A synodical, congregational and household ministry
The Generosity Project
Growing in God’s Grace Generation to Generation

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HISTORY – The GENEROSITY PROJECT

The Generosity Project is an expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) Macedonia Project, with initial funding provided by Thrivent Financial Services. The purpose of the Macedonia Project is to grow faithful steward leaders.

The Rocky Mountain Synod, a regional ELCA office, submitted the original proposal for The Generosity Project in 2011. Synod staff representing Outreach and Mission (the Rev. Jim Hytjan), Stewardship (the Rev. Dan Bollman), and Children, Youth and Household Ministry (Linda Staats), collaborated to create an approach to stewardship that crosses all generations and focuses on equipping households.

With continued support from the ELCA beginning in 2013, The Generosity Project: Our Table is Ready became an introductory, in-depth workshop. It was piloted nationally, including events in 10 synods and more than 50 congregations. These events provided valuable insight for the 2018 expanded curriculum, The Generosity Project: 5G. A note of gratitude to all those who helped pilot, shape and contributed to The Generosity Project (TGP).

The following resources support The Generosity Project and are available through the ELCA:

- **The Generosity Project: Introductory Workshop**
  The three- to four-hour TGP Introductory Workshop is intended for hosting by synods or groups of congregations, with the purpose of introducing The Generosity Project to teams of people from multiple congregations and/or a network of leaders within a geographic area. The ELCA Generosity Project coordinator or a regional Generosity Project Network leader is available to facilitate the process and content. The goal is for people to experience multi-age interaction, conversation, and a sample of activities from TGP: 5G curriculum.

- **The Generosity Project: 5G**
  TGP: 5G is a multi-use curriculum and 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!, a take-home resource.

- **The Generosity Project: Annotated Bibliography**
  A list of books, web sites, articles and research for those who wish to go deeper and/or extend the focus of generosity into a year-round initiative.

- **The Generosity Project: Foundation and Fundamentals**
  A summary of the basics that ground the multi-generational, household approach to stewardship and discipleship. TGP is based on commonly held best practices in faith formation, research, Scripture and a Lutheran understanding of baptism. It includes questions to ponder and next steps to consider.
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THE
GENEROSITY
PROJECT
Growing in God’s Grace Generation to Generation

VISION

• Being generous: An individual’s identity and daily decisions as a consumer shaped by God’s Story in Jesus.

• Connecting generations: All ages and all generations recognized as recipients of God’s grace and as stewards of God’s abundant generosity.

• Equipping households: Households equipped as places where God’s generosity is received, practiced, and responded to with joy, at home and away, 24/7/365.

• Creating centers of generosity: A spirit of generosity developed that overflows from households to congregations to neighborhoods and into all the world.

• Living God’s Story: A confidence and trust in God’s grace and generosity created that fosters a belief – With God, all things are possible, “there is more than enough!”

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

• God’s Story in Jesus shapes our lives, our identity and our daily decisions.

• All ages have the ability to be generous and God’s stewards.

• Generosity is best practiced and formed in households, supported by the community of faith and all generations.

• Faith is nurtured and a climate of trust developed when values and finances are discussed between generations.

• Generosity is essential, as the vital, daily expression and practice of Christian faith.

GOALS

• Grow an individual, household and congregational culture and spirit of sharing.

• Recognize God’s grace and generosity through cross–generational interaction.

• Practice generosity and mature as Christ’s disciples and God’s faithful stewards.

• Celebrate God’s Story of generosity, locally and globally.

• Sing, pray, practice, move, laugh, learn and worship together.
INTRODUCTION

The Generosity Project is both a resource and an approach to stewardship that engages all generations and equips households as centers for the faith practice of generosity. It is an expression of the ELCA churchwide initiative to grow faithful stewards and generous leaders, so all may grow in their capacity to recognize and respond to God’s abundant grace and generosity – in congregations and at home.

The Generosity Project: 5G Planning Guide introduces the six-sessions, provides an overview that includes the scope and sequence core to each session, and outlines the steps for planning and hosting the sessions and culminating worship celebration. TGP: 5G curriculum may be used as a complete and separate resource or as an extension of The Generosity Project: Introductory Workshop.

We are God’s creations, growing in God’s grace generation to generation. It is our hope that through The Generosity Project: 5G, five generations are brought together for meaningful interaction; households are supported and equipped to live into a new way of reliably supporting one another in this interconnected, consumer society, and the capacity to respond joyfully to God’s abundant grace and generosity is greatly increased.

The Difference Between Generosity and Stewardship

“Generosity” is not the same as, nor a substitute for, the concept of “stewardship.” The primary focus of TGP is on becoming more generous as a response to the generosity, character and grace of God.

The modern English word “generosity” is derived from the Latin word “generōsus,” which means “of noble birth.” Generosity is an aspect of one’s character, a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). As children of God and disciples of Jesus, we are called “to be” – to be generous in spirit and generous with our time, talent and resources.

In Jesus’ time, a steward was the manager of the household. The steward was not the owner but rather an administrator responsible for the owner’s property and assets. We are God’s stewards – administrators of ALL things inherited and entrusted to us by God. We are stewards of the earth, our wealth, our time, our possessions and our physical bodies.

As a result of offering The Generosity Project: 5G, may you, the Planning Team, witness the Holy Spirit’s powerful, transforming work in your lives and that of the generations and households gathered and sent, filled with God’s grace and generosity.

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generosity

is an aspect of one’s character, a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
OVERVIEW

Scope
TGP: 5G curriculum includes five sessions, a sixth session that is a celebratory worship, and accompanying Live It Out! take-home discussion guides. The goal is to equip participants to live out the five-fold vision of The Generosity Project. Each session includes an overview outlining the foundation, focus and Bible story or biblical text as well as resources and prompts for the Planning Team as they “Prepare, Ponder and Pray.”

