

JOYFULLY GENEROUS



A Worship & Faith Formation Series for Households about God's Generosity

An expression of *The Generosity Project* – ELCA

Week 4 Acts 2:41-47

The practice of generosity begins in our homes, with the support of all generations and a community of faith.

CREATING AN ALTAR SPACE AT HOME

+ **Green is the color for Pentecost**

Find a scrap piece of green cloth, an old green shirt, a cloth napkin/towel, or even a piece of green construction paper and place it in the middle of your kitchen table or coffee table.

+ **Add a small bowl with water**

This is a reminder of our baptism.

+ **Add a small candle to light as you worship**

For households with little ones or apartments that don't allow wax candles, you could use a battery-operated candle, or a candle made from construction paper, if an open flame is not an option.

+ **Add a small cross to the space**

This could be a cross from your wall, a necklace charm, or one made from paper or scrap wood.

WHO IS THIS FOR?

+ **Everyone and anyone who lives in your household can gather together.**

Adults, children, college students, and pets! "Connect" with as many generations as possible!

SUGGESTIONS AS YOU PREPARE FOR WORSHIP AT YOUR TABLE

+ **Children/Youth could help lead different parts of your worship time.**

They can set up the altar space, read the Bible story, share their own prayers, sing, or color.

+ **You can invite grandparents, grandchildren, cousins, neighbors, friends, etc. to join you for worship using your phone, or Facetime/Skype or another video chat platform.**

Feel free to email them this worship order so they can follow along, too!

+ **If you are a 1-person household** and are unable to call or video chat family or friends, perhaps you could write in a journal as a part of these worship experiences.

+ **Prepare a space that is most comfortable for you.**

You can worship at your kitchen table, coffee table, on the rug in the kids' room, or in your sunroom surrounded by green plants and windows.

CREATIVE PRAYER IN YOUR HOME

+ **Create a prayer wall/box/basket for your weekly prayers**

Use a dry erase board, post-it notes on a wall or fridge door, a bulletin board, or scraps of paper

+ **Text prayers** or written notes of encouragement or prayers to loved ones or church friends.

WORSHIP + WEEK 4: EQUIPPING HOUSEHOLDS

+ GATHERING +

Together with God our Creator, Jesus our Rescuer,
and the Spirit our Encourager. **AMEN.**

+ LITANY +

Today we gather as one church by the Holy Spirit;
God's grace is abundant.

We have been created in the image of God;
God's creativity is abundant.

We are a part of the sacred story of God's people,
God's words are abundant.

Together, we inhale the goodness and generosity
that is freely given to us;
God's kindness is abundant.

We exhale our gratitude for all that we have been given;
God's love is abundant.

Light your candle...

We light the candle as a reminder that we are the light of Christ. May we reflect on God's grace as we
gather together today.
AMEN.



+ PRAYER +

Holy God, you have given us so much – ourselves, our time, our possessions – and throughout the story of
your people we have learned to share these things with others. Remind us again today of how powerful
the simple act of sharing can be. **AMEN.**

+ SCRIPTURE +

+ **Acts 2:41-47**

+ **Spark Story Bible:** Early Believers (Pages 504-505)

+ **Northwest Synod of Wisconsin App:** Click the 'Bible' tab at the bottom.

+ REFLECTION ON GOD'S WORD +

Option 1: Click on the **Joyfully Generous Video #4** (Millennial Generation)

Option 2: Use the following questions for in-home conversation or personal reflection

Questions:

- + What do you love about your church family?
- + How does it feel to invite friends and family to your home? What do you do to prepare for their visits? How do you spend your time with them?
- + What would happen if everyone shared a little of what they had? What would change?
- + What's one thing we can do differently this week because of God's generosity?

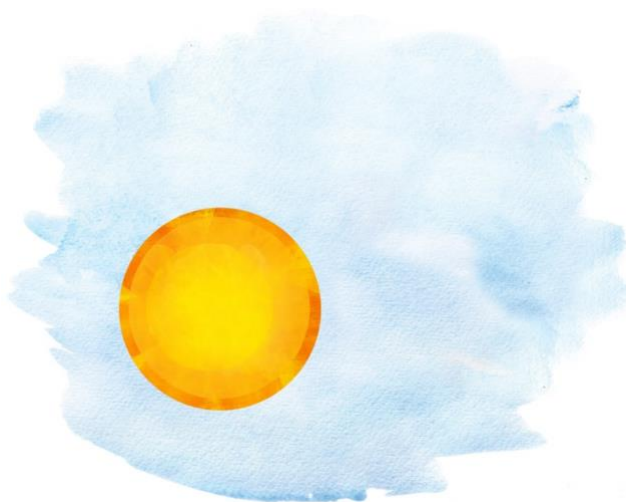
WORSHIP

+ APOSTLES' CREED +

I believe in God, the Father Almighty
Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
And he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.



