who doesn't have any. I am also pulling out my teacher's chair to help her sit down.



◀ DRAWING
Serving My Grandma
NATHAN R., 5, SEWARD, NEBRASKA
This is a picture of Nathan and his great grandma. He is raking leaves in her yard.

ESSAY
Clean Earth

HAILEY B., 6, EAGAN, MINNESOTA
I use God's gift of thinking about the Earth to pick up trash so others can enjoy the Earth.

VIDEO
Henry's Gifts

HENRY R., 4, BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
Henry's Gifts is a short video of the way he is using his gifts in everyday, simple ways to serve.

◀ DRAWING
I Fly to Rwanda

LINNEA MARAIS H., 3, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
Linnea can't write, but she carefully copied these letters, after asking her family how to spell "I fly to Rwanda." She traveled with her mamma on a service trip to Rwanda in February/March.

GRADES 1-3



▲ DRAWING
I Like to Serve

AARON R., 8, SEWARD, NEBRASKA
I drew pictures of ways I like to help and serve people. The cross shows that Jesus loves me, and I like to show His love to others.



◀ DRAWING
Untitled

NATALIE R., 6, CRYSTAL, MINNESOTA
Singing in my school's talent show... sharing part of my allowance with the pastor...hugging my friend Feven...Leading worship.



▲ DRAWING
Untitled

FINLEY C., 7, OMRO, WISCONSIN
I love to sing. My drawing shows me in the Vacation Bible School choir.

ESSAY
Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow

ALAYNA A., 7, OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA
My gift from God is my beautiful long hair. I cut my hair to help others who don't have hair. I donated my hair to "wigs for kids."

ESSAY
Ways I Do God's Work

NAOMI O., 8, WALDO, WISCONSIN
My class goes to Project Angel Hugs to make cards and crafts for kids with cancer. I always try to use bright colors for my projects because I think it would cheer the sick kids up. I do not like cancer.

ESSAY
Using God's Gifts to Help Others

MASON B., 9, EAGAN, MINNESOTA
Using the gifts God has given me; time, energy and open mind, to serve people food. Once every month we put food on a plate to give people warm, healthy food. I like to serve people food who can't get it.

SEE MORE!

Find links to the videos, the complete winning essays and the thoughts behind the drawings at Thrivent.com/contest.

GRADES 4-6



▲ DRAWING
Your Talent is God's Gift to You—What You Do With It Is Your Gift to God

BRIELLE D.-W., 11, LOCKHART, TEXAS
 I share my time, talents and treasures with others in my daily life through my faith in God.



◀ DRAWING
My Time, Talents and Treasures

KASEN A., 9, JACKSON, MISSOURI
 I drew a treasure chest to represent all my gifts. In the thought bubbles I put the ways I help people.

DRAWING ▶
I Can Help With God's Love!

SOPHIA B., 11, SILVER SPRINGS, FLORIDA
 I can use my God given talent of drawing to help people feel better.



ESSAY

Hurricane Harvey

IAN S., 9, SPRING, TEXAS
 I was able to use my time, talent, and treasure when Hurricane Harvey hit our area last August. I used my treasure by giving offerings that helped storm victims. I used my time and talent to help my church with helping the victims of the storm. The first few days after Harvey, my church was a shelter. I helped to set up beds for people to sleep on and label bags full of clothes for people that needed them.

ESSAY

The Joy of Serving

MICAH R., 10, SEWARD, NEBRASKA
 God has blessed me with the gift of a glad heart. This summer I volunteered for the Orphan Grain Train, and it made me feel good to know that I am helping other people. I spent time preparing boxes of clothes to be shipped around the world. It makes my heart glad to know that I am serving others.

ESSAY

Using the Gifts God Gave Me

ALAYNA G., 11, LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
 My school is very multicultural. When a student from another country came to my classroom, she was very shy and couldn't speak any English. She didn't have very many friends. So me and my friends stepped in and became her friend. I talked slowly and used my hands to explain. Just because she couldn't speak English, doesn't mean she can't be my friend.