Session I–VI RESOURCES on page 27

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.

### SESSION I
**Being Generous**
**The WHY**
Hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s Supper.

**Genesis 1:27-31a**

### SESSION II
**Connecting Generations**
**The WHO**
Live among God’s faithful people.

**John 6:1-14**

### SESSION III
**Equipping Households**
**The WHERE**
Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed.

**Acts 2:41-47**

### SESSION IV
**Creating Centers of Generosity**
**The HOW**
Serve all people following the example of Jesus.

**2 Corinthians 8:1-9**

### SESSION V
**Living God’s Story**
**The HERE & NOW**
Strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

**Matthew 19:23-30**

### SESSION VI
**Gathering at the Table**
**We WORSHIP**
Hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s Supper.

All the texts above

Sequence
Each session is designed to be educational and worshipful – an “edu-worship” experience. Each session has six parts or sections, similar to that of a liturgical worship service. The sequence and flow within each section is described in this TGP: 5G Planning Guide, along with the preparations that are common to all sessions. The sessions are designed for a quick-paced, interactive hour. Suggested timeframes are offered with the flexibility to lengthen or shorten sections as you choose.
PREPARATION: Planning Team

TGP: 5G is more than a program – it is a lens, a language, and a way of leading ministry and being in community. The time and effort invested in engaging generations and equipping households as centers for the faith practice of God’s generosity will be well worth the effort!

Serving on the TGP: 5G Planning Team is an opportunity to grow as a steward leader. Hosting and offering The Generosity Project: 5G necessitates careful preparation by a team of people with a variety of gifts. The Generosity Project: 5G is NOT a curriculum you can just pick up and make happen as you walk in the door of the church or gathering space at the start of a session. Create a Planning Team as a first step in preparing to offer and host TGP: 5G.

☐ Distribute and review GUIDE FOR CREATING A TGP: 5G PLANNING TEAM on page 8.

☐ Complete the THE GENEROSITY PROJECT: 5G PLANNING TEAM Wrap-up & Evaluation on page 32 and share it with the ELCA Generosity Project coordinator following the final session.

The TGP: 5G Planning Guide outlines the preparations, components, rituals, activities and flow that are common to all TGP: 5G sessions. There are elements that the Planning Team members and designated leader(s) need to prepare, learn and practice prior to Session I, as they are repeated for each session. Attention to the details will provide the best possible outcome, as each session moves quickly from one element to another.

Please note that each TGP: 5G Session I-VI is customized to explore that session’s theme. Each TGP: 5G session’s guide contains the details for all additional preparation and supplies.

Leading TGP: 5G Interaction

TGP: 5G curriculum is designed to build relationships between all ages and across all generations. Each session provides large-group interaction and activity that intentionally divides people into mixed-age, small groups. TGP: 5G curriculum honors age and mobility levels as well as varied learning styles, attention spans and reading abilities. Planning and facilitating, meaningful interaction between all generations and within households takes confidence and intentionality.

☐ Read GUIDE FOR LEADING TGP: 5G INTERACTION on page 10.

☐ Discuss how the Planning Team will create an environment that honors the wisdom of the elder and wonder of the child. What are the challenges? The opportunities?

Settings

The curriculum is designed for multiple settings: a congregation’s cross-generational learning, educational settings, interactive worship services, weekend retreats, family VBS or a camp program for households and all ages.
GUIDE FOR CREATING A TGP: 5G PLANNING TEAM

Your time and intentional efforts to prepare and bring all generations together to Grow in God's Generosity will be well worth it as households are equipped for living generously.

Create a team of all generations and gifts to assist in preparing, presenting and facilitating TGP: 5G. Invite children, youth and adults to lead and serve based on their gifts. Involving many people in the planning will generate energy and excitement for the TGP: 5G workshops.

AV/Technology – Gifts to create, maintain and make things work
• Responsible for all audio-video details and will be unfazed with any challenge that arises

Chaplain or Intercessor – Gifts to pray with a certainty that all are in God’s care
• Prays for staff, planning team and all participants; may offer prayers during TGP: 5G sessions

Facilitator(s) – Gifts of confidence to lead, teach, encourage, listen, and inspire
• Ability to create a safe and trusting environment for all ages, sensitive to group dynamics

Hospitality – Gifts to joyfully welcome and receive guests as Jesus would
• Meet, greet, prepare name tags, food, beverage; well-placed directional signs; set up; clean up

Music & Movement Leaders – Gifts of faith, movement, music
• Memorize and lead Invite and Fountain Blessing; use gifts of children and youth as leaders
• Select, learn, teach and lead songs

Promotion – Gifts of artistry, evangelism, writing and web mastery
• Skilled at the how, where, when and whom for promotion
• Use web, posters, bulletins, newsletter, phone, Facebook, newspaper, personal invitation

Registration and Finances – Gifts of administration, organizing, faith, giving
• Sets up a system for registering, receipt of any funds and reimbursement of expenses

Research – Gifts of technology, curiosity, wisdom
• Fun Facts; expands a topic for parents, congregation, small groups and community outreach

Storytellers – Gifts of exhortation, faith, knowledge, evangelism
• Learn and share God’s Story with heart, so it is taught, caught and remembered
• Communicates an understanding of the Bible in such a way it is understood by others

Supply /Resource Curator – Gifts for organizing, enjoys crafts, creative and helps behind the scene
• Create the Gathering Table, assemble items for the theme and focus for each session
• Gather supplies and resources; sees that “Prompts” are projected, posted or printed

Team Chair – Gifts of leadership and administration
• Ability to formulate, direct, coordinate and carry out a plan and vision for a specific purpose
• Checks that all is ready for each session, even if it is the responsibility of someone else
GUIDE FOR LEADING TGP: 5G INTERACTION

Tips for creating an environment that honors the wisdom of the elder and wonder of the child.

