

JOYFULLY GENEROUS



A Worship & Faith Formation Series for Households about God's Generosity
An expression of *The Generosity Project* – ELCA

Week 7 Acts 2:42-47

How to practice generosity in our homes.

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 7: GOD'S PROMISE. OUR PRACTICE

+ 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 +

Faithful God, from the beginning you have promised to be with us. You have taught us how to practice our faith, and to share that faith with others. Whether in our homes or in communities, we pray that you will continue to guide us, filling us with a spirit of generosity that shines a light directly on you. **AMEN.**

+ SCRIPTURE +

+ **Acts 2:42-47**

+ **Spark Story Bible:** How to Pray (Pages 278-281)

+ **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 #7** (Silent Generation)

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

Questions:

- + Name something you enjoy doing that requires practice. How long did it take you to learn this? What did it feel like when you "perfected" it?
- + What is your favorite faith practice? (prayer, singing, daily devotions?) Why is it your favorite?
- + Like learning to read, sheetrock a wall, or drive a car, living generously requires practice through patience and repetition. What is one thing your household can do to practice generosity this week?
- + How can we practice our faith with others?

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)__, you are blessed to be a blessing.**"

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

+ Try Some New Ways to Pray:

- + Praying in Color: <https://prayingincolor.com/handouts>
- + Dwelling in the Word: <http://www.davidlose.net/2014/01/3-ways-to-dwell-in-the-word/>
- + Finger Labyrinth: <https://zdi1.zd-cms.com/cms/res/files/382/ClassicalLabyrinth.pdf>
- + 5-Finger Prayer: <https://ministry-to-children.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/5-Finger-prayer.pdf>
- + Examen: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/examen-prayer-card/>

+ **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?

+ **Small Catechism:** Use a paper copy or download the Small Catechism App on your smartphone. Choose a section – Lord’s Prayer, Creed, etc. – to read and study.

- + How do these elements of Lutheran faith apply to your life today?
- + Have these words and “what does this mean” questions shaped your faith? Why or why not?
- + If this document is new to you, connect with someone who can wonder together with you.
- + When was the first time you used/saw the Small Catechism. What do you remember about what you learned?

+ **Picture the Bible:** This deck of cards has beautiful art, a short Bible story, and a question for reflection or conversation. Perfect for car rides, bedtimes, morning devotions, or vacation!
<https://firstchurchrf.org/product/story-cards/>

+ **Singing and Music:** What does music mean to you? How does it influence your faith?

- + Sing some favorite hymns this week. If you don’t have a hymn book, YouTube has many hymn videos with text that you could sing along with.
- + Encourage each household member to choose a song that describes their faith; share the recordings with one another and invite them to explain why the song is so meaningful for them
- + Are there instrumental/classical pieces of music or specific composers that inspire or uplift you?

+ **Live It Out:** Choose a time to use this resource (Page 6) 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.

Bonus Activity

Generosity: God's promise. Our practice.

Faith5 (R. Melheim), Four Key Faith Practices (D. Anderson) and HomeGrown Faith's Top Ten Faith Practices are reflected in this inventory

Read together Acts 2:42-47 (CEV):⁴² They spent their time **learning** from the apostles, and they were like **family** to each other. They also **broke bread** and **prayed together**.⁴³ Everyone was **amazed** by the many miracles and **wonders** that the apostles worked.⁴⁴ All the Lord's followers often **met together**, and they **shared everything** they had.⁴⁵ They would **sell their property and possessions** and **give the money to whoever needed it**.⁴⁶ Day after day they **met together** in the **temple (church)**. They **broke bread together** in **different homes** and **shared their food** happily and freely,⁴⁷ while **praising God**. Everyone liked them, and each day the Lord added to their group others who were being saved.

Name all the things people in this household practice. How many hours are involved in practice? Following are 14 faith practices. What habits are **Already** established as a part of my/our personal and household routine? Mark those with an **"A."** Choose one faith practice to start or **Begin**. Write the letter **"B"** by that practice. Discuss when, where and how I/we will make it happen.

I/we invite the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and household as I/we practice generosity.

- **God's Story:** Regularly read and study the Bible to *personally* learn more about God.
 - **Learn. Teach:** Share God's Story with one another, using age appropriate Bibles, storybooks and technology.
 - **Caring Conversation:** Share highs and lows and find God's Story in one another's stories.
 - **Mealtimes:** Regularly eat meals together – with all "tech" turned off.
 - **Serve:** Joyfully serve one another and regularly host guests for a meal in our home.
 - **Pray:** Pray at mealtime, bedtime, sick time, car time, school time, anytime and anywhere.
 - **Share:** Easily and joyfully share possessions and wealth with those outside this household and family.
 - **Care:** Take deliberate action to care for our neighbor, our community and the earth.
 - **Identity:** Talk and act in ways that reflect our creator God who sent us Jesus to follow.
 - **Cross-Generational Relationships:** Create opportunities for friendships and caring relationships with faith-filled people of all ages.
 - **Worship:** Regularly gather to worship with a community of faith.
 - **Bless:** Practice forgiveness and grace. Affirm and celebrate one another's gifts. Live joyfully and share freely.
 - **Music:** Sing, play or listen to music that praises God and brings joy, peace and healing in our lives.
 - **Amazed and Awed:** Live with a sense of gratefulness every day for God's grace and generosity.
- I covenant with God and one another to become a center for the faith practice of generosity.** Add household signature(s) here:

