

Reframing  
Stewardship as a  
Spiritual  
Discipline of  
Generosity



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The annual stewardship campaign can feel...



monotonous, stressful, and discouraging.

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This workshop will  
encourage  
participants to  
reframe their  
understanding  
of generosity...



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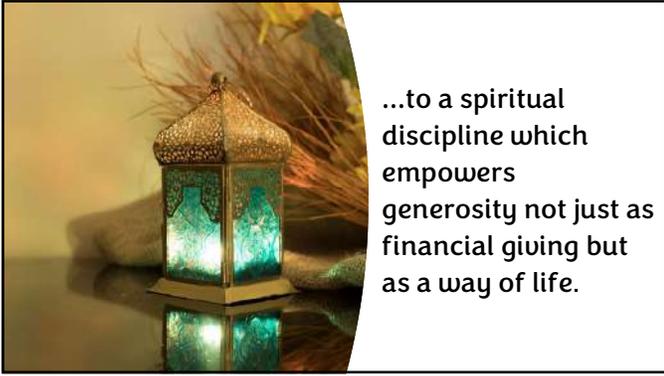
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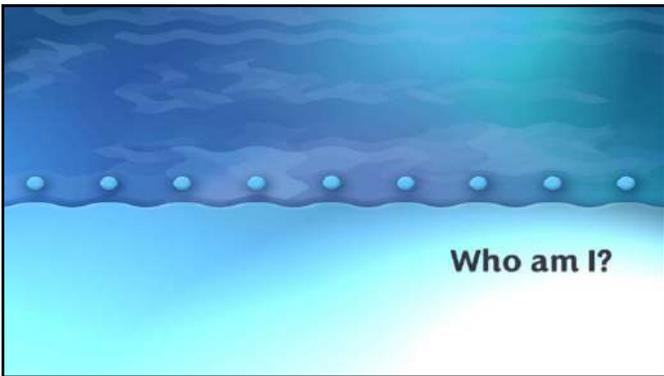
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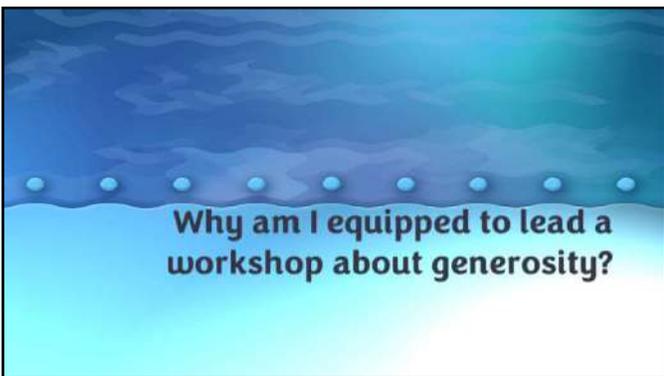
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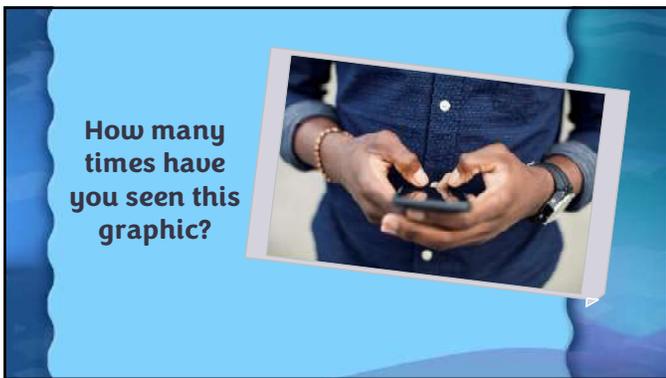
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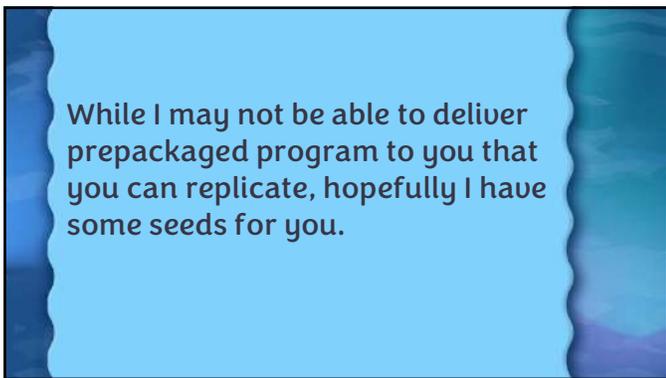
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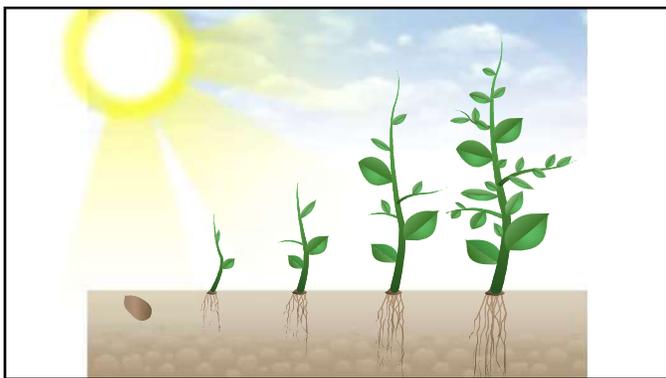
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How did Trinity reframe stewardship into a spiritual discipline of generosity?