TGP: 5G is built around mixed-age, small group interaction and discussion. Because the norm has been age-segregated learning for so long, many of even our most experienced leaders and teachers are nervous about facilitating groups composed of 4-year-olds with 94-year-olds and all ages in-between.

TGP: 5G curriculum attempts to honor various learning styles, attention spans, non-readers and mobility limitations. Each session provides an activity that divides people into mixed-age, small groups. Almost always the instructions are for the small groups to contain five people. It is the experience of the editor that this is truly the gathered number where the Holy Spirit does its best work.

Create Sacred and Safe Space
• Let participants know that they always have permission to “pass” on any question or exercise they are invited to do. A person says, “pass” and continues to give the gift of listening.
• Ask people to honor one another’s conversation by not sharing what they hear beyond the group gathered, unless it is their own story.
• Always inform people if the content of their small group conversation will later be summarized for all the gathered participants.
• When appropriate, list questions and responses on a projected slide deck, newsprint or white board. This provides a visual element to the learning and sharing process.

Magic Number “5”
• Five is an effective number of people for small group interaction. If a group is larger than five, it is difficult for people to hear, and it takes too much time to share. If there are only two in a group, one may be a non-talker, creating uncomfortable moments. Three works for brief exchanges.

• Most tables in our congregations are too large to be conducive for shared conversation. People will quickly disengage if they cannot easily hear others. If you have a choice, use smaller tables or create one group of five at each end of a large table.

• When the goal is shared conversation and storytelling, move away from tables and ask people to pull their chairs together, knee-to-knee, in small groups of three, four or five.

• “Turn to one person next to you and share,” is a fine approach for questions that can be answered briefly and by any age. This also works when time is short.

The Gift of Sharing and Listening
• Provide a few moments of silence for people to consider a response to a question before inviting open sharing. Some folks are out-loud “verbal processors” while others need time to think.

• Provide materials for people to write, draw or create an artistic response. Participants of any age whose learning style is visual or tactile will feel more included and at ease when asked to share.

• Add a tactile element to the flow of conversation by providing a soft round object that can be easily passed from one person to the next – something like a hacky-sack or stress ball. A person has permission to speak, uninterrupted, as long as he or she holds the designated object.

• Mutual Invitation, a process created by Eric Law of the Kaleidoscope Institute, is a means for sharing the “power” of selecting who goes next. One person shares a response to the selected question or activity and then that person invites the next person or group to share, continuing until all have had an opportunity. Even if someone chooses to pass, they still retain the privilege of selecting the next person or group. kscopeinstitute.org

kscopeinstitute.org
PREPARATION: Physical Space

The checklist below is provided as a guide for creating a welcoming space for hosting The Generosity Project: 5G sessions. When choosing a space to hold the sessions, look for maximum flexibility and ample room for movement of people as they interact with one another. The environment created for interaction is critical to the success of TGP: 5G.

You are encouraged to make additional copies of the checklist for reference as you prepare for each session. Each session’s packet will outline additional preparations for that specific session.

**Hospitality** begins the minute people enter the property where TGP: 5G is hosted.

- **Lighting** – ensure the parking lot is well lit, lights on in the entry, and doors unlocked.
- **Signage** – clear direction, each step and turn, to the gathering space.
- **Greeters** – direct participants to bathrooms, coatrooms and childcare, if offered.
- **Beverages** – offer water and other beverages planned for this time.
- **Snacks** – if serving refreshments, consider serving finger foods that reflect the Middle East and Mediterranean regions of the world, where God’s Stories were first recorded.

The TGP: 5G requires setting up five distinct spaces or areas for each session:

- **Registration/Check-in**
- **Large Group**
- **Small Group**
- **Resources**
- **Leader’s Staging Area**

**Registration/Check-in Area** for participants requires at least one table and the following items:

- Supply nametags and markers. Provide more than the number expected.
- Create a generation chart like the example *Generation-to-Generation on page 21*. Print several copies and place on the Registration Table(s). It contains space for a different colored sticker to be assigned to each generation.
  - You may also use a slide-deck or a re-useable large poster to display the description of the generations with coordinating stickers.
- Obtain stickers in six colors or shapes. Assign one sticker to each generation. Attendees will be asked to find the sticker that coordinates with the generation in which they were born and to place the sticker on their nametag.

When creating mixed-age, small groups, a quick alternative to using nametags and stickers is inviting participants to identify their “decade” by putting the same number of fingers in the air. Example: Age 34 = three fingers up.
**Large Group Area** is where participants gather and interact for all except the WE SHARE section in each session. This area is made up of a Gathering Table and accessible, moveable seating.

- Arrange chairs in a semi-circle or a circle with the Gathering Table as the focal point.
- Place large pillows on the floor in the center of this space for those who choose to sit on the floor.
- Include smaller chairs for children.
- Consider creating an inviting, cozy area for the youngest children, supplied with engaging, quiet toys. Encourage children to move back and forth between this area and the large group.
- Provide a basket filled with pipe cleaners, “fidget” toys and other sensory items – for all ages.

The Gathering Table is a sturdy, large table that is the focal point for each session. It is where people are immediately engaged after registering and checking in. You need:

- a sturdy 8-foot table or other large table
- a durable tablecloth for the Gathering Table (A piece of light, solid colored canvas, oilcloth or plastic that fully covers the table almost to the floor. This cloth will be used throughout all five sessions and becomes the altar covering for the celebratory worship.)

