

LEADER'S GUIDE

2021: THE YEAR OF GENEROSITY



THE JERUSALEM COLLECTION

"Funding the Mission"

Deacon Sherry Krieger
Pastor Sarah Schaaf
Bishop Daniel Beaudoin



Northwestern Ohio Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	pg. 1
Welcome Letter	pg. 2
Tips for Leaders	pgs. 3-5
Bible Study Resources	pg. 6
The Jerusalem Collection: An Introduction	pgs. 7-8
The Jerusalem Collection: Key Scripture Passages & Memory Verses	pg. 9
Studies and Conversation	
Study #1: A Heart for Generosity	pgs. 10-12
Study #2: Remember the Poor	pgs. 13-15
Study #3: Direction for the Collection	pgs. 16-18
Study #4: Theology of Generosity	pgs. 19-21
Study #5: Principles of Generosity	pgs. 22-25
Study #6: Sharing Generosity	pgs. 26-28
12 Cs of Leadership	pgs. 29-31

Welcome Letter

Dear Friends in Christ,

Welcome to 2021: The Year of Generosity. Our focus this year will be on Funding the Mission. God has a mission, and God's mission has a church, and God's church is full of generous people who have abundant gifts and resources; gifts and resources that we are called to share. In the Book of Acts, Jesus reminds us that, "...It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35c). Generosity is at the heart of following Jesus.

One of my favorite Bible verses related to generosity is recorded in the Sermon on Mount (see the Gospel of Matthew chapters 5-7). The Bible verse is Matthew 6:21, which will serve as our 2021 Year of Generosity memory verse. **"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21).** This powerful verse reminds us that the spiritual practice of generosity can transform our hearts and lives, and at the same time, renew our parishes and communities. By practicing generosity, we are given the opportunity to partner with God to renew all things. This partnership is at the heart of the Northwestern Ohio Synod's mission:

Sent by the Crucified and Risen Jesus to Make Disciples, Equip Leaders, Strengthen Parishes, and Nurture New Communities for the Renewal of Northwestern Ohio and the World.

St. Paul also encourages the spiritual practice of generosity, and challenges the earliest followers of Jesus, to think not only of themselves, but to consider the needs of the wider community. The Jerusalem Collection is one example of St. Paul's call to generosity. The Jerusalem Collection was a generous financial gift given by Paul's newly formed churches in Galatia, Philippi, and Corinth, to meet the needs of those experiencing hardship and poverty in Jerusalem. In addition to helping those in need, the Jerusalem Collection also served to break down long established barriers and bring unity to the Church of Jesus Christ. The spiritual practice of generosity is one of the gifts God uses to renew both the church and the world.

What follows is a 6-session Bible study on the Jerusalem Collection. Open your Bible, gather with a group of friends, get outside the 4 walls of the congregation, and learn what God desires to teach you. But be careful. Be very, very careful, because God's Word has the power to transform people and communities from who we are, into the people and communities that God longs for us to be.

Let us pray,

O God, in your love you have given the people of this land gifts of abundance beyond what our forebears knew or could imagine. Mercifully grant that we may not be so occupied with material things that we forget spiritual gifts, and thus, even though we have gained the whole world, lose our souls, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship pg. 80)

Blessings,
Bishop Daniel G. Beaudoin

Tips for Leaders

“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”

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

God is generous. Always has been and always will be. From God's Gift of Creation to the Call of Abraham. From the Exodus out of Egypt to the Return from Exile. From the Promise of a Coming Messiah to the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus. From the Giving of the Holy Spirit to God's Eternal Promise to Make All Things New. God is generous. Always has been and always will be.

As the beloved people of God, we get to reflect God's love by living generously in the community and the world. One of the best ways to discern and practice God's call to generosity is to gather with others for prayer, Scripture, and conversation.

Thank you for your willingness to lead this sacred endeavor. If this is something new for you, no need to worry, simply trust in the promise of God's presence (see Matthew 28:20b).

These guided conversations are designed to be “user friendly” and flexible. They may be used with different groups and in a variety of settings: congregational study groups, lunch studies with co-workers, gatherings with friends at a coffee shop, etc. Simply adapt the lessons to your group and context, but I would encourage you to follow the pattern of the original apostles and lead these studies out in the “marketplace” (outside the 4 walls of the church building). You never know who may be watching, listening, and wondering. These studies are intended to last around 60 minutes.

Now, you don't need to be a Bible scholar to lead a Bible study. These lessons are not designed to help you lecture, but to help you to facilitate group reflection and conversation. Below are some suggestions to assist you.*

Before the Study

1. Pray. Pray that God would guide you to lead faithfully. Pray for the participants (by name) who will gather for conversation. Ask God to open your heart and mind to hear God's Word that it may motivate you to a new way of thinking and being.
2. Read and then slowly re-read the assigned Bible passage(s). Write down particular and peculiar words and phrases. Use the notes from a Study Bible or a Bible Dictionary for insight (see Bible Study Resources on page 6).
3. Carefully work through both the leader and student lessons. Take time to meditate and reflect on each question. Write your responses in the space provided.
4. Consider ways to apply the assigned Bible passage to your life. Those who are gathered for study will follow your lead. They will not go any deeper than you.