VIDEO

Using Time, Talents and Treasures

ASHER A., 9, JACKSON, MISSOURI
 Asher tells five ways he uses his talent and treasures to help others and shows some of the tools he uses to do so.

VIDEO

My Sharpie Project

TAYA K., 11, BELLE FOURCHE, SOUTH DAKOTA

I was challenged by a good friend to do this and while I was doing this, I noticed how much people judge and how it makes them feel, and I also noticed how much I even judge people.

VIDEO

My Talent

LEVI R., 11, BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
 My Talent is a short video on how Levi uses his gift and joy for fishing to serve others.

GRADES 7-9

ESSAY

The Joy of Giving

INANA N., 11, EDEN PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA
 As a homeschooler, God gives me the time to help my church during weekdays. I've helped ladies at church assemble homemade quilts that go to other countries. I've also had the chance to help set up post-funeral luncheons at my church. My mom and I come early to help others prepare food and clean up after the service.

ESSAY

God's Little Blessings

LILLIAN H., 12, ARVADA, COLORADO
 With the gifts that God has given me, I can bless other people. One of the gifts that God has blessed me with is my intuitiveness. I can tell when other people feel hurt, discouraged, or are just having a bad day. Using that knowledge, I can do little things to help them. Whether it's writing them a nice note or giving them a piece of candy to sweeten up their day, I can make a difference in their lives.

VIDEO

5 Ways I Use My Gifts From God to Help Others

NATHAN M.-R., 12, PORTLAND, OREGON
 In this video I become a minifigure and show the ways I use my gifts from God to help others.

VIDEO

Where Can You Use Your Time, Talents and Treasures?

ISAAC N., 12, ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA
 You can use your time, talents and treasures to give glory to God...no matter where you are!



▲ DRAWING

God's Gift to Noah

NOAH W., 14, ANNA, TEXAS
 Drawing is my first passion but by serving others I have found ways to not only express my gift through drawing but also through creative arts ministry.

ESSAY

Little Acts, Big Impacts

ALEA V., 13, GOLDEN, ILLINOIS
 I look for little ways to bless people — like giving a hug if someone is hurting, babysitting so parents can have a night out, and other things that don't require a lot of effort or talent, but might bring a little sunshine into another's life. Sometimes the simple things mean the most. Little acts can lead to big impacts.

GRADES 10-12

ESSAY

My Gifts From God

JASON S., 17, HILLSBOROUGH, NEW YORK
 I thought that even though I was just a kid, what if I worked hard to help people in need? The next year we volunteered to coordinate the backpack program. That was 11 years ago and I still give speeches to the congregation, apply for grants, talk to store managers about our donation needs and spend almost every day during the summer shopping and organizing supplies.

ESSAY

The Two-Way Touch

EMILY H., 15, ARVADA, COLORADO
 Even a gift of creativity can boost people up! I like to craft homemade cards for friends on their birthday or make big "Get Well" signs for family in the hospital. Sometimes, something that comes so naturally seems insignificant to me, but these personal touches make people smile, and that keeps me going.

DRAWING ▶

Beginning of Love

ELSA P., 17, STILLWATER, MINNESOTA
 One of the gifts God has given me is a big and beautiful smile. One of the easiest ways to show love and kindness to others is through a genuine smile.



ESSAY

Serving God by Serving Others

HAILEE C., 15, PLACENTIA, CALIFORNIA
 God gave me the trait of a servant's heart. Our church has many opportunities to serve and I began working in kid's ministry in 5th grade. My favorite part of volunteering with the kids is hearing their stories and making sure they know that they matter. I have also had the privilege this year of volunteering with a program called lot 318. It is a homework program for under privileged kids.

VIDEO

Enriching Lives Through Art

CATHERINE H., 17, CHANDLER, ARIZONA
 Voice over video explaining how artistic talents can be used to bring people together and send messages to others and the public.