+ PRAYERS +

Together we pray:

Thank you, God, for all that grows.
Thank you, God, for your promise, seen in rainbows.
Thank you, God, for stars that shine.
Thank you for these friends of mine.
Thank you, God, for the moon and sun.
Thank you for all that's given – for everyone!
Help us, Lord, to learn to share,
To be more generous everywhere.
AMEN

+ OFFERING +

Whether we worship in a church building or in our homes - as people of faith we are reminded of God's abundance and the many ways we have been called to share these gifts with others. This circle of kindness strengthens relationships and the mission of the church. Here are a few for your household as you practice generosity.

- + Gather a gift of money, or write a check, and send this monetary gift to your congregation in the mail; or if your congregation has online giving through an app or on their website, you can take a moment to send a gift digitally.
- + Write a card or letter to a grandparent, elder, shut-in or a resident at the care center.
- + Draw or color a picture to place at your home altar, or to give/mail to someone.
- + When buying groceries or essentials, plan to share 10% of your purchases with your local food shelf
- + Consider sharing 10% of an unexpected financial gift with your congregation
- + Place your weekly contribution in your 10-10-80 container. (*see Week 1 for instructions*)

WORSHIP

+ LORD'S PRAYER +

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth, as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
And deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours,
Now and forever. **AMEN.**



+ BLESSING EACH OTHER +

Using your pointer finger, dip it in the bowl of water, and make the sign of the cross on another's forehead or the back of their hand saying, "**__(name)__, may you share joyfully at home and away.**"

We are made in the image of God!

God is a generous God!

We are made to be generous too!

**Go, be a blessing to others as you serve God with grace-filled, generous hearts and hands.
AMEN.**

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OTHER IDEAS FOR FAITH FORMATION DURING THE WEEK

- + **Make a "Sweet" House:** Items needed: graham crackers, frosting, small chocolates, sprinkles, licorice, gumdrops, peppermint, nonpareils, etc. You'll need a butter knife and a plate as well.

Instructions:

1. Use five graham cracker squares to create the floor and outer four wall of the house – use frosting to secure the corners together and to your plate.
2. Use two more crackers to create the roof, securing again with frosting
3. Using frosting as your "glue" add decorations to your house.
4. Share your sweet house with others in your household.

- + **Bake bread or make cookies/cupcakes:** package them in a special way and include a note, if you'd like. Deliver them to the doorstep of a neighbor, friend, grandparent, or shut-in from church.

- + **10-10-80 Containers** – place your week's gifts into your containers. Have you made a family goal? What are some other things we have an abundance of that we could share 10% of?

- + **Books About Generosity:** *The Quiltmaker's Gift* (by Gail DeMarcken & Jeff Brumbeau)

- + **Watch Video: "Eat. Act. Pray":** <https://youtu.be/xANb0JOict0>

- + **Watch Video: "More Than Food":** <https://youtu.be/2IpM6vVNJQY>

- + **Live It Out:** Choose a time to use this resource (pages 6-7) during the week as a way to respond to God's word and actively participate in practicing generosity as a household!

- + **Conversation Questions** – can be done during a meal, in the car, on a walk, etc.
- + **Storytime** – re-reading a scripture story can help us to see just how "alive" God's Word is! Take time to read and think about a word or phrase that stood out. What might God be saying to you through those words?
- + **Action** – A fun and interactive way to remember how generosity shows up through the special people in our lives.
- + **Challenge** - What does 10% look like in your household? This week's challenge helps us to see the abundance of wheels.

LIVE IT OUT!



Equipping Households: The WHERE

Conversation Goal

Identify all the places and ways this household can practice generosity.

Conversation #3

Where Do We Practice Generosity?

One only needs to read or hear the news to know there are many communities of faith, organizations, people, and places that could benefit from acts of generosity. The great needs of the world need attention and heart-felt care. Take some time to identify the places that stir your passion for giving. All ages can find ways and places to share.

Key Question

Where are all the places and what are all the ways we could be generous with our treasure (money), time, and talents?

Discussion Prompts

- What issues or concerns are most important to each of us? This household?
- What or who compels us most deeply to give?
- What are the ways we can support those issues and needs we most care about in addition to our financial gifts? (Ex. recycling)
- What is the difference between charity and generosity? (Do a web search if unsure.)
- What do we need to do and know to practice responsible and wise generous giving?

God's Story Acts 2:41-47 (CEV). "On that day about three thousand believed his message and were baptized. They spent their time learning from the apostles, and they were like family to each other. They also broke bread and prayed together. Everyone was amazed by the many miracles and wonders that the apostles worked. All the Lord's followers often met together, and they shared everything they had. They would sell their property and possessions and give the money to whoever needed it. Day after day they met together in the temple. They broke bread together in different homes and shared their food happily and freely, while praising God. Everyone liked them, and each day the Lord added to their group others who were being saved."

Affirmation + Blessing

God equips us and has given us many opportunities to give and share at home and away from home.



EQUIPPING HOUSEHOLDS

Action 3

Our words and drawings illustrate ALL the places and people we can imagine receiving our heart-felt care and generosity.



The Generosity Challenge

How many items do we own that have wheels?
(Ex: vehicles, tricycle, bicycles, lawn mower, toys with wheels etc.) Count them. What would it mean to give away 10% or purchase new that same number? How hard would this be to do? Who is in need of these items? To whom or where would we go to donate one or more?

