

BEGINNING A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY

As you consider your giving to the church next year, please consider how you can grow in your own generosity.

An idea for someone whose income has gone down in the last year:

Everyone can grow in generosity, even if that means the overall dollars given decreases. Perhaps, if before your income decreased you were giving away 2% of your income, now with income being less, can you find a way to grow the percentage of giving to 3 or 4%. There are people in our congregation who will need to decrease the total dollars given because of loss of work or other reasons.

Other ideas:

1. Systematic giving leads to generosity: For most people, we can grow significantly in our giving just by making our gift on a regular basis. Sign up for automatic giving or just add an amount each week or month. Growing giving by \$1 per day equates to significant growth over the course of the year.
2. An extra gift or two during the year: During the crisis, a story was shared in a stewardship workshop about someone who said, "I'm not sure what the future holds for me, but for now I am doing okay, so I will double my giving in the month of April". Well, what if we decided to double our giving one month or even two months next year?
3. Grow by a percentage each year: For some, the idea of a tithe is unachievable in a single year, but something people would like to reach someday. By growing giving by a percentage each year, it is achievable over the long-term. If you currently give away 2% of income, perhaps you can reach 3% next year and 4% the year after. This takes discipline, but over the long-term is effective for some.

You may have your own ideas for growing in generosity. As a church family, as we each grow in our generosity, it will have a tremendous overall impact.

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HAVE FAITH AND ASSUME SUFFICIENCY NOT SCARCITY

Many fear they will not have enough to live on. This is called The Scarcity Assumption. It is human and natural but it is not Christian.

Our faith teaches us that God will provide sufficiently for all our needs if we but trust in God's promises. And this is so even when we give away the largest portion or amount that we have ever given!

So we must have faith that a good and gracious God will continue to provide for us in the future as God has in the past. And as God has promised to do!

We are to trust God as did Abraham of old and so many others throughout the pages of the Bible. These examples were written for our instruction and for our assurance. We must learn to give in faith with the assumption of sufficiency, not scarcity. God will provide for God cares for us.