Place the following items on top of the cloth that covers the Gathering Table:

- a candle
- a cross
- a Bible opened to God's Story. (The text for each session is quoted from the Contemporary English Version, CEV. All activities are based on the words from the CEV. The CEV translation is more easily read and understood by those in grade school and second-language readers. If choosing another translation, remember that the TGP: 5G sessions engage all ages.)
- a globe or world map displayed on the table or nearby, or use a slide deck to share the geographic location for God's Story each session
- Table Tent with instructions for participants to engage in the Start It Out activity. A template is provided print ready, for each session. Or select OPTION 2 on page 22.
- fabric markers or permanent markers of various colors suitable for writing on the table covering
**Small Group Area** is where reminders of the story, or centerpieces, are made and the church-home connection is emphasized. In an area adjacent to the Large Group Area, arrange tables and chairs for cross-generational small groups and households to meet for WE SHARE.

- Provide one table for each household or small group. Smaller, round tables are preferred to large tables. If long, oblong tables for 10 are used, create seating for two groups, one on each end.

- Have chairs available to accommodate varying sizes of households and small groups.

**Resource Area** is a space that features additional resources related to the session's theme. They are organized and displayed to create interest and/or for participants to take home. Have your Planning Team’s “researchers” organize and display resources. Suggestions are offered for each session. A summary of resources are found in the Planning Guide Supplements.

- children's books
- complimentary resources from your synod or the ELCA churchwide organization related to the topic
- information that expands the session's theme
- Live It Out! household resource

**Leader's Staging Area** is a place to organize and have accessible the items needed for facilitating each TGP: 5G session. It can be a small table or a moveable podium or cart.

- script including songs, prompts and notes for each session
- a bell or chime to call the participants back together after conversations and activities
- microphone and amplification, projector, laptop for any slide deck, Wi-Fi/USB for web links and other visuals. Enlist the gifts of the Audio-visual/Technology team members to ensure the mic and audio-visual needs are setup, tested, cued for all formats and ready to go.
PREPARATION: Sessions & Sections

As described in the OVERVIEW on page 7, each session has six sections: WE WELCOME, WE GATHER, WE HEAR, WE SHARE, WE SEND and WE LIVE. Each section has a flow and sequence that is the same for every TGP: 5G session. In addition, each session has its own, theme-specific preparation and supplies that are outlined in each session's packet. A leader's script and Participant Prompts (the words to be projected, posted or printed) are provided for each session. Although it is possible to facilitate a TGP: 5G session with only the leader's verbal prompts, visual cues honor visual learners.

☐ Decide if Participant Prompts for each session will be projected, posted or printed.

WE WELCOME Large Group Area

**Greet** Hospitality begins the moment people arrive on the host site. Be setup and prepared to welcome people at least 15 minutes before the stated start time.

- ☐ Warmly welcome attendees and direct them to register and check in.
- ☐ Guide them toward the Gathering Table for the Start It Out activity and then to find a seat in the Large Group Area.

**Start It Out** The first five sessions each begin with an activity at the Gathering Table that engages participants in drawing or writing on the table covering. The covering becomes the altar cloth for the sixth session, the celebratory worship.

- ☐ Create Table Tent from template included in each session. Display on Gathering Table.
- ☐ Check out a second, dynamic option for transforming Gathering Table into Altar, OPTION 2 on page 22.

**Preview** Once everyone has completed the Start It Out activity and found a place to sit in the Large Group Area, the leader will stand near the Gathering Table to welcome participants at the beginning of each session:

- ☐ Summarize in your own words The Generosity Project: 5G's vision, principles and goals, page 5 along with your hopes and desired outcome for TGP: 5G in your faith community.
- ☐ Introduce and explain the general Sequence on page 7. Participants relax when they know what to expect and it builds anticipation.
- ☐ God's Story (biblical text), the Foundation and the Focus are unique to each session and are provided in the Overview in each session’s guide. A brief summary is provided in the leader’s script for each session as well.

**Fun Facts & Map It** Once the theme of a session is introduced, a fun fact and a geographical location for God’s Story are shared. This information will change with each session to coordinate with the biblical text that is featured.

- ☐ Select and prepare a map, globe or slide deck for sharing the Fun Fact and Map It.
WE GATHER Large Group Area

Sing A complete listing of songs to complement each of the five sessions, plus the celebratory worship, is found in the WE GATHER Sing on page 23. Some songs are public domain. For other songs, check with your congregation’s copyright and annual licensing agreements. It is not necessary to have a piano or instruments for accompaniment, but if you are blessed with such gifts – engage them.

☐ Have Planning Team “song leaders” select, practice, prepare and teach the songs each session.

☐ Decide if words to songs will be projected, posted, printed or “echoed.”

☐ Choose one song to serve as a theme song and sing it every session.

Invite The invitation to gather is repeated in each TGP: 5G session. It includes American Sign Language (ASL) and several basic yoga postures that can be done sitting or standing. Children and many adults love, and even need, to move. Movement helps us “embody” the lesson and take God’s message to heart. The goal is to create an atmosphere that is inclusive of all ages, mobility levels and learning styles.

☐ Learn “Mountain Pose” from yoga and be ready to teach it while incorporating movement and the motion of a “Fountain Blessing.” WE GATHER Invite on page 25 of this Planning Guide teaches the process. Practice this while incorporating each session’s blessing. The words for the blessing change with each session and are included in the leader’s script for each session.

☐ Learn ASL for “God,” “Jesus,” and “Holy Spirit.” Use one of the websites that demonstrates signs for various words: signasl.org/sign/ or signingsavvy.com.

− Invite youth or children to learn and lead the signing and yoga movements for the Invite section of each session.

☐ Be prepared to say the following invocation while signing:

   We gather in the name of God, our Creator (demonstrate ASL sign for “God”), Jesus, our Savior (demonstrate ASL for “Jesus”) and the Spirit, our Sustainer (demonstrate ASL for “Holy Spirit”). Amen

5G Connect A simple, brief game or activity is core to the beginning of each session. The intent is to have fun across the generations and ages represented, as well as introduce the theme in engaging and meaningful ways.

