Tree of Hope

Identify a needy organization within your community to be the recipient of items ranging in price from $1 to $15.00. Organizations to consider are the parish Gabriel Project, Our Lady of the Angels Maternity Shelter in Temple, Annunciation Maternity Home in Georgetown and any Gabriel Project Life Center. Contact the organization about your project and ask them for particular items on their "wish list". Usually these are items that cannot be bought with food stamps. A list could include toiletry items for adults - soap, shampoo, tooth brush/tooth paste, deodorant, razors, lotion and personal items for babies - cloth diapers, disposable diapers, undershirts, one piece underwear, rubber pants, diaper pins, socks, Desitin, baby powder, baby lotion...

Make stars out of purple and pink paper (advent colors). On one side print the message:

The Joy of Hope
The joy in Life is found in loving, in giving, in serving,
In being a strong hand in the dark to another in the time of need,
In being a cup of strength to any soul in a crisis of weakness.
Like a star, let us radiate our joy to others.
Through this, our joy, we bring HOPE.

Print an item on the back side and then laminate the stars. Punch a hole at the top of the star and string a piece of purple or pink yarn through the hole for hanging purposes.

Obtain a pine or fur tree and place it in a noticeable and prominent location at your church. Make a sign that says "Tree of Hope" and hang it close to the top of the tree. Decorate the tree with the stars. Be sure to make more stars than will cover the tree, so that you may replace them as they are picked off.

Announce the Tree of Hope with an announcement from the pulpit and in the bulletin. A sample:

A Tree of Hope
A tree of hope, tagged with stars, will be in the main entry of the church during the season of Advent. Each star will have an item that can be used by mothers and babies. You may take home a star, obtain the item, and return the item with the tag to be placed under the tree. The item will then be given to the Gabriel Project, a ministry which assists expectant mothers in need. During the season which we joyously anticipate the coming of the Christ child, let us offer hope to those living without hope.