

Bulletin Inserts – Generosity

Gratitude is the memory of the heart. ~ French Proverb

As we try to live a life that reflects Christ, it's important to recognize that our churches are made of individuals from various backgrounds that are on their own journey. Some of us like different types of worship or music, folks at different life stages have different needs and concerns. One aspect we can all consider together is our pathway to generosity. How do you express generosity in your daily life?

We learn generosity from the people closest to us when we are young. Our parents and other relatives model generosity through their daily actions of providing for our needs, comfort, and love. Our extended church families also teach about generosity. In what ways did you experience generosity in your family or in your church?

You don't have to be a millionaire to make a difference in the world. Your own goals and dreams can provide the direction for your generosity. Think about the people and places that have made a difference in your life and about how a legacy gift would tell the story of their influence on you. How would you begin to think about who and what you value? How would you let them know?

We teach that stewardship is "using the gifts God has given to do the work God calls us to do." It is our privilege to use all of our gifts from God, to be good stewards of them and to be accountable for them. Generosity is built relationship and it's not transactional. It's important to remember that to be generous we need to offer the grace to allow others to be generous to us – otherwise we're robbing us both of an important experience. Have you allowed someone to do something generous for you recently?

Generosity is hard to teach. Volunteering and community service have been mandatory for many high school students, and this has certainly impacted the way younger generations express generosity. It's the act of being generous that's important, and that powerful transformation within us when we allow ourselves to get out of the way and practice generosity. How have you shown others that you care for them?

When we teach about good stewardship practices we talk of time, talent, *and* treasure. We give of our time, talent, and treasure on a regular basis. The work of ministry is to find the way that we can each be generous in our time using our talent with our treasure. What we want to fully develop is a way to cultivate impulses that become generous habits – a new way of life. This is the pathway of generosity to inspire us all to be givers and not only keepers who are centered on themselves.

Let's consider what it could look like to respond to issues in our life as the Christians that we are. Whose life could you change with a kind word or your generous hospitality? What lessons do you want to pass along to your children or grandchildren through the decisions you make with your gifts of time and the way you plan to give your money?



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