Tips for Leaders

During the Study

1. Be sure that everyone in your group has the necessary materials: Bible, student guide, pen, or pencil. It will be helpful to have a Study Bible and Bible Dictionary available for the group gathering.
2. As you gather for the first time, share with the participants that these studies are meant to be reflections and conversations, not lectures. Encourage everyone to participate. Refrain from putting pressure on those who may be hesitant to share, especially during the initial gatherings.
3. Begin each study on time and with a Bible verse. The assigned “memory verse” (see page 9) for each session is a great place to start.
4. Ask for prayer requests and then lead an opening prayer. Pray for the concerns mentioned by the participants and ask God to help the group to understand and apply the Bible passage.
5. Take a moment to share any pertinent announcements and to review some of the highlights from last week’s lesson.
6. Have someone from the group read the Introduction. Having someone else (besides the leader) read is a great way to cultivate confidence and raise up new leaders.
7. Discuss the “Opening Reflection” questions before the Bible passage is read. The “Opening Reflection” introduces the theme of the study and helps participants to “warm up” and begin to engage one another in conversation. Encourage as many participants as possible to respond to the “Opening Reflection” questions. Be ready to get the conversation going with your own response.
8. Have a group member read the Bible passage(s) to be studied aloud. One effective method is for one participant to read the passage at normal speed followed by another participant re-reading the passage at a slower speed. It is good to hear different voices.
9. Invite participants to read the study questions aloud and then share their responses with the group.

Tips for Leaders

10. Tips for Leading Discussion

- a. Avoid answering your own questions. When the leader does most of the talking, other participants will become passive and silent.
- b. Don't fear the silence. Some folks need time to think through a question before responding. Moments of quiet are ok. Learn to savor them.
- c. Encourage multiple answers. Ask, "What do the rest of you think?" or "Does anyone have anything else to share?"
- d. Try to be affirming. Especially affirm participation. Never shut someone down. If an answer is clearly off the mark, simply ask, "Which verse led you to that response?" Or "What do the rest of you think?"
- e. During the initial sessions most of the conversation will be directed to the leader (you). As participants become more comfortable, they will begin to interact with one another. This interaction is the mark of a healthy and growing group. Cultivate it.
- f. Don't shy away from controversy or conflict. It is one of the ways we grow. If an issue cannot be resolved, don't become frustrated. Explain that the group will move on and that God may enlighten all of you by the time you meet again.
- g. Periodically pause to summarize what the participants have said about the passage. This helps bring together the various ideas and gives continuity to the study. The goal is that folks will leave with 1 or 2 "nuggets" from the study to apply in their daily lives.

11. Conclude your time together by asking a participant to pray the prayer at the end of each lesson. This is another great way to cultivate confidence and raise up new leaders.

12. End on time.

* adapted from "Bible Studies for Everyone" by N.T. Wright

Bible Study Resources

Study Bibles

Lutheran Study Bible - NRSV (2009) Published by Augsburg Fortress

Harper Collins Study Bible – NRSV (2006) Published by Harper One

NIV Zondervan Study Bible – NIV (2015) Published by Zondervan

Bible Dictionary/Handbook

Harper Collins Bible Dictionary (2011) Published by Harper One

Halley's Bible Handbook (2014) Published by Zondervan

Bible Atlases

The Student Bible Atlas (2015) Published by Augsburg Fortress

Zondervan Atlas of the Bible (2010) Published by Zondervan

Commentaries

The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary by Ben Witherington III
(1998) Published by William B. Eerdmans Company

Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary by Joseph Fitzmyer
(1993) The Anchor Bible: Volume 33. Published by Doubleday

Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians
by Ben Witherington III (1995) Published by William B. Eerdmans Company

2 Corinthians by Judith A. Diehl (2020). The Story of God Bible Commentary Series.
Published by Zondervan

Other

The Offering of the Gentiles: Paul's Collection for Jerusalem in Its Chronological, Cultural, and Cultic Contexts by David J. Downs (2008) Published by William B. Eerdmans Company

Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps, and Timelines (2015) Published by Rose

The Jerusalem Collection: An Introduction

St. Paul of Tarsus was a man with a God given mission, and his mission was three-fold. First, Paul was called by God (Acts 9) to make disciples, though curiously, he never uses the word “disciple” in his writings. Instead, Paul forms and nurtures new disciples by encouraging them to “imitate me” (1 Corinthians 4:16; Philippians 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:7), which is exactly what Timothy, Titus, Silas, and Phoebe do. They imitate Paul and become faithful followers of Jesus.

Second, Paul was called by God to establish house churches, which he does with a group of traveling companions in places like Galatia, Philippi, and Ephesus. Many of Paul's letters are addressed to these newly established house churches. In the Letter to the Romans, Paul writes about his call to form and nurture new communities of faith. *“Thus, I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, ‘Those who have never been told of him shall see, and those who have never heard of him shall understand’”* (Romans 15:20-21).

Finally, Paul was called by God to raise funds, to take a collection for those experiencing hardship and poverty in Jerusalem. In addition to helping those in need, the Jerusalem Collection also served to break down barriers and bring unity to the early church. This call to take a “collection for the saints” (1 Corinthians 16:1), is always present, right below the surface of many of Paul's letters.

The Biblical narrative of the Jerusalem Collection begins in the Book of Acts chapter 11, which records the church in Antioch responding to a famine in Judea. A Christian prophet named Agabus predicts the coming of a severe famine (Acts 11:28). Ancient historians, including Josephus and Tacitus, record that several famines affected wide areas of the Roman Empire during the reign of Emperor Claudius (41-54 AD). Josephus writes that the area of Judea was hit particularly hard by famine. The church in Antioch sent Barnabas and Paul with a financial gift to help those who were suffering in Judea (Acts 11:30). Some Bible scholars call this relief effort from Antioch to Jerusalem, Paul's “Famine Visit”.

This “Famine Visit” was Paul's 2nd trip to Jerusalem and is most likely the same trip recorded in the Letter to the Galatians chapter 2. It is during this trip that Paul's mission and ministry are affirmed by the “pillars” of the Jerusalem Church (James, Peter, and John), as Paul is entrusted to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles. Paul is also encouraged to continue to “remember the poor” (Galatians 2:10), which Paul is eager to do through his call to organize the Jerusalem Collection in his newly formed Gentile house churches. We read in Acts 12:25, that Barnabas and Paul return to Antioch after completing their “Famine Visit” to Jerusalem.