☐ Review the GUIDE FOR LEADING TGP: 5G INTERACTION on page 10.

☐ Review the detailed instructions for each session and prepare to lead.

☐ Cognizant of physical, mental and social limitations and specific needs among participants, tweak activities and give directions so all feel safe and included.
WE HEAR  Large Group Area

Act It Out – God’s Story. Each session introduces a Bible story that is intended to engage all ages through words, actions, movement and props. The goal is to honor varied learning styles and to “embody” God’s Story. The leader’s own vulnerability, openness and attitude will go along way in setting a positive example for others to try new ways of experiencing and remembering God’s Story, even if outside a participant’s normal comfort level. Act It Out and Talk It Out are similar to the goals of the ELCA Book of Faith initiative: Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.

☐ Mark God’s Story for each session in a CEV Bible or another translation.

☐ Become familiar with and comfortable leading Act It Out for each session.

☐ Review each TGP: 5G session’s Preparation page for instructions and supplies needed to tell and re-tell the story.

Talk It Out – Your Story. My Story. Conversation starters for cross†generational sharing and interaction are suggested for each session and are listed in the Participant Prompts.

☐ Review instructions for each session, as the dividing of people into cross†generational conversation groups varies from session to session.

Reach Out – A Glocal Story. An easy to read book and/or video is recommended in each session’s packet that presents the session’s theme from a “local” and “global” perspective. The “glocal” story is meant to expand our understanding of God’s generosity and connection with our “neighbor.” If the glocal story is set in a specific location, point it out on the map or globe. Or identify and point to the location of the author’s home.

☐ Review the suggested resources, select one and prepare to read or project. A compiled list for all the sessions is found in the PLANNING GUIDE SUPPLEMENTS on page 19. The resources specific to each session are also listed in each session’s guide.

WE SHARE  Small Group Area

Center It – Remember It. Households gather at tables to create centerpieces to take home, as “reminders of God’s Story.” Please, do not refer to them as crafts.

☐ Review each session’s instructions for creating the reminder of God’s Story.

☐ Gather and provide more than enough supplies for each session’s activity so that anyone who attends a session for the first time will feel included.

Hospitality and inclusion are lived out when participating households of two or more people invite those attending “solo” to join them as a guest or adopted cousin, aunt, uncle or another role the individual might choose. “Solo” folks may also be invited to form a new household(s) for a particular session. Encourage them to have fun creating a name for their new, adopted family. Those attending “solo,” regardless of whether they joined another household, will each make a centerpiece to take home.

Connect It – Church and Home. A goal for each TGP: 5G session is to connect church with home. A TGP: 5G session is considered “practice” for equipping households as centers of God’s grace and generosity in daily life. While gathered in household groups for this section, households are asked to ponder: What is one thing we will do differently this week because of God’s story of generosity? After ample time, households are invited to share with the large group their response.

Each session participants are asked to bring their centerpiece to the Gathering Table before taking it home to their household tables.

☐ One “centerpiece” (a sample made prior to the session or another made during the session) is to be kept on the Gathering Table following each session. They will be used in the final worship.
**WE SEND** Large Group Area

**Sing** Each session will close with everyone singing a song introduced during WE WELCOME. This is another way of building community, emphasizing the theme and remembering God's Story.

☐ Select a song to serve as the theme song. Sing it each session for WE SEND.

**Pray** The following prayer is printed in the leader’s script for each session and included in the Participant Prompts as well. You are encouraged to use the same closing prayer each week so participants will come to know it by heart. Each session invite individuals and households to add their own prayers of concern and gratitude.

Thank you, God, for all that grows.
Thank you 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.

☐ Invite children to create actions for the prayer the first week, repeat them each session.

**Bless** The final blessing is a repeat of the blessing used during the Invite of WE GATHER. A change in pronouns makes it a blessing for someone else rather than claiming a blessing for one’s self. It is another opportunity to teach and model blessing one another in daily life. The blessing is included in each session's guide.

After all have been blessed by one another, the leader will lead the following in a bold, loud voice. It is included in the leader's script, but not in the Participant Prompts.

**We are made in the image of** (prompt all to echo or respond) **GOD!**

**God is a** (prompt all to echo or respond) **generous God!**

**We are made to be** (prompt all to echo or respond) **generous too!**

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

All: **AMEN.**
Take It Home As participants depart, encourage households to practice their faith all week by repeating the yoga movements and blessings, singing songs, using the prayer, staying connected with “solo” participants, and borrowing items from the Resource Table.

Encourage members of the Planning Team with the gift of “research,” to expand each session’s topic. Provide information for participants in the form of handouts, displays, social media and e-based connections. How might a session topic lead into a focus and action for the entire congregation? Suggested resources to complement each session are summarized in Session I–VI RESOURCES on page 27.

Live It Out! Live It Out! is a household supplement to The Generosity Project: 5G. The take-home conversation starters are intended to nurture conversation and to encourage the practice of God’s generosity in households and daily lives. The Live It Out! resource for each session is included in each session’s Supplement section. They are also combined and available as a separate Live It Out! packet.

- Live It Out! is intended for households with one or more members, for people from all ages and stages of life, and for those who may experience multiple or no faith traditions.

- Live It Out! consists of a theme, a goal, a key question, discussion prompts, the session’s Bible story, words of affirmation and blessing and a Generosity Challenge. Visual images and activities help launch conversation for shared understanding and action.

- Live It Out! may be used as part of a congregation’s Generosity Project: 5G ministry or as a stand-alone resource. Live It Out! may be distributed at the end of each TGP: 5G session, uploaded to the congregation’s website for a download or distributed using a congregation’s social media tools.

