

JOYFULLY GENEROUS



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

An expression of *The Generosity Project* – ELCA

Week 6 Matthew 19:23-30

With God, all things are possible!

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 6: THE HERE AND NOW

+ 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 +

Surprising God, through your Word you show us the incredible things you can do, and you teach us that we are stronger than we realize. Help us to understand that, no matter how much or how little we may have, we are capable of speaking and acting generously. **AMEN.**

+ SCRIPTURE +

+ **Matthew 19:23-30**

+ **Jesus Storybook Bible:** The Friend of Little Children (Pages 256-263)

+ **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 #6** (Baby Boomer Generation)

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

Questions:

- + What feels impossible right now? What makes it impossible? Can anything be done to make it possible?
- + The disciples chose to let go of many things to follow Jesus; what's something we could let go of that might be keeping us stuck?
- + How does it feel to "win" at something? How about coming in last place? When Jesus says "the last with be first" what did he mean?
- + What does it look like to follow Jesus?

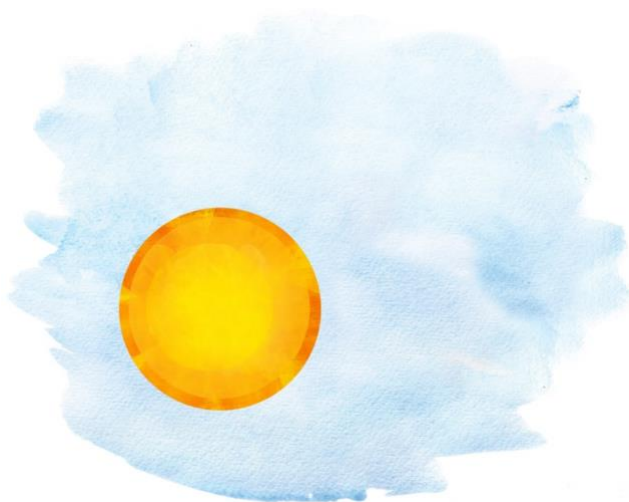
WORSHIP

+ 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 ideas 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)__, with God ALL things are possible.**"

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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<http://www.elca.org/generosityproject>*

OTHER IDEAS FOR FAITH FORMATION DURING THE WEEK

- + **Is there someone in your household (or someone accessible to you) who knows how to sew, knit, or crochet?** Perhaps teach/learn this skill. What could be handmade with needles and thread? Facemasks? Prayer shawls? Dishcloths? Scarves? Baby caps? Quilts? Who needs these items? Could we create a new ministry with the church and establish a quantity goal?
- + **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 Jelly Donut Difference* (by Maria Dismondy)
- + **Kindness Donut:** Using paper, glue and scissors, make a large donut to hang on a wall. Create paper “sprinkles” that you can keep in a container near the donut. When members of your household are recipients of kindness or generosity, invite them to write a word or two about the gesture and glue it to the donut. Sprinkle love throughout the week!
- + **Possibility Jar:** Decorate a container or box. Using small strips of paper, have each household member jot down one goal on each slip of paper. (ex. Learn to dribble a basketball, increase yoga skills, bake a cake from scratch, build a birdhouse, take a walk each day, make a contribution to a beloved church ministry, do daily devotions, read a novel, etc.) Each week, everyone takes a goal out of the container and together work toward those goals during the week, encouraging one another along the way. At the end of the week, or once the goal has been met, hang that goal on the fridge or bulletin board until they have all been met! Have a household party to celebrate those efforts.
- + **Your Congregation and Community:** Contact your church office; what are the biggest needs in our community right now? In what ways can you help out? Are there resources that could be shared? Is there a need for volunteers for food distribution, yardwork, or spiritual support?
- + **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 electricity.

LIVE IT OUT!



Living God's Story: HERE & NOW

Conversation Goal

Discover that my household can respond to God's surprising and unexpected nudges to be generous – and do what may seem impossible.

Conversation #5 When Pigs Fly – Nothing Is Impossible With God!

Sometimes you may be moved to give beyond your planned and intentional giving. A specific situation may move you to give to someone in need. You may feel the desire to help an entire community when tragedy or disaster has occurred. You may feel moved to support a person or organization that helps others and cares for God's creation. Spontaneous giving may be prompted by the Spirit and is another way to grow and nurture generosity in our lives.

Key Question When have we unexpectedly felt motivated to be generous?

Discussion Prompts

- What are some situations or examples where we may want to give of our treasure, time or talent unexpectedly? (Ex.: disasters, someone we personally encounter, or a fundraiser at school)
- How can we be open to giving and sharing unexpectedly?
- Is there a limit to our generosity?
- Do we need to consult with one another before giving and sharing spontaneously?
- How does giving spontaneously fit into our household mission statement?
- Is there a difference between responsible and irresponsible giving?

God's Story Matthew 19:23-30 (CEV). Jesus said to his disciples, "It's terribly hard for rich people to get into the kingdom of heaven! In fact, it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to get into God's kingdom." When the disciples heard this, they were greatly surprised and asked, "How can anyone ever be saved?" Jesus looked straight at them and said, "There are some things that people cannot do, but God can do anything!" Peter replied, "Remember, we have left everything to be your followers! What will we get?" Jesus answered: "Yes, all of you have become my followers. And so in the future world, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, I promise that you will sit on twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. All who have given up home or brothers and sisters or father and mother or children or land for me will be given hundred times as much. They will also have eternal life. But many who are now first will be last, and many who are last will be first."

Affirmation + Blessing God, with you all things are possible. Lead us and help our household grow in generosity and unexpected giving and sharing.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

LIVING GOD'S STORY

Action 5

Our words and drawings illustrate the causes and purposes that we have supported because of unexpected opportunities.



The Generosity Challenge

How many light bulbs are inside and outside our house? Count them. What is 10% of this total? What would it mean to give away or purchase new, 10% of the total number of lightbulbs we use? How hard would this be to do? Who needs lightbulbs? To whom or where would we go to donate them?