In Paul's 1st and 2nd Letters to the Corinthians, we learn about the Jerusalem Collection in greater detail. In 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Paul offers practical advice about the collection. He encourages the Corinthians to take up the collection before he arrives. The best way for them to do this is to set aside and save from whatever extra they earn. There is no compulsion here, this is a voluntary collection. After Paul arrives, he will arrange (with the help of the Corinthians) the transport of the collection from Corinth to Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Collection: An Introduction

In 2 Corinthians chapters 8-9, Paul provides an in-depth look at the theology and principles behind the Jerusalem Collection. After writing 1 Corinthians, Paul learns that the “collection for the saints” (1 Corinthians 16:1), has stalled because of conflict. Paul writes 2 Corinthians, to address the conflict and to encourage the Corinthians to restart and complete the collection. Paul begins by pointing to the Macedonian churches as an example of generosity and encourages the Corinthians to imitate them (2 Corinthians 8:1-6).

For Paul, the Jerusalem Collection is more than a financial transaction; it is a response to the goodness and the grace of God. He uses theological terms to describe the collection. It is a “sharing” (2 Corinthians 8:4), that shows the unity between Gentile and Jewish Christians. It is a “ministry to the saints” (2 Corinthians 9:1), and a particular way of serving those in need. It is also an “act of grace” (2 Corinthians 8:6,7,9), which is a direct response to the grace the Corinthians have received from God. According to Paul, generous giving is faithful, thoughtful, proportional, and voluntary. Generous giving is an act of faith given out of gratitude for the grace all of us have received from God.

At the end of Paul’s Letter to the Romans 15:22-33, Paul shares his intended travel itinerary with the Roman Christians, while he is on his way to Jerusalem. He shares that the Jerusalem Collection was fully funded by the churches in Macedonia (Philippi and Thessalonica) and Achaia (Corinth), to provide relief for the poor in Jerusalem (Romans 15:26). Paul states that the task of receiving the collection is complete, and only the delivery remains. Paul concludes this section of the letter by asking the Roman Christians to pray. His request for prayer is two-fold: first for his personal safety, and secondly that the collection would be received favorably by the Church in Jerusalem. Even as Paul fulfills his God given call to raise funds to alleviate suffering and to “remember the poor”, he still has doubts about how the distressed Jewish Christians will receive this generous financial gift collected by a growing Gentile Church.

According to the Book of Acts, chapter 21, we read that Paul finally arrives in Jerusalem, though there is no mention of the Jerusalem Collection and how it is received (or not received) by the Church in Jerusalem. We might speculate, and many Bible scholars do speculate. Or we can simply find hope in the promise that God’s grace is sufficient and our simple and generous response to that grace is always reward enough.

The Jerusalem Collection

Passages and Verses

Key Scripture Passages

Matthew 6:19-21 Sermon on the Mount "Concerning Treasures"

Acts 11:19-30 The Church in Antioch

Galatians 2:1-10 Paul's Famine Visit to Jerusalem

1 Corinthians 16:1-4 Directions for the Collection for the Saints

2 Corinthians 8 Complete the Collection for the Saints

2 Corinthians 9 Generosity: Theology and Principles

Romans 15:22-33 Paul's Travel Itinerary

Acts 21:17-19 Paul Arrives in Jerusalem

Memory Verses

Study 1

Matthew 6:21

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Study 2

Acts 11:26c

"... and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christians'."

Study 3

1 Corinthians 16:2a

"On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn..."

Study 4

2 Corinthians 8:7

"Now as you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you - so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking."

Study 5

2 Corinthians 9:7

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Study 6

Romans 15:26

"For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to share their resources with the poor among the saints of Jerusalem."

Leader Study #1: A Heart for Generosity

1. Read the Opening **Scripture** Verse: Matthew 6:21
2. Take **Prayer** Requests and Lead an Opening Prayer
3. Offer a **Welcome** and Lead Introductions
4. Offer Any **Announcements** that Are Pertinent to the Group
5. **Introduction** to the Study (encourage a participant to read)

We begin our study on generosity in the heart of Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount* (Matthew chapters 5-7). This sermon is filled with several well-known and treasured passages, including the Beatitudes (5:3-12); the Lord's Prayer (6:9-13); and the Golden Rule (7:12). As we read Matthew chapter 6, Jesus' teaching leads us back to the Shema from Deuteronomy 6:4-5, "*Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might*". The ancient Israelites were called to love God with everything they had; to give their full hearts and minds to God.

In Matthew chapter 6, Jesus encourages his followers to praise God through the spiritual practices of almsgiving (6:1-4), prayer (6:5-15), fasting (6:16-18), and generosity (6:19-21). In Matthew 6:19-24, we read a series of three short statements from Jesus that appear to be disconnected. What does treasure in heaven have to do with a sound eye and serving only one master? In Luke's Gospel, these three sayings are found in three separate locations (Luke 12:33-34; 11:34-35; 16:13). Matthew arranges these three sayings together to emphasize the call for the disciples of Jesus to have a "true heart" for God. Seeking earthly treasures, having an unsound eye, and trying to serve two masters pushes and pulls us in multiple directions. The only way to navigate our way through these all-consuming demands is to focus *all our heart, all our soul, and all our might* (Deuteronomy 6:5), on God. Like the ancient Israelites who were called to love God with everything they had; we too are called to give our full hearts and minds to God.

One of my Bible professors during my time at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, was Dr. Mark Alan Powell. In 2006, he wrote a book on Christian generosity called *Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life*. Dr. Powell argues that generosity is a spiritual discipline, just as Bible reading, prayer, fasting, and worship are spiritual disciplines. He further argues that we can grow in our love for God by practicing the spiritual discipline of generosity, for generosity is directly connected to the status and condition of our hearts.