☐ Decide if Live It Out! will be sent home with households following a TGP: 5G session or made available at another time and place.

☐ Engage in conversation with other TGP: 5G leaders and staff about how the topic of generosity might be expanded into the fabric of congregational and household life.
## Generation-to-Generation

Select a colored sticker that represents your generation and place it on your nametag

### 1901-1926 The Greatest Generation or GI's
- Faith based on knowledge and experience; know hymns by heart; had heroes; “We will do whatever it takes to get the job done”; believe every generation will be better off than the one before it; lived a life of sacrifice for the good of others; want respect and to share their stories; civic minded; may have fought in WWII; Came of age during the Great Depression.

### 1927-1945 The Silent Generation/Traditionalist
- Faith based on knowledge and involvement; know hymns by heart; committed to common good; “Hard work will get the job done”; save and pay cash; shaped by the Depression, WWII and Industrial Revolution; rooted in tradition, loyalty, hard work and the conservation of resources; grew up listening to radio; appreciate traditional music; trust institutions and leaders; may have served during the Korean War.

### 1946-1964 The Baby Boomers
- Born post WWII; taught that institutional church will pass on faith, “buy now, pay later;” shaped by TV and social-political change, space exploration, Vietnam, women's movement, Watergate; experienced assassinations of religious and political leaders; suspicious of institutions, hierarchy, and authority; live to work and play; high standards; first generation to leave hometown for a career, may care for parents, kids and grandkids.

### 1965-1980 Gen X or Busters
- Searching for purpose and meaning; reached by non-denominational churches; lack loyalty to a denomination; live in shadows of three generations; “No fear – just do it;” known as “latch-key kids;” concerned about making ends meet; shaped by: computers, collapse of Berlin Wall and end of Cold War, AIDS crisis, divorce, rise of mass media, MTV; concerned about making ends meet; accept diversity; care for the environment.

### 1981-1996 Millennial or Y Generation
- New civic generation; public service; looking for heroes; experience a hectic pace of life; formative years in childcare and preschools; short attention span; “wired” for technology; digital natives; less respect for authority; assumed adult responsibilities at young age; looking for authentic relationships; economically stressed; confident; upbeat; open to change; coming of age influenced by 9/11.

### 1997-2012 Generation Z or iGeneration
- Rise of the Information Age; communicate in real-time across the globe; digital globalization; influenced by dot-com bubble, Google and internet; marketing directly to them 24/7/365; leaving behind toys for digital devices; KGOY-kids (kids-getting-older-younger), and much more still to be defined.

### 2013-2025 Alpha Generation
- Born into and immersed in technology; will expect customization; movement to “touch” communication; more will become centenarians; global citizens.

Notes: Generational descriptions and dates may vary by ethnic group, culture and personal experience.
WE WELCOME

START IT OUT

OPTION 2

When households gather for the TGP: 5G sessions, they become a community of faith. The Gathering Table becomes an expression of God’s Stories of generosity and of one another’s stories. The ideas below suggest how to create a dynamic Gathering Table that will be transformed into the altar for the sixth session, the TGP: 5G Celebratory Worship.

- **Session I:** As people arrive, give each a piece of felt on which to trace one’s hand. Instruct each person to cut out the felt hand and write their name inside the hand. Provide pins to attach the felt hand to the cloth covering the Gathering Table. The hands represent TGP: 5G’s first story – the story of God’s creation and humans made to mirror God’s image as well as caretakers of God’s creation.

- **Session II:** Purchase small, smooth stones or ask someone to donate some from their yard. Invite participants to write the name of someone they consider generous on the stone – someone who is a model of generosity and light of Christ in their life. Place a hurricane lamp or tall candle on the Gathering Table. Instruct people to place their “generosity stone” around the vessel. The light of Christ and reminders of God’s generosity will be another addition to the altar for the final worship.

- **Session III:** Purchase several inexpensive, white napkins or towels. As people arrive invite them to write on the linen the name of an organization they contribute time, talent or financial resources. The linens will cover the bread, wine and grape juice to serve as reminders of the ways we bring life to organizations with our generosity.

- **Session IV:** Purchase two large goblets, a plate and pitcher. These items will serve as the chalice (standing cup) for wine and grape juice, the paten (plate) and flagon (vessel) for communion. Have each person draw a symbol that represents “joy” on the various communion ware items.

- **Session V:** Purchase shells. As people arrive invite them to write on the shell a word or image that represents God’s generosity. Place the shells into a large bowl of water, or baptismal font that will serve as a reminder of God’s promise for the final 5G Worship.

- **Session VI:** As people depart the final 5G Worship, invite them to take a felt hand, a rock and a shell (other than the ones they created) as reminders of the community of faith that surrounds them as they are sent as stewards into their homes and the world to live out God’s Story of generosity.

**SUPPLIES:** These items may be purchased inexpensively at craft stores, online or at dollar-type stores.

- markers suitable for cloth, felt, glass, rocks, and shells
- large straight pins
- white napkins or small towels, smooth in texture
- large bowl with water
- tall candle in holder or hurricane-style globe with candle
- two large goblets, plate, pitcher made of clear glass or ceramic, without a design
- felt squares
- smooth stones
- shells
WE GATHER

Sing

Songs are suggested for each session to complement the Scripture and the theme. Some songs are public domain. For others, check with your congregation’s copyright and annual licensing agreements before using.

- Invite and engage those of any age with the gifts of music to play, sing, teach and lead. It is not necessary to have a piano or instruments for accompaniment, but if you are blessed with people with such gifts – engage them!

- Have the Planning Team “song leaders” select, prepare and teach the songs each session. Consider selecting one song to be a theme song and sing it every session.

- Include songs familiar to each generation as well as camp-type songs that can easily be sung by heart.

