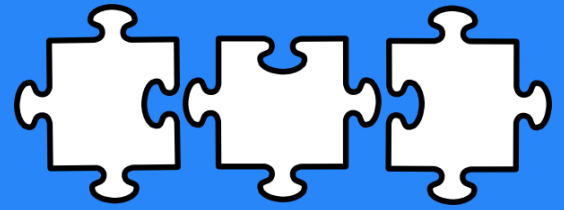


BUILDING A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY



As we return our Statements of Intent for our generosity for this year in worship today, several of our Council members have shared their excitement about our ministry moving forward:

- I have so enjoyed our change to one service. Seeing more people from both services, getting to know them better and hearing the loud singing makes the feel of community so much greater. Being on the council has also been a blessing as it has increased my involvement in the church life and my knowledge of the workings of the church. Please consider increasing your involvement in the church, the paybacks are 10 fold.

Julie V.

- My family and I love our Esperanza family. Worshiping with our faith community is the highlight of our days. It is a true joy to welcome new families to Esperanza. Nothing is better than living out God's mission at Esperanza.

Kelly E.

- I am encouraged by the Spirit of generosity that is growing in our midst at Esperanza. I see it in the little things. Our shared stories of Faith, the homemade refreshments, people helping keep the church campus clean, and more people visibly sharing their gifts, i.e. music, organization and worship. I look forward to our church growing in generosity even more in the coming year..

Paige S.

Keeping our ministry strong will enable us to dream about an ever-growing ministry into the future. Take time this week to reflect on the ways in which connection to our ministry has impacted you and those you know and love in the past year and start dreaming about what God may be up to here moving forward.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY

DECIDE TO GIVE SACRIFICIALLY

Little has ever been accomplished without sacrifice. This is true in our homes, our work, our church, our country. Sacrifice is a necessary component of successful living.

And so it is with the Christian life and faith. Our salvation cost God the cross. Bonhoeffer rightly said there is no cheap grace.

Much of church giving is only token giving, averaging about two percent of income. No wonder there is so little joy or satisfaction in it! It requires no sacrifice! We have given only what we could easily afford, what we would not really miss.

Experience has shown that giving, to be meaningful and joyful, has to be sacrificial! Each will have to determine what amount or percentage is sacrificial for his or her circumstances. But experience again suggests that for most people sacrificial giving begins at five percent of income with proportions under five percent falling into the token giving category.

Church interest is often low, studies have shown, because investment is low. There is no sacrifice. It doesn't really cost anything. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will be your heart also." (**Luke 12:34**) Where is my treasure? That is where you will find your heart.



Esperanza Lutheran Church
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