



THE OCTOBER BELL 2021

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I recently came across Peter Marty's thoughts on Generosity...

It has nothing to do with means and everything to do with desire.

There's an old tale of a monk who found a precious gemstone. He picked it up and put it in his knapsack and carried it with his few other belongings. One day he struck up a conversation with a traveler. When the monk opened his knapsack to share some food, the traveler saw the jewel and asked the monk to give it to him. The monk did so readily.

The traveler went on his way, overjoyed by this unexpected gift that would bring wealth and security for the rest of his life.

After a few days, however, the traveler returned in search of the monk. Once he found him, he immediately gave the stone back and begged of the holy man: "Please give me something much more precious than this stone, as valuable as it is. Give me that which enabled you to give it to me."

The particular feature of this monk that captures our attention is his generous spirit. Not his generous deed of giving away something precious, but his generous spirit that appears to shape his entire outlook on life.

I like to distinguish these two aspects of generosity. Any of us is capable of carrying out a kind or charitable deed. All it takes is a soft moment, brought on by a compelling grab at our emotions, and



You will be enriched
in every way to be
generous in every way,
which through us will
produce thanksgiving
to God.

2 Corinthians 9:11

our hands and wallets open wide. But a person who enjoys little spasms of generosity is not the same as one who is generous to the bone.

A life steeped in generosity pours out love unconsciously.

The most startling dimension of generosity may be the irrelevance of extensive means. Generosity has nothing to do with means, and everything to do with desire. The poorest of the poor can be as generous in spirit as the richest of the rich. The widow in the temple who gave her last two coins is emblematic of one whose desire runs deep.

When 5,000 people sat hungry before Jesus one day, the disciples saw only scarcity. They proposed a go-it-alone strategy for resolving the crisis. Everyone in the crowd was to head home and fend for him or herself. Jesus stepped in to transform their frugal thinking into the mystery of abundance. Breaking open five loaves and sharing two fish would provide enough for all.

“There is no free lunch,” we hear. “You get what you deserve.” So what do you make of people who love you more than you deserve? And what about God who forgives you in more ways than you can comprehend or repay?

A deep generosity in the heart of God easily puzzles.

I have never met a generous soul who is a grump. Should you ever encounter one, however, take a good second look. You won’t want to confuse bursts of charity with bone-deep generosity.

Blessings,

Pastor Craig

WORSHIP *with us*

In-Person Worship at 9:00 am Sunday mornings

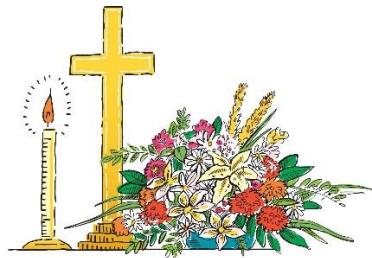
BROADCAST WORSHIP

WRPQ RADIO BROADCAST • 740 AM / 99.7 FM
at 11:00 am

(also streamed on their web site – www.wrpq.com at 11:00 am)

*Worship
with us
from
HOME*

In Memory and Celebration



- October 3 Flowers in memory of Steve's parents by Steve and Karen Stuelke
- October 10 Flowers in memory of Clark Justesen by Jen Justesen
- October 24 Flowers in memory of parents by Jack and Boni Hanson
- Candle in celebration of Cole's birthday by Dennis and Jan Dorow



Bethany Women

BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday, October 12

River's Edge on County A

Breakfast at 9:00 and Bible Study at 10:00 am

The Bible study can be found in the September/October issue of *Gather* magazine. Come even if you can't stay for the entire meeting or don not have a copy of the magazine. Copies of the study will be available at the meeting.

At 11:00 am, following the study, the Women's Board will have a short meeting.

BAKE SALE

Thank you to all who contributed with baked goods or money to our successful Wo-Zha-Wa bake sale on September 17. The proceeds totaled \$1,128.55.

HEALTH KITS

The Women of Bethany will assemble health kits for Lutheran World Relief on Tuesday, October 19 at 6:30 pm in the church quilting/study room. Come join us!

WOMEN'S SUNDAY

Sunday, October 17

On Display in the Narthex: Quilts and Personal Care Kits



Classes start at 9:45 and end at 10:30 am on Sunday mornings.

There are two groups: preschoolers through early elementary, and mid-to-late elementary.

Enroll your child by calling the church office, emailing Pastor Craig,
or simply attending on Sunday morning!