- Check out this list of stewardship-related hymns from Center for Stewardship Leaders at Luther Seminary.

- Check out this vast index of hymns and hymnals with sources, dates, authors and other information: Hymnary.org.

SESSION I – Genesis 1: 27-31a


- “Johnny Apple Seed” – unknown. Public domain.


- “Step By Step / Forever We Will Sing” – Michael W. Smith.

SESSION II – John 6: 1-14

- “Eat This Bread, Drink this Cup” – Taize Community. Adapter: R. Bastastini. 1984. GIA publications.

- “We Are Marching in the Light of God” (Tune: “We are Walking” (Siyahamba) – Utryck. 1984. GIA Publications.

- Consider adding words and phrases to reflect the theme. Example: We are gathering. We are learning. We are grateful for the love of God.


SESSION III – Acts 2: 41-47

- “I am the Church. You are the Church” – Avery/Marsh. 1972. Hope Publishing.


- “Let Us Go Now to the Banquet” – Guillermo Cuellar.

- “They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love” – Peter Scholtes. 1966. F.E.L. Publications.

SESSION IV – 2 Corinthians 8: 1-9


- “Oh God, You Are My God/Step-by-Step” – Michael W. Smith. Vineyard Music USA.

- “Take My Life and Let It Be” – Frances Havergal. 1874. Public domain.

SESSION V – Matthew 19: 23-30


- “I am Trusting Thee Lord Jesus” – Frances Havergal. 1874. Public domain.


SESSION VI – WE WORSHIP Biblical Texts for Sessions I-V
Consider singing songs previously introduced in Sessions I-V. Below are suggestions with some additional titles for the WE GATHER, WE HEAR, WE SHARE and WE SEND parts of worship.

Gathering Songs
• “All Things Bright and Beautiful” – Alexander
• “Gather Us In” – Haugen. 1982. GIA Publishing
• “Let Us Go Now to the Banquet” – Cuellar

Response to Readings
“Take My Life and Let It Be,” Frances R. Havergal
Verses selected from two different hymnals and are woven into the sharing of Scripture. Changes in wording are noted.

1. Take my life, O Lord renew,
   Consecrate my heart to you;
   Take my moments and my days;
   Let them sing your ceaseless praise.
   (Lutheran Worship, #404, vs. 1)

2. Take my hands and let them do
   Works that show my love for you;
   Take my feet and lead their way,
   Never let them go a-stray.
   (Lutheran Worship, #404, vs. 2)

3. Take my love and help it grow;
   Let my loving over flow.
   Take me now, and help me be
   part of Christ's community.
   (The New Century Hymnal, #448, vs. 4)

4. Take my silver and my gold,
   Not a dollar I withhold.
   Take my lips and keep them true,
   Filled with messages from you.
   (Lutheran Worship, #404, vs. 4)

5. Take my life; your will be done!
   Make your will and mine be one.
   Take my heart, and by your grace
   Make of it your dwelling place.
   (The New Century Hymnal, #448, vs. 3)

Theme Songs
• “Give thanks with a Grateful Heart” – Henry Smith. 1070. Integrity's Hosanna! Music.

Communion Distribution Songs
• “Eat This Bread, Drink this Cup” – Taize Community. Adapter: R. Bastastini. 1984. GIA publications.

Sending Songs
• “This Little Light of Mine” – African-American spiritual. Public domain.
• “Go, My Children, With My Blessing” – Jaroslav Vajda
• “Send Me, Jesus” – Traditional, South African. 1984. GIA.

The words to this song are particularly fitting as a theme song or summary for The Generosity Project.
**WE GATHER**

** Invite**

**Mountain Pose and Fountain Blessing are a part of every session:** You may stand up tall or sit up tall in a chair. Place feet hip-width apart, pointing forward. Press feet down into the earth. Hands may be at your sides or palms together at your heart. Lift your belly, head and heart. Move your shoulders back and down away from your ears. Your body is active and you are looking straight ahead.

1. Place palms together at the heart. Take a slow, deep breath through the nose and pause when the lungs are full.

2. Hold the pause as you bring your arms up overhead.

3. Exhale slowly and “spray the fountain”

4. Moving arms to the side and then

5. Back together at heart center.

**Repeat movements:** Each time we breathe in and bring our arms up overhead, it’s like we are breathing in all that God has given us; and as we move our arms to the side, we are sharing that generosity with others. Repeat movements: Stand up tall in Mountain Pose, or sit up tall in a chair. Place palms together at the heart. Take a slow, deep breath through the nose and pause when the lungs are full. Hold the pause as you bring your arms up overhead. Say “Blessing for the session” as you “spray the fountain,” moving arms to the side and then back together at heart center.
RESOURCES FOR SESSION I–VI
OVERVIEW Prepare

Readings and resources to prepare the Planning Team’s hearts and minds for each session.

SESSION I


SESSION II

• “Filled Full”. The Jesus Storybook Bible. Sally Lloyd Jones, Pub: ZondervanKidz, Grand Rapids, MI. pp. 244-249.


• “Facts on population of each generation”. Pew Research Center. April 25, 2016. FACTANK.

SESSION III

• “Five Gifts of Discipleship”. ELCA Faith Practice.


Session IV

• “Stewardship focus shifts to year-round giving, community building.” Nov. 29, 2016

Session V

• Bible Gateway. For a fresh view of the text read it in The Message translation by Eugene Peterson.


