

THE GENEROSITY PROJECT

Growing in God's Grace Generation to Generation

Sample 5G Planning Guide & LIVE IT OUT



A synod, congregation and household ministry



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



THE GENEROSITY PROJECT

Growing in God's Grace Generation to Generation

Writer and editor: **Linda Staats,**
ELCA Generosity Project coordinator

Co-editors and contributors: **Jen Kooistra**
Stephanie Luedtke

Contributors: **Heather Roth Johnson**
Aly Kohlmeyer
Laura Ramlow
Jennifer Rome
Holly Slater
Sara Yotter

To host a workshop, train leaders or for more information, contact:
ELCA Generosity Project coordinator
TheGenerosityProject@elca.org

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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 Stewardship¹

“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.

gen·er·os·i·ty
is an aspect of one's character, a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

¹ Robert Schnase, “From Stewardship to Generosity,” Ministry Matters, May 16, 2011.

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

 5 min	WE WELCOME	Greet Start It Out Preview Fun Facts & Map It
 15 min	WE GATHER	Sing Invite 5G Connect
 15 min	WE HEAR	Act it Out Talk It Out Reach Out
 20 min	WE SHARE	Center It Connect It
 5 min	WE SEND	Sing Pray Bless
 Everyday	WE LIVE	Take it Home Live It Out!

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.

These are only suggested roles. One person may take on several responsibilities. The five essential areas of responsibility are indicated with a *.

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”

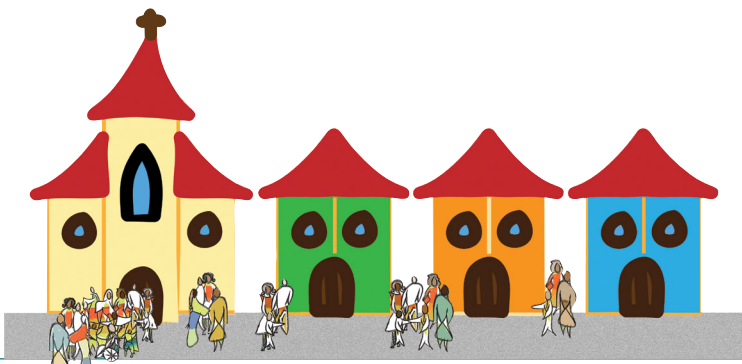
- Five is an effective number of people for small group interaction. If a group is larger than five, it is difficult for people to hear, and it takes too much time to share. If there are only two in a group, one may be a non-talker, creating uncomfortable moments. Three works for brief exchanges.

- 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

LIVE IT OUT!



Connecting Generations: Conversation Goal

The WHO

Identify and celebrate the people of all ages who are examples of generosity that surround this household.

Conversation #2

Ripples of Generosity

Who are the models of generosity for you? Have you been the recipients of the generosity of others? Who are the extended family members or friends who have shared their time, talent or wealth with you? Recall and name beloved friends, community members and others whose generosity have shaped your life. Listen to one another's stories. Make a photo collage of people who have impacted your life in big ways and small ways. If living, send them a note expressing your appreciation.

Key Question

Who has given generously to us?

Discussion Prompts

- When have we been recipients of the generosity of others?
- For whose generosity am I most thankful?
- What are the giving patterns over the generations in our family? Do we want to change these patterns in some way?
- Does the giving of others inspire us to be generous?
- Does one's age matter in acting generously?

God's Story John 6:1-14 (CEV). "When Jesus saw the large crowd coming toward him, he asked Philip, 'Where will we get enough food to feed all these people?' He said this to test Philip, since he already knew what he was going to do. Philip answered, 'Don't you know that it would take almost a year's wages just to buy only a little bread for each of these people?' Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the disciples. He spoke up and said, 'There is a boy here who has five small loaves of barley bread, and two fish. But what good is that with all these people?' The ground was covered with grass, and Jesus told his disciples to have everyone sit down. About five thousand men were in the crowd. Jesus took the bread in his hands and gave thanks to God. Then he passed the bread to the people and he did the same with the fish, until everyone had plenty to eat. The people ate all they wanted, and Jesus told his disciples to gather up the leftovers so that nothing would be wasted. The disciples gathered them up and filled twelve large baskets with what was left over from the five barley loaves. After the people had seen Jesus work this miracle, they began saying, 'This must be the Prophet who is come into the world!'"

Affirmation + Blessing

God has blessed us through the abundant generosity of others. We will joyfully share what God has provided us.



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CONNECTING GENERATIONS

Action 2

Our Family Tree of Generosity: These are the names of all those who have shared God's abundant generosity with us.



The Generosity Challenge

How many canned goods or jars of food are in our cupboards and pantry? Count them. What is 10% of that number? What would it mean to give away or purchase 10% of the number of canned and jarred items in our cupboards? How hard would this be to do? Who suffers from being hungry? To whom or where would we go to donate these items?



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