

November is National Donor Sabbath month, celebrating the interfaith support of organ donation as an act of generosity and compassion that saves the lives of others.

There are 110,000 people waiting nationally for a transplant and nearly 10,000 right here in New York, many of whom may be your congregants, family, and friends. New York also has an organ shortage resulting in longer wait times for those on the transplant waiting list. On average, a New Yorker dies every day waiting for the organ transplant that could have saved their life.

Religious leaders are encouraged to affect positive change by being outspoken that organ, eye and tissue donation saves lives and extends the blessings that are given to us. By educating our communities we can encourage more people to say yes to donation and give the gift of life to someone who desperately needs it.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP**

**There are many ways your congregation can support and celebrate the lifesaving power of organ donation. Any of the efforts listed below will go a long way in doing something meaningful for those in need of a transplant.**

* Share a message in support of organ donation during a sermon.
* Allow someone from your congregation, or another member of the community, who has been affected by organ, eye and tissue donation (a transplant recipient, someone waiting for a transplant, or the family member of someone who was an organ donor) to share their story during a sermon. If you would like to request a speaker to share their story, please submit a request here: <https://bit.ly/357DmgG>
* Say a prayer for those waiting for a transplant, transplant recipients, and the family members of organ donors during service.
* Feature a message in support of organ donation in your bulletin.
* Send a newsletter to your congregation.
* Write and submit an article supporting organ and tissue donation to your local newspaper.
* Post about organ donation on your social media handles and add LiveOnNY.org **as a link on your website** as a resource for congregants to access further information.

Below you will find resources to help you communicate the importance of organ, eye and tissue donation with your congregants. Please let us know how else we can be helpful.

**Resources**

**Support for Organ Donation**

Organ and tissue donation are accepted and actively promoted by the Christian Church. In 1985, the General Assembly adopted “Resolution #8548 Concerning Organ Transplants,” which encouraged members to register as organ donors and support transplant recipients through prayer.

"Heal the sick … freely ye have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8)

**Suggested Newsletter Content**

**Organ Donation Saved Aiden’s Life**

Aiden was barely one day old when his doctors realized something was wrong. Soon the medical team learned that he suffered from a rare genetic disorder that was damaging his liver. Aiden was so sick that a simple cold could land him in the hospital.

Eventually he was listed for a liver transplant. At just 27 months old, he underwent his first transplant. Unfortunately, he developed a blood clot which necessitated a second liver transplant three months later. The second transplant was a success and now Aiden is a happy, healthy nine-year old who enjoys karate and basketball.

 “No amount of words ever seem to be enough when showing how grateful we are to our donor families,” Nicole says. “Our donor families gave our son a chance to live a better quality of life. A day does not go by without us thinking about how their decisions has forever changed the narrative of his life.”

To learn more or to sign up to be an organ donor, please visit LiveOnNY.org.

**The Facts About Saving Lives**

* Organ donation is often possible even with certain health conditions.
* There is no age limit to be an organ donor - the oldest donor in New York was 93 years old.
* The organ donation process follows strict guidelines to ensure fairness and equity.
* Because organ donation saves lives, major religions celebrate it as a final act of kindness.
* Registering as an organ donor does not change your medical care.

**Share on Social Media**

National Donor Sabbath month celebrates the interfaith support of organ donation as an act of generosity and compassion that saves the lives of others as shared in this short video: <https://bit.ly/2IEtzav> #NationalDonorSabbath #LiveOnNY

Organ donation is an act of generosity that helps save the lives of others by giving the gift of life. #NationalDonorSabbath #LiveOnNY



**Suggested Bulletin Text**

November marks Donor Sabbath, a time when we recognize the importance of organ donation. Organ donation is an incredible act of generosity and charity. One person can save up to eight lives and leave a lasting legacy. Nearly 10,000 of our fellow New Yorkers are waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant and there are not enough donors. Please consider signing up to save a life. To learn more, visit LiveOnNY.org.

**Suggested Prayer**

**The Strength to Give: A Prayer for Organ Donation**

Rock of Ages, Almighty God...

give us strength!

Give strength to those awaiting transplantation,

whose bodies betray them,

whose spirit abandons them, waiting, hoping, praying...

for the gift of life.

Give strength to the relatives and friends

of those awaiting transplantation,

who dearly love them,

who steadfastly care for them,

waiting, hoping, praying...

for the gift of life.

Give strength to the grieving families

considering organ donation.

Help them find comfort in the power

to end the wait,

to fuel the hope,

to answer the prayers...

by saying ‘yes’ to the gift of life.

Rock of Ages, Almighty God,

give our loved ones the strength to Live On...

through the miracle of transplantation

and the legacy of organ donation.