Session VI – Worship

The Generosity Project: 5G sessions were intentionally planned to follow the flow of worship. Notice how the five TGP: 5G sessions were educational and worshipful. Notice how the sixth TGP: 5G session is worshipful and educational. To learn more about edu-worship and cross†generational ministry, check out the following networks and people that provide resources and conferences:

• Cross+Gen Life (Faith Inkubators) A conference, series of books and other creative resources to equip leaders and congregations. An amazing network of creative leaders sharing ideas for cross†generational ministry at church and in the home. Cross+Gen Life on Facebook or crossgenconference.com

• HomeGrown Faith Search under “Photos” for pictures of all generations interacting in worship and educational settings, including those focused on the topic of generosity. HomeGrown Faith on Facebook

• InterGenerate An ecumenical and international network that hosts a conference every other year. InterGenerate on Facebook or intergenerateconference.com
WE HEAR Reach Out – A Glocal Story

The following resources are suggested for Reach Out – A Glocal Story, a segment of each TGP: 5G session. The goal is to add a glocal perspective – a local and global story expanding our understanding of God’s generosity and strengthening the connection with our “neighbor.”

Review the suggested resources. Select one for each session and prepare to read or project. Incorporate into worship as a way of weaving the focus on generosity into both education and worship. Be prepared to point out on the map or globe the location or author of the story.

Session I – Being Generous

**Video:** “Unsung Hero”. TVC Thai Life Insurance. 2014.

Session II – Connecting Generations


On market day, Mama Panya’s son invites everyone he sees to a pancake dinner. How will Mama Panya ever feed them all? This heartwarming story about Kenyan village life teaches the importance of sharing, even when you have little to give.

**Video:** “These People’s Generosity Will Give You All the Feels / 0-100.” Soul Pancake 3:04 length. People ages 2-100 answer the question, “Have you ever given anything to someone that made you feel really happy?”

Session III – Equipping Households


A Chinese American girl’s aunt discovers soybeans, a favorite Chinese food, growing in Illinois, leading to a tradition that grows into an annual community event.


Session IV – Creating Centers for Generosity


Seeds of friendship between a young girl in Holland and one in America following WW II grow into something extraordinary. This inspiring story shows young people that they, too, can make a difference. A recipient of more than a dozen literary awards.

**Video:** ELCA World Hunger “Kanchan’s Story” 4:27 length. Kanchan and her two sons live in the village of Mardwani near Madhya Pradsh, India. When her son Hritik became malnourished, she brought him to Padhar Hospital, whose Tripti Project is supported by gifts to ELCA World Hunger.

Or select another brief video focusing on your congregation’s outreach, a story from your synod, or other examples of ELCA’s mission and generosity around the world. ELCA stories are featured on the ELCA YouTube channel.

Session V – Living God’s Story

**Book:** *The Rainbow Fish*. Marcus Pfister. Distributor: Northsouth Books. New York. A classic. A fish with beautiful shiny scales refuses to share them with the other fish and becomes lonely, until he decides to share. An internet search offers several options: It may be read from the book, read online by Ernest Borgnine, a slide format, or several versions on YouTube. Four to six minutes to share the story.

**Blog:** “Worshiping with Children” blog offers creative ideas for books and creative approaches for children to experience this story as told in Mark 10:17-31. worshippingwithchildren.blogspot.com

**Video:** “More than Food”. Christian Aid Collective. 2:46 length. What does it really mean to live in community in our world – not just in our own church or home? The power of community in meeting the needs of one another.

Session VI – Gathering at the Table (Worship)

**Video:** “Kids with Character: Generosity”. 3:36 length. Generosity has a ripple effect and is a quality that can be taught. This family’s $100 giving challenge resulted in something extraordinary. A great summary of TGP: 5G.

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*An ELCA Global Mission term, “To equip us for God’s work in global and local realities, as well as their ‘glocal’ intersections.”*
WE LIVE  Take It Home

Resources for in-depth study, links to further research for displays in the Resource Area, and information to further equip households all year round.

SESSION I
Impact of marketing and advertising on children and teens:
- Center for Media Literacy
- Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood
- Common Sense Media
- “Children as Consumers” Global Issues
- Logo challenge quiz
- Media Smarts
- Parents Television Council
- “Frontline: The Persuaders” PBS

SESSION II
- “Generation to Generation,” a website for a diverse, action-oriented community of people who believe experience matters. Every child deserves a web of support, and every older adult has something to give.
- Reimagine Faith Formation: Intergenerational. Curated resources.
- “Who is Gen Z?” What are their assumptions and values? What is shaping them? How can we better equip them, reach them and help them follow Jesus with confidence in this culture? Barna. Jan. 23, 2018.
- “Will Our Children Be Stewards?” The Episcopal Church website for stewardship.

SESSION III
- “Spiritual Practices: Gratitude”. Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat. A well-curated site offering a wide variety of resources, tools and topics related to the topic of gratitude.

Session IV
- “Children’s lessons on generosity”. Salvation Army.
- Resources for personal and household stewardship, ELCA.

Session V
- “Children, Money and the Sanctuary”. “Worshiping with Children” blog, 2013
- “10 10 80 Financial Lifestyle”. Envelopes by Finicity10
- Financial education workshop materials. Thrivent Financial
- “Share Save Spend”. Nathan Dungan
- “Through the Needle’s Eye”. Ministry-To-Children. A plethora of ideas to demonstrate this story.

Session VI – Worship
Spend time reading through The Generosity Project: Annotated Bibliography. It includes a list of books, web sites, articles and research.

Link to be created when bibliography section is complete.
Questions for the TGP: 5G Planning Team to ponder upon completion of hosting and offering the six sessions:

• What can we celebrate about hosting The Generosity Project: 5G sessions?
• What is the most important learning about cross†generational interaction?
• What are the challenges we faced in equipping and supporting households as centers for the faith practice of generosity?
• What components of the TGP: 5G curriculum worked most effectively?
• What was least effective or did not work?
• Suggestions for improvements and edits needed.
• Name and share new activities created and tweaks to the existing curriculum that worked well.
• Comments and stories we received or heard from participants.

Please email your comments and evaluation to: TheGenerosityProject@elca.org.