Discernment  
Study of Scripture  
Prayer  
Personal Testimony  
Repetition

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Discernment - What shapes our theology of giving?

God loves us  
We accept God's love  
We love God in return  
We form community with God  
We cooperate with God

Vacek, Edward, SJ (1996). *Love, Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics*, Georgetown U. Press.

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Anglican Theologian David Ford calls, "coping with God and God's generosity...the central task of the Christian faith."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ford, D. (2005). *Living in Praise: Worshipping and Knowing God*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

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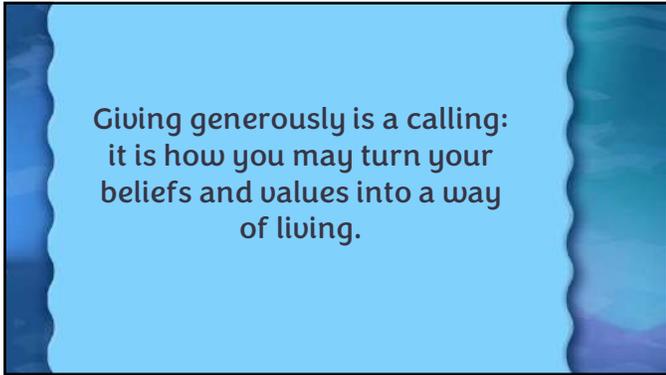
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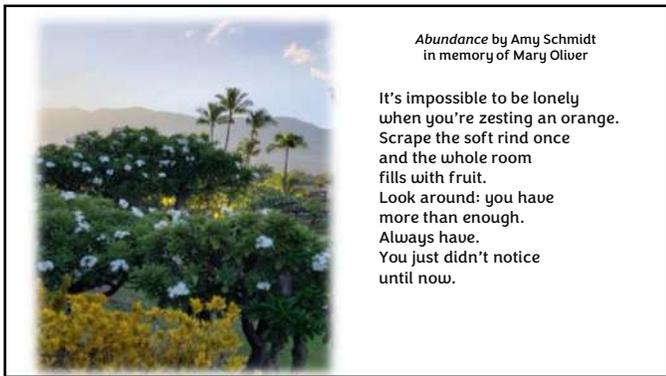
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**13 Weeks of Scripture for study and prayer**

Genesis 1.1-5 The Creation Story  
 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

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**Genesis 9.1-3, 16-17**

Noah, the aftermath of the flood and the rainbow

God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the air, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

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**Genesis 45.1-5**

Joseph offers forgiveness to his brothers.

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.

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### Exodus 16.11-16, 31

God provides manna to the Israelites in the wilderness.

The LORD spoke to Moses and said, "I have heard the complaining of the Israelites: say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'" In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: Gather as much of it as each of you needs, an omer to a person according to the number of persons, all providing for those in their own tents." The house of Israel called it manna: it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

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### Psalms 25.1-5

The earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it.

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me. Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

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### Proverbs 3.5-9

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, honor God with your first fruits.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body. Honor the LORD with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce:

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**Matthew 6.24-34**

Jesus talks about the birds and the lilies and God's provision.

"No one can serve two masters: for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. <sup>25</sup> Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup> And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? <sup>28</sup> And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

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**Matthew 6.24-34**

Jesus talks about the birds and the lilies and God's provision.

<sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you-- you of little faith? <sup>31</sup> Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" <sup>32</sup> For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. <sup>34</sup> So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

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**Luke 10.25-29**

Love God and love neighbor, the greatest commandments.

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>26</sup> He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" <sup>27</sup> He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." <sup>28</sup> And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." <sup>29</sup> But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

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**Luke 13.18-21**  
 Parables of the mustard seed and the yeast

He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what should I compare it? 19 It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches." 20 And again he said, "To what should I compare the kingdom of God? 21 It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

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**1 Peter 4.8-11**  
 Love, hospitality and being good stewards of God's grace.

Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Be hospitable to one another without complaining. 10 Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 11 Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

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**1 Corinthians 4.1**  
 Love, hospitality and being good stewards of God's grace.

Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries.

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**2 Corinthians 9.8**  
 Love, hospitality and being good stewards of God's grace.

And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

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**Ephesians 3.20**  
 Generosity grows.

To God - whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine -...

~The Inclusive New Testament by the Priests for Equality

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How did Trinity reframe stewardship into a spiritual discipline of generosity?

Discernment  
 Study of Scripture  
 Prayer  
 Personal Testimony  
 Repetition

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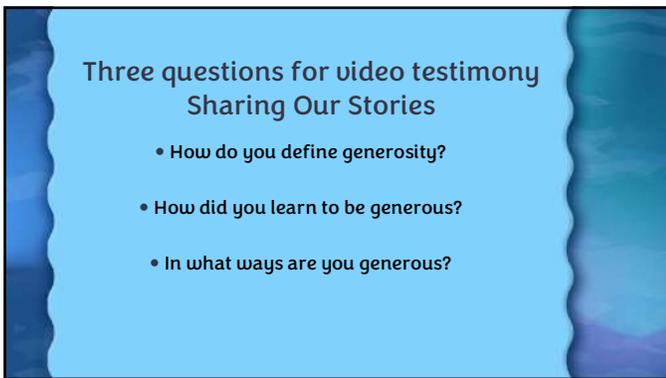
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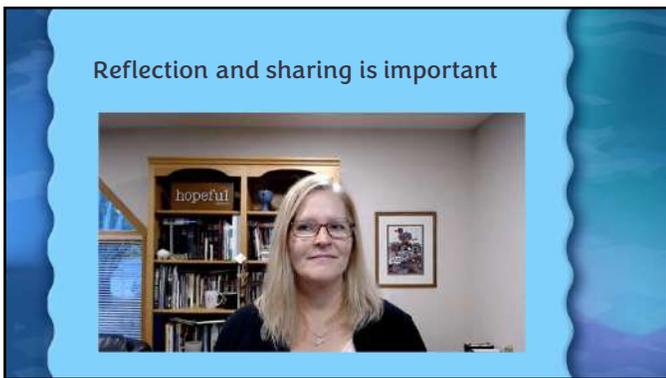
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Can putting together the annual report reflect the spiritual discipline of generosity?

- Yes, if you are intentional.
- Yes, if it is created to reflect the stories behind the numbers.
- Yes, if it reflects how generosity has impacted the church and the community.
- Yes, if it reflects the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

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**Caveat...change is tough**

- Even a simple change like changing to format of the annual report took time.
- After a year of intentionally focusing on the spiritual discipline of generosity for a year, the willingness to change the format of the annual report occurred literally without discussion.
- The session wanted the annual report to tell Trinity's story of generosity and connection.

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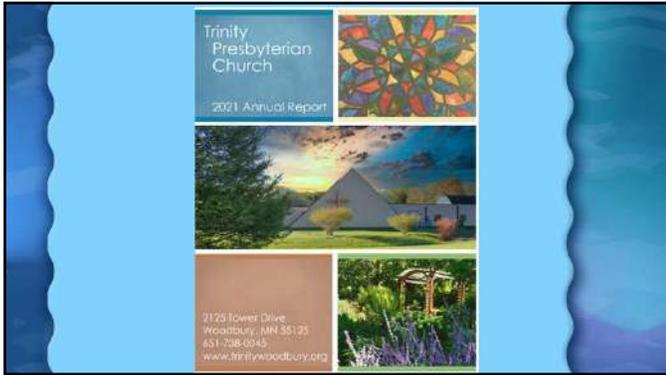
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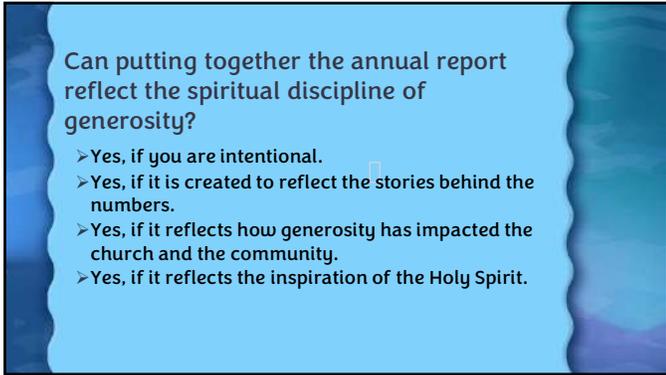
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