

# THE GENEROSITY PROJECT

## Forming & Celebrating Generous Households During (and after) a Pandemic

The three-fold goal of **The Generosity Project**: *Connect Generations, Equip Households, and Create Centers for the Faith Practice of Generosity.*

As congregational leaders we know, all too well, that due to COVID-19 the way we approach ministry is unlike anything we have experienced before. The way we live and approach ministry has changed forever – there is no going back. In fact, we need to “pivot,” adapt, and adopt new digital tools and resources for ministry. How do we cease this moment in history and ministry to consider new, unending possibilities?

*Sheltering in place, staying home, family members, households, income, budgets, financial strain, financial security, and financial disparity* are now familiar words and topics in our news and daily conversations. Let us, then, not approach stewardship in the same, familiar ways. Instead, let us focus on creating a lasting culture of effective financial stewardship and generosity, beginning with our households of every age and stage.

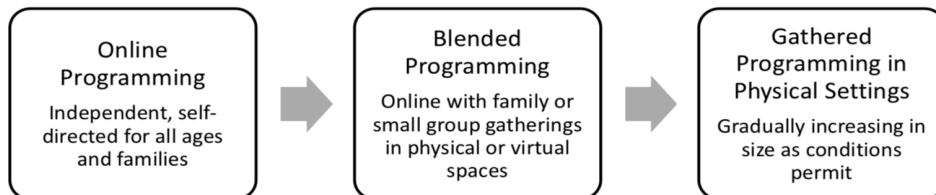
**“Equip people to become Steward Leaders in our homes and congregations, as a response to a generous and loving God who showers us with abundant grace and forgiveness in Jesus.”**

GCS Statement on Stewardship <http://www.gcsynod.org/stewardship>

Prior to COVID-19 the cornerstone of The Generosity Project was “Connecting Generations” through face-to-face, lively interactions between those ages 2-102. Although gathering in person has been disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic; reaching out and connecting with households and individuals in every generation is now a prime objective for all our ministries.

As we continue to pivot and plan ministry in these uncertain times, consider adapting and utilizing The Generosity Project resources for one’s emphasis on Stewardship and Discipleship. Think about delivery of resources in three ways, now and into the future:<sup>1</sup>

1. Delivery to Individuals and households online
2. Online small groups (council, ministry team leaders, generational cohorts)
3. Physical face-to-face gatherings.



<sup>1</sup> Transforming Faith Formation, John Roberto, June 1, 2020

[https://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/guide\\_to\\_transforming\\_faith\\_formation\\_for\\_a\\_changed\\_world.pdf](https://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/guide_to_transforming_faith_formation_for_a_changed_world.pdf)

## Resources & Ideas for: Forming Generous Households During (and after) a Pandemic

All Generosity Project resources may be downloaded at:

<https://www.elca.org/generosityproject>

### For Church Councils, Stewardship, Discipleship, Christian Ed Team Leaders:

Consider using the following resources for personal and small group study in preparation for creating a culture of generosity in one's congregation and households.

- **TGP: Welcome** Introduction, overview and history of The Generosity Project
- **TGP: Foundation and Fundamentals** A summary of the research, theology, Lutheran understanding of baptism, and ELCA's Five Gifts of Discipleship that ground a multi-generational, household approach to stewardship and discipleship.
  - Give attention to the section that explains the "why" for equipping households.
  - The concluding list of questions is yeast for rich conversation for leaders, via online or in person.
- **TGP: Annotated Bibliography** A list of books, web sites, articles, financial education, workshops, apps, and research for planning teams and households – anyone who desires to go deeper and extend the focus of generosity into a year-round way-of-living

The Generosity Project resources listed above are available as a FREE download.

**The Generosity Project: 5G** six-session curriculum outlined below, is available to download for \$39. It is the foundation for preaching, worship, small groups, conversations across generations, and equipping households in-person and online.

The Generosity Project: 5G curriculum easily complements and lifts up the ELCA Five Gifts of Discipleship, also known as the Affirmation of Baptism. Read TGP: Foundation and Fundamentals for further insight and application.

