

Sunshine Box



When I know of someone who is a “shut-in” and is unable to leave their home or the hospital (such as someone who’s been ill or is recovering from surgery), I decorate a large box with wrapping paper, label it “Sunshine Box,” and then sit the box on a table in the church foyer. I spread the word that we are doing a Sunshine Box for this person and ask folks to bring in a small wrapped gift to place in the box.

I try to provide suggestions, especially if I know the person’s favorites, such as crossword puzzle books, magazines, or CDs. I also suggest giving gift cards for restaurants that provide take-out meals. When we have a few gifts, I deliver the Sunshine Box to the person in need with instructions that they are to open one gift per day until the gifts are gone.

I love how this can bring a bit of sunshine and joy to each day and is also a way everyone can be a part of the person’s recovery without being a burden on them with too many visits. When my own grandmother was diagnosed with cancer and given a short time to live, she was like a little child, anticipating the opening of gifts from her Sunshine Box. She would stay awake until midnight because she said that was the start of a new day, so that meant she could open the next gift!