

Generosity

"Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity.

For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do." **2 Corinthians 8:1-5**

Opening Prayer

Check-In (Share an important or interesting thing from this past week.)

Exploring Generosity

Paul commends the churches of Macedonia in **2 Corinthians 8:1-5**. (Discuss their commitment to generosity. Why would they help another when they are so poor?)

"O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name! But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come

from you, and we give you only what you first gave us!" **1 Chronicles 29:13-14** (The writer acknowledges that all things come from God. How do you do that?)

"But Peter said, 'I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!'" **Act 3:6** (We speak of generosity of time, talent, and treasure. Is one more important than the others? What can we offer the Church and the broader community? Will we?)

From the **Book of Common Prayer**: "The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous are generous in giving." **BCP p. 635 Psalm 37:22** (To whom should we give? What should we give?)

"So you, too, must show love to foreigners, for you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt." **Deuteronomy 10:19** (Have you ever felt like a stranger in a new church before? How were you welcomed? By whom?)

"In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us." **Colossians 3:11** (What are we doing at SMM to welcome people to this new life? Are you a part of that? Should you be? How can you become involved?)

Closing Observations

Closing Prayer

All Bible quotes are from the New Living Translation.