<b>SESSION I</b>	<b>Being Generous</b> Hear the word of God and share in the Lord's Supper.	<b>The WHY</b>	<b>Genesis 1:27-31a</b>
<b>SESSION II</b>	<b>Connecting Generations</b> Live among God's faithful people.	<b>The WHO</b>	<b>John 6:1-14</b>
<b>SESSION III</b>	<b>Equipping Households</b> Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed.	<b>The WHERE</b>	<b>Acts 2:41-47</b>
<b>SESSION IV</b>	<b>Creating Centers of Generosity</b> Serve all people following the example of Jesus.	<b>The HOW</b>	<b>2 Corinthians 8:1-9</b>
<b>SESSION V</b>	<b>Living God's Story</b> Strive for justice and peace in all the earth.	<b>The HERE &amp; NOW</b>	<b>Matthew 19:23-30</b>
<b>SESSION VI</b>	<b>Gathering at the Table</b> Hear the word of God and <b>share</b> in the Lord's Supper.	<b>We WORSHIP</b>	<b>All the texts above</b>

### For Congregations:

- Pastors and Deacons check out each **TGP: 5G** session's Overview to prepare your message or sermon. The overview includes a reflection and links to sermon resources.
  - Consider complementing your message with **Joyfully Generous**, an 8-week “in-the-home” Worship Resource developed by the NW Synod of WI and inspired by TGP. <http://nswi.org/worship-faith-formation-at-home/summer-ministry>
  - Consider incorporating one of the “Glocal” videos or books suggested for each week's theme. The resources celebrate the expression of generosity in another country, culture, setting. Or, make your own videos as modeled in the NWSWI.
- How can your congregation use the abundant digital platforms – or the telephone, to connect generations for conversation in response to the **TGP questions** related to God's Story and one's personal money story, consumerism, and practice of generosity?
- How could you duplicate what All Saints Lutheran, Phoenix, AZ accomplished Fall 2019 with **The Generosity Challenge**? One component of **Live It Out!**, the TGP take-home resource became their fall stewardship focus for households and the congregation. <http://www.gcsynod.org/news/always-be-generous-the-generosity-challenge>

### For Households:

- **TGP: 5G** is a multi-use, six-session resource for congregations and households to use as they grow and live into the faith practice of generosity. The curriculum consists of: a planning guide, five one-hour sessions, worship and **Live It Out!** take-home activities.
  - **Live It Out!** resource for households is provided FREE during COVID-19. Go to **The Generosity Project ELCA Facebook** page, under Files, and download. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thegenerosityproject>
- Check out NW Synod of WI's VBS **Joy in My Heart**, focused on the ELCA's Five Gifts of Discipleship, inspired by The Generosity Project. This is meant for use in the home or it could provide a rich 5-week experience for congregations in August or this fall. [https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.cloversites.com/0a/0a854394-3a19-4d9f-b1ae-f93021508921/documents/Joy\\_in\\_My\\_Heart\\_VBS.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.cloversites.com/0a/0a854394-3a19-4d9f-b1ae-f93021508921/documents/Joy_in_My_Heart_VBS.pdf)
- How might the FREE **TGP: Annotated Bibliography** spur creative, Covid-19 safe, activities in households or across generations in one's congregation?

**The Generosity Project** resources were not created with a pandemic in mind, but they were always intended to be “tweaked” for each faith community's context. You are encouraged to use your creativity and make The Generosity Project your own. Please give appropriate credit to TGP and share what you develop on **The Generosity Project ELCA Facebook** page.

Thank you for being one of God's faithful stewards in the GCS during these challenging times. May you be a witness each and every day to God's generosity – at home and away from home (with your facemask on!)

*Linda E Staats*

ELCA Generosity Project Coordinator  
Grand Canyon Stewardship Team member

[linda@homegrownfaith.net](mailto:linda@homegrownfaith.net)

602-740-3752

## ELCA Generosity Project Resources for Equipping Congregations and Households

Found at <https://www.elca.org/generosityproject> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thegenerosityproject>