In Matthew 6:21, Jesus says, "*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*" This is a hopeful Bible verse, for it shows that generosity has the power to change (grow) our hearts. Think about it. According to Jesus, the sharing of our treasure does not simply reveal who we are. The sharing of our treasure has the potential to determine who we will become.

"For where your treasure is >>>>>>> there your heart will be..."

Generosity can indeed change our hearts, and changed hearts have the potential to change the community and the world.

Leader Study #1: A Heart for Generosity

6. Opening Reflection Questions

- A. In what ways do materialism and consumerism draw us away from God and away from others?
- B. Think about a time you changed your mind about someone or something. As you are comfortable, please share that story with your study group.

7. Study and Conversation

A. Concerning Treasures (read Matthew 6:19-21).

1. When you hear the word “treasure” what immediately comes to mind?

Please list your top 3 responses

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. What is the most valuable thing (treasure) you own? What is the story behind it? What makes it so valuable to you?

3. Consumerism can consume us. Many of us suffer from affluenza. What does the Bible teach about excessive accumulation?

- a. Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 **In the end, pleasure and possessions are meaningless.**
- b. Luke 12:13-21 **Life does not consist in the abundance of one's possessions. Greed can keep us from being rich toward God.**

4. In Matthew 6:19, Jesus uses three images to warn us about the temporary nature of earthly treasures? What are the three images and how do they help us see the futility of storing up treasures on earth?

- a. Moths**
- b. Rust**
- c. Thieves**

5. Dream together about what your life might look like if you gave away 50% of your possessions? How about 75%? Or 90%? Does this exercise give you a sense of foreboding or a sense of freedom? What is your heart telling you?

Leader Study #1: A Heart for Generosity

6. Ponder these words, “The sharing of our treasure does not simply reveal who we are. The sharing of our treasure has the potential to determine who we will become”. Do these words sound threatening or promising (or both)? Do you think these words are true?

7. Based upon today’s learning and conversation, how might you view the spiritual discipline of generosity differently?

8. Closing Question: What is your one take away from today’s study? With whom might you share this “take away” this week?

9. Homework:

- Read the Book of Acts 11:19-30 and the Letter to the Galatians 2:1-10
- Memory Verse Matthew 6:21
- Work through Study #2
- Check out this Bible Project Video on St. Paul (6:00 minutes)
 - <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/gospel-acts-2>

10. Closing Prayer: **O God, in your love you have given the people of this land gifts of abundance beyond what our forebears knew or could imagine. Mercifully grant that we may not be so occupied with material things that we forget spiritual gifts, and thus, even though we have gained the whole world, lose our souls, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship pg. 80)

Leader Study #2: Remember the Poor

1. Read the Opening **Scripture** Verse: Acts 11:26c
2. Take **Prayer** Requests and Lead an Opening Prayer
3. Offer a **Welcome** and Lead Introductions
4. Offer Any **Announcements** that Are Pertinent to the Group
5. Review: Any **Questions / Comments** from Last Week's Study?
6. **Memory Verse** is Matthew 6:21 (ask for volunteers)
7. **Introduction** to the Study (encourage a participant to read)

As stated in the Introduction (pgs. 7-8), Paul has a three-fold mission: to make disciples, to establish and nurture house churches, and to raise funds for those experiencing hardship and poverty in Jerusalem. Paul's primary call by the crucified and risen Jesus is to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15), and this call is confirmed by the pillars of the church (James, Peter, and John), during Paul's 2nd visit to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:7-9). After a time of formation in the desert, followed by trips to Damascus and Jerusalem, Paul arrives in the Syrian city of Antioch (Galatians 1:17-21), where he teaches with Barnabas for a full year (Acts 11:26).

Antioch was an important city for the early church, for it was a place of mission and sending. Christian missionaries (including Paul and Barnabas) are equipped and sent into the world from Antioch. Antioch was large, cosmopolitan, wealthy, and heavily influenced by Greco-Roman culture. It is in Antioch that the good news of Jesus is successfully shared with a Gentile audience, with a strong emphasis on the grace of God and God's gift of faith. It is in Antioch that the followers of Jesus are first called Christians (Acts 11:26). In the history of the early church, Antioch plays a major role in the formation, equipping, and sending of second and third generation Christians.

As we read in Paul's Letter to the Galatians, there is tension between the Church in Antioch and the Church in Jerusalem. Though smaller, more insular, and deeply influenced by Jewish culture, Jerusalem remains the birthplace of Christianity. It remains the place of the Apostles (James, Peter, John), and most of the folks who follow Jesus were born and raised in Judaism. Jerusalem is also a place of pilgrimage. Rather than being sent from Jerusalem, people of faith come to Jerusalem, including Barnabas and Paul.

We read in Acts 11:29-30 that the Church in Antioch sends Barnabas and Paul to Jerusalem with a financial gift to help those who are suffering from famine. Some Bible scholars call this relief effort from Antioch to Jerusalem, Paul's "Famine Visit". This is Paul's second trip to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1-10), and it is during this trip that Paul receives the support of the "pillars" of the Jerusalem Church (James, Peter, John), to share the Gospel with the Gentiles. Paul is also encouraged to "remember the poor" (Galatians 2:10), which he is eager to do through his call to raise funds in the newly established Gentile house churches. In Acts 12:25, we read that Barnabas and Paul return to Antioch after completing their "Famine Visit" to Jerusalem.

Leader Study #2: Remember the Poor

8. Opening Reflection Questions

- A. Even in the early church there was a clash of cultures in places like Antioch and Jerusalem. Can you think of some cultural clashes taking place in the Church today? How might we find ways to navigate through these cultural changes and focus on God's mission?
- B. As followers of Jesus how do we care for the poor on a global scale? In what ways might we care for the poor on a more personal level?

9. Study and Conversation

A. The Church in Antioch (read Acts 11:19-30).

1. What are a few key events that occurred in the city of Antioch during this time?
 - a. 11:20-21 **disciples from Cyprus and Cyrene (Greek speakers) reach out to the Hellenists (fellow Greek speakers) to tell them about Jesus.**
 - b. 11:22 **The Church in Jerusalem sends Barnabas to Antioch to check things out**
 - c. 11:25-26 **Barnabas travels to Tarsus to fetch Saul and bring him to Antioch as a missionary to the Gentiles.**
 - d. 11:26 **It is in Antioch that the disciples are first called Christians**
 - e. 11:29-30 **The disciples take a collection for those suffering in Judea and send Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem to deliver it.**
2. Antioch is a newly established church that reaches out to help the "Mother Church" in Jerusalem. What are some ways God calls us to honor those who came before us? Think about ancestors, church elders, old neighborhoods, and established congregations.

B. The Church in Jerusalem (read Galatians 2:1-10).

1. What are a few key events that occurred in the city of Jerusalem during this time?
 - a. 2:1 **Paul, Barnabas, and Titus travel to Jerusalem**
 - b. 2:2-5 **Paul presents to the "pillars" of the Church of Jerusalem the good news that he is sharing with the Gentiles**
 - c. 2:6-9 **Paul receives the support of the "pillars" of the Jerusalem Church (James, Peter, John), to share the Gospel with the Gentiles.**
 - d. 2:10 **The church leaders in Jerusalem asks Barnabas and Paul to "remember the poor".**

Leader Study #2: Remember the Poor

2. A severe famine in Judea has caused the established Church in Jerusalem to struggle to meet the needs of the poor. The Church in Antioch offers generous financial assistance. Are there established churches and ministries in your neighborhood / community that help those who are experiencing poverty. Are there way that you and your local church might provide financial and other resources?

3. Based upon today's learning and conversation, in what ways might you personally reallocate your resources to help those in need?

10. Closing Question: What is your one take away from today's study?

With whom might you share this "take away" this week?

11. Homework:

- Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-4
- Memory Verse Acts 11:26c
- Work through Study #3
- Check out this Bible Project Video on 1 Corinthians (8:46 minutes)
 - <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/1-corinthians>

12. Closing Prayer:

God of Promise, Your Word is as sweet as honey, and your promise fills us with life. As we gather around the table to eat and drink, we remember all those who go without the nutrition needed to sustain them. Bless the farmers who work in the fields, helping them produce what is needed for life. Bless the children whose growing bodies need the nourishment of the harvest. And bless us with the wisdom to meet them face to face. Give to us all your daily bread and fill us with your everlasting promise of life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

(Mealtime Prayer from Lutheran World Relief)

Leader Study #3: Direction for the Collection

1. Read the Opening **Scripture** Verse: 1 Corinthians 16:2a
2. Take **Prayer** Requests and Lead an Opening Prayer
3. Offer a **Welcome** and Lead Introductions
4. Offer Any **Announcements** that Are Pertinent to the Group
5. Review: Any **Questions / Comments** from Last Week's Study?
6. **Memory Verse** is Acts 11:26c (ask for volunteers)
7. **Introduction** to the Study (encourage a participant to read)

The first time that Paul specifically mentions the Jerusalem Collection is in his First Letter to the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 16:1, Paul coins the phrase “the collection for the saints”. Some Bible scholars argue that the previous gift sent to Jerusalem from Antioch was a one-time collection to specifically help those who were suffering from famine in Judea (Acts 11:29-30). The “collection for the saints” that Paul writes about in 1 Corinthians is different. This collection is an organized and ongoing fund to assist the Church in Jerusalem. The “collection for the saints” is an initiative for Paul’s newly established house churches to offer financial support for the “Mother Church” in Jerusalem. In Paul’s 1st and 2nd Letters to the Corinthians, we learn about the Jerusalem Collection in greater detail.

Several years after the “Famine Visit” to Jerusalem, Paul writes 1 Corinthians. In this letter, Paul offers faithful counsel and guidance on a number of issues that are causing conflict in Corinth, including: lawsuits, spiritual gifts, and sexual immorality. At the end of this letter, Paul briefly touches on the Jerusalem Collection. In four verses, Paul instructs the Corinthians on what they should do with the collection before he visits (16:1-2), and what will occur once he arrives (16:3-4). Paul’s instruction to the Corinthians is very practical.

Paul begins by offering the same directions for the collection that he gave the newly established churches in Galatia. This is a good reminder for the Corinthians (and for us), that a congregation does not stand alone, but is intricately connected to the world-wide Christian Church.

Paul then encourages the Corinthians to develop an individual plan for giving. “*On the first day of the week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn...*” (1 Corinthians 16:2a). This instruction ensures that a generous fund will be built as the community gathers for weekly worship on Sunday. As we read Paul’s instruction, we see that there is no compulsion here; this is a voluntary collection. After Paul arrives, he will arrange (with the help of the Corinthians) the transport of the collection from Corinth to Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:3-4).

Leader Study #3: Directions for the Collection

8. Opening Reflection Questions

- A. Think about the phrase, “A congregation does not stand alone, but is intricately connected to the world-wide Christian Church”. We are a part of something greater than ourselves. What might happen when a follower of Jesus or a community of Jesus followers (church), focuses solely on itself?
- B. Are you a focused planner or a free spirit? What are some of the benefits of lists, plans, and goals? What are some of the drawbacks? How might you find a healthy balance?

9. Study and Conversation

A. The Galatian Example (read 1 Corinthians 16:1)

1. What church does Paul use as an example for the Church in Corinth to imitate?

a. Churches in Galatia

2. Are there other instances in Paul’s letters where he encourages “imitation”?

a. 1 Corinthians 4:16 **Paul appeals to the Corinthians to imitate him.**

b. Philippians 3:17 **Paul appeals to the Philippians to imitate him and those who live by Paul’s example. Imitate the imitators.**

c. 2 Thessalonians 3:7 **Paul encourages the Thessalonians to imitate us (Paul, Silvanus, Timothy).**

3. What are the possible benefits of imitating someone else? What are some of the possible drawbacks?

4. Is there a follower of Jesus whom you have sought to imitate? As you are comfortable tell your study group about this person.

B. Direction for the Collection (read 1 Corinthians 16:2)

1. What specific instruction does Paul give for the Jerusalem Collection?

a. When is it done? **“first day of the week”**

b. Who does it? **“each of you”**

c. What is done? **“put aside and save whatever extra you earn”**

d. Where is it done” (hint: city?) **“in Corinth”**

e. Why is it done? **“So that the collection will be complete before Paul arrives”**

Leader Study #3: Directions for the Collection

2. What does 1 Corinthians 16:2 teach us about regular giving? About proportional giving? About a plan for giving, rather than last minute giving? Please discuss with your study group.

C. Trusted Fiscal Leaders (read 1 Corinthians 16:3-4)

1. Why do you think Paul encourages the Corinthians to select trusted traveling companions to help deliver the collection to Jerusalem?

a. **To help guard the collection from robbers and to ensure against embezzlement. When it comes to financial matters it is always wise to involve several trusted people so no one is tempted and there is no cause for criticism in the way money is handled.**

2. True or False: *Generous parishes are led by generous people.* Please discuss your response with your study group.

10. Closing Question: What is your one take away from today's study? With whom might you share this "take away" this week?

11. Homework:

- Read 2 Corinthians 8
- Memory Verse 1 Corinthians 16:2a
- Work through Study #4
- Check out this Bible Project Video on 2 Corinthians (8:38 minutes)
 - <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/2-corinthians>

12. Closing Prayer: **Lord Jesus, teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to seek reward, except that of knowing that I do your will. Amen.**

(Prayer for Generosity by St. Ignatius Loyola)

Leader Study #4: Theology of Generosity

by Pastor Sarah Schaaf

1. Read the Opening **Scripture** Verse: 2 Corinthians 8:7
2. Take **Prayer** Requests and Lead an Opening Prayer
3. Offer a **Welcome** and Lead Introductions
4. Offer Any **Announcements** that Are Pertinent to the Group
5. Review: Any **Questions / Comments** from Last Week's Study?
6. **Memory Verse** is 1 Corinthians 16:2a (ask for volunteers)
7. **Introduction** to the Study (encourage a participant to read)

There are moments in life when grace is so real that you experience it in your senses. So, when was the last time you tasted God's grace? There we were in Capetown, South Africa, crammed into a hut for worship. At the time I was a seminary student, completing my cross-cultural experience. We had spent the last few days in the townships near Capetown, shadowing medical workers through the community and listening to stories of the people who lived there. But today was Sunday so work stopped, it was time to worship. Worship in South Africa was unlike any service I had experienced. There was singing and dancing, sermon after sermon, testimonials, and long impassioned extemporaneous prayers. It went on for hours. It was loud, exciting, and exhausting. You felt as though the Holy Spirit was crammed into that tiny hut, sweating right alongside you. The townships of South Africa are a holdover from apartheid, South Africa's system of institutional racism. They are underdeveloped, racially segregated communities built on edges of major cities to section off people. They are often places of extreme poverty, but poverty is not what I remember most about that day.

We had been worshipping for hours. The air had grown so hot and thick, that it was difficult to catch your breath. We were melting. Our hosts must have anticipated our need, because they prepared a gift for us. They carried their offering forward to us with proud shoulders and wide smiles, glass bottles of cold soda. I can only imagine what was required to present such an offering. We felt loved and humbled all at the same time. It was the best soda I ever drank, but knowing we were the only ones who would receive it made it difficult to swallow. That was the day that I tasted God's grace.

In Chapter 8 of 2 Corinthians, Paul is on a mission. He is organizing a collection for the church in Jerusalem. Paul has had a turbulent relationship with the church in Corinth, but that does not stop him from making an appeal to them for a collection. By the time Paul arrives in Corinth, he wants to make sure that the church has set aside an offering for the impoverished church in Jerusalem. This collection would be used to address economic needs, but it also has a deeper purpose. It is an expression of the grace of Christ. Paul reminds the church in Corinth, that this isn't "a command" (8:8), it is a "privilege" (8:4) that reflects the genuineness of their love (8:8). This gracious offering bonds the church in Jerusalem and Corinth, Jewish and Gentile Christians. Their generosity is a statement that they are part of the same family of God.

For Paul this "generous undertaking" (8:6,7,9) is about more than money, it illustrates their practical theology. Practical theology is how we as Christians show what we believe by the way we live. If the church in Corinth has experienced the abundant grace of God through Christ, the natural response is to be generous.

Leader Study #4: Theology of Generosity

8. Opening Reflection Questions

- A. Share a story of a time when you experienced a true gift of grace? Try to step back into that moment. What did you see, hear, taste, smell, feel?
- B. Who did that gift bond you to? What did the gift say about what the gift giver believes?

9. Study and Conversation

A. A Story of Generosity (read 2 Corinthians 8:1-7)

- 1. How does Paul begin his appeal for generosity?
 - a. **By telling the story of the generosity of the church in Macedonia; how they gave generously despite their affliction.**
- 2. Describe the actions of the Macedonian churches? What do these actions tell us about what they believe (their theology)?
 - a. **They give in the midst of affliction (8:2)**
 - b. **They give voluntarily (8:3)**
 - c. **They give according to and beyond their means (8:3)**
 - d. **They regard it as a privilege (8:4)**
 - e. **They give themselves first to the Lord and then to others (8:5)**
 - f. **They believe this is how God gives to them**

B. Paul says the church in Macedonia gave generously, “begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints” (8:4). What makes giving feel like a privilege? What makes giving feel like an obligation?

- C. What is Paul doing by beginning this conversation by telling a story of generosity?
 - 1. **Stories of generosity tend to stir further acts of generosity. Stories are invitational. They invite us to discover what we believe.**

D. What are your favorite stories of generosity from the Bible? What do these stories teach us about who God is?

Practical Theology of Grace (read 2 Corinthians 8:8-9)

- E. Do you think we are able to be generous before we experience the generosity of God?
 - 1. **Most often in scripture an act of generosity is a response to the grace of God. We give because God gave to us.**

Leader Study #4: Theology of Generosity

F. At the center of Paul's appeal is the ultimate story of God's grace, the death and resurrection of Jesus. In what ways does this truth shape the way we live? (8:8)

The Desire To Do Something (read 2 Corinthians 8:10-15)

G. What does Paul hope that this offering will bring about? (see 8:13-15)

1. Fair Balance

H. In what ways do we see "fair balance" in our world? In what ways do we see an "unfair balance"? How does your parish work to "balance out" your community?

I. Paul ends his appeal by quoting Ex. 16:18, "The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little." He is referring to the collection of manna that the Israelites made in the wilderness. (Invite someone to summarize the story.) What did the manna teach the Israelites about their God?

1. That they weren't alone. God would provide.

Highlighting

J. Throughout this bible study we have been exploring impact stories of generosity. What stories from: (1) scripture, (2) your life, (3) your parish would you share to inspire generosity? How will you share them? Remember generosity is better caught than taught!

10. Closing Question: What is your one take away from today's study? With whom might you share this "take away" this week?

11. Homework:

- Read 2 Corinthians 9
- Memory Verse 2 Corinthians 8:7
- Work through Study #5
- Check out this Bible Project Video on Generosity (5:12 minutes)
 - <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/generosity>

12. Closing Prayer: **I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

(Philippians 1:3-6)

Leader Study #5: Principles of Generosity

by Deacon Sherry Krieger

1. Read the Opening **Scripture** Verse: 2 Corinthians 9:7
2. Take **Prayer** Requests and Lead an Opening Prayer
3. Offer a **Welcome** and Lead Introductions
4. Offer Any **Announcements** that Are Pertinent to the Group
5. Review: Any **Questions / Comments** from Last Week's Study?
6. **Memory Verse** is 2 Corinthians 8:7 (ask for volunteers)
7. **Introduction** to the Study (encourage a participant to read)

As we have learned, the Jerusalem Collection, the "collection for the saints," was an organized, ongoing fundraising effort established by Paul to raise money from the new, Gentile churches to assist the Church in Jerusalem. As he's teaching these new Jesus followers about personal generosity Paul offers several principles of generosity. We're going to look at three Principles of Generosity:

1. Characteristics of the Giver
2. Guidelines for Giving
3. Charitable Giving's ROI.

Have you heard of a "ROI?" It is a business term for "Return on Investment." Basically, we'll look at the benefits of generous giving as they are explained and gifted to us in 2 Corinthians Ch. 9.

Let's start with a couple scriptural characteristics of a generous giver. In 2 Corinthians chapter 9, Paul defines for us several characteristics of a Jesus follower and how they and the collective church may function in generosity. For Paul, a Generous Giver is:

A person of **Faith**: The Principles of Generosity are built first on a basis of faith that acknowledges and trusts what God has given us and will continue to provide for us when we give generously. These principles are so ingrained in Paul that he spends eight more verses detailing their implications (2 Corinthians 9:8-15).

A person of their **Word**: Paul talks about the promises that the church in Achaia (Corinth) has made to respond to the needs of others, the needs of the wider church, and he notes how important it is to keep that promise. Later we'll talk about the intentionality and determination of giving.

A person of **Compassion**: For Paul, it is imperative that a generous giver gives their money and support willingly, happily and voluntarily. This is so important to Paul, that he notes God's appreciation of the "cheerful giver," and warns that giving begrudgingly will have consequences.

Paul also offers us some practical advice on how to determine our giving choices. For Paul, the Guidelines for Giving are imbedded in intentional and thoughtful personal decisions that are made between the giver(s) and God (2 Corinthians 9:5-7). These are truly decisions of the heart when:

Leader Study #5: Principles of Generosity

Giving is planned and the amount decided upon is determined with deep reflection. Whether corporately or individually, advance directives and intentionality are important for faithful giving.

Giving is dependent upon one's resolve or determination to follow through to the end. One must choose deliberately to give "as you have made up your mind", with the calculated ability to complete the intention.

Giving is a private venture in which the decision to give depends upon one's heart and is settled there when the commitment is made. For Paul, our giving is reflective of how God gave everything to us, even his very Son (John 3:16). Our desire to give must illuminate God's giving to us, it's that simple.

Finally, Paul reminds us that there is always a ROI: Return on our Investment when we support and give generously to God's mission and ministry.

Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 9:10 that how we give determines our future ability to give. Thus, generous giving begets the continued ability to give even more generously because God promises to "multiply your seed" and "increase the harvest" when we trust enough to give abundantly.

The Return on Giving is 3-fold. Who benefits from generous giving?

- a. **The Givers and Receivers:** Blessings abound for the one/the community that gives generously, and of course those who receive the gift(s) and who have their needs met experience numerous benefits that may satisfy needs (2 Corinthians 9:8-12)
- b. **God:** God is glorified in generous giving. Thanksgiving and praise to God abounds on both sides: the giver shows a thankful heart, and responds in praise for all that God has given, and the receiver(s) overflowingly thanks God for both the generous gift that changes their life, and for the people who saw the need and responded. (2 Corinthians 9:11-12, 13, 15)
- c. **The Church:** Community is built, and parishes thrive, through generous giving because relationships are formed and grown between the giver and the receiver, the giving community and the receiving community. Prayers and grace flourish in a generous, open-hearted, benevolent and reciprocal environment! (2 Corinthians 9:13-14)

8. Opening Reflection Questions

A. In chapter 9 of 2 Corinthians, Paul uses some phrases, sayings, adages or "maxims" that help us remember the point he is trying to make, "...the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" (9:6). When we're telling stories, old adages are often used to get a point across, in our culture they might be: "Don't put all your eggs in one basket," or "Don't count your chickens before they hatch."

Leader Study #5: Principles of Generosity

Think about the stories and sayings of Jesus. What did Jesus say about generous giving, and what special sayings, adages did he use? What story(ies) did Jesus tell about generous giving?

B. Who is the most generous person you know? What makes them generous? Think about the qualities or behaviors that characterize this person.

1. What is one characteristic that you might adopt or emulate over the next year that will help you increase your own generosity?
2. Describe this person to the group, tell them what you admire about this person, and as you are comfortable, share the new behavior or quality of your 'generosity mentor' that you will strive for in the coming year.

9. Study and Conversation

A. Generosity is a leadership characteristic, and we are all leaders in some way, to someone or some group. Whether we are a parent, a friend, part of a hobby group, team, Sunday School teacher, or worshipper at church, someone is watching us, they're watching how we behave, work with, or treat others; as such, we are leaders.

In the Year of Mission, the Northwestern Ohio Synod staff developed a leadership tool that helps us define and understand the characteristics of leaders. You will find the **12 C's of Leadership** document at the end of this Study. Twelve **C**haracteristics are identified that are essential for leadership. They fall into 3 categories – those that reflect our **relationship to and with God**, those that reflect our **relationship with others**, and the personal characteristics that are expressive of the way we lead and live our life.

1. Paul helps us identify several characteristics of a generous giver, **Read 2 Corinthians 9:5-15** and identify texts that support these scriptural characteristics:

- a. A Person of **Faith: 2 Corinthians 9:8-11**
- b. A person of their **Word: 2 Corinthians 9:5 & 7**
- c. A person of **Compassion: 2 Corinthians 9:9,13**

2. **Review** the 12 C's of Leadership. Which of the 12 Characteristics correlates with Paul's scriptural descriptions of a generous giver:

- a. A person of **Faith**

Example: The Leader who is **Committed to Christ** shows they are a person of faith through praying and reading scripture regularly, worshipping God, is giving generously through tithes and offerings, and serving others in need

Leader Study #5: Principles of Generosity

b. A person of their **Word**

A person of their word is a person of **Character** and/or **Centered on Christ**.

Talk about the behaviors and qualities associated with these characteristics

c. A person of **Compassion**

·The leadership characteristic, **Compassion**, is reflected in both the person who *really sees* others who are in need, and the person who *freely responds* to those needs.

d. Study the other C's of Leadership and talk about their relationship to giving and generosity

B. Supporting the Church through glorifying and giving thanks to God, praying for each other and building relationships is inherent in generous giving. Paul identifies several ways God is thanked and by whom God is thanked when generous giving takes place. Take a look at 2 Corinthians 9:11-15 and make a list.

1. As a generous giver, how have you experienced thanks and received thanksgiving from others?
2. As a recipient, how have you given thanks to the giver?
3. What are some creative ways to thank those in your parish who give generously to others, to the mission, to God?
4. How have you experienced the church growing and/or new relationships being built with others due to the giving of time, talent and treasure?

10. Closing Question: What is your one take away from today's study? With whom might you share this "take away" this week?

11. Homework:

- Read Romans 15:22-33 and Acts 21:17-36; 24:17
- Memory Verse 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Work through Study #6
- Check out this Bible Project Video on Paul: Bound for Rome (4:49 minutes)
 - <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/gospel-acts-4>

12. Closing Prayer: **Living and loving God, you have given your people abundance beyond what our ancestors knew or could imagine. Give us your wisdom and grace to reflect on all that you have given, and to think, plan and respond to your calling to give generously to those in need. Allow our gifts to be a reflection of our faith in you so that we truly join you in mission and ministry with others. Build up your church through our generosity and help us love others genuinely so that our prayers of thanksgiving might arise in amazing and harmonious ways to glorify you, and you alone. In the strong name of Jesus we pray, Amen**

Leader Study #6: Sharing Generosity

1. Read the Opening **Scripture** Verse: Romans 15:26
2. Take **Prayer** Requests and Lead an Opening Prayer
3. Offer a **Welcome** and Lead Introductions
4. Offer Any **Announcements** that Are Pertinent to the Group
5. Review: Any **Questions / Comments** from Last Week's Study?
6. **Memory Verse** is 2 Corinthians 9:7 (ask for volunteers)
7. **Introduction** to the Study (encourage a participant to read)

At the end of Paul's Letter to the Romans 15:22-33, he shares his travel itinerary with the Roman Christians. After a trip to Jerusalem (to deliver the Jerusalem Collection), Paul plans to stop in Rome, while on his way to Spain. Paul shares that the collection to provide relief for the poor in Jerusalem was fully funded (Romans 15:26), by the churches in Macedonia (Philippi and Thessalonica) and Achaia (Corinth).

It is important to note that Paul uses the word "saints" for both the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem (Romans 15:25; 31), and the Gentile Christians in Rome (Romans 1:7; 16:2). The Jerusalem Collection is an act of unity between two Christian cultures. Gentile Christians contribute to the collection to show their appreciation for the spiritual blessings received from the Jewish Christian tradition. Jewish Christians receive the collection to show their appreciation for the financial blessings the Gentile Christians have shared.

Paul concludes this section of the letter by asking the Roman Christians to pray. His request for prayer is two-fold: first for his personal safety, and secondly that the collection would be received favorably by the Church in Jerusalem. Even as Paul fulfills his God-given call to raise funds to alleviate suffering and to "remember the poor", he still has doubts about how the Jewish Christians will receive a financial gift collected by Gentile Christians.

According to the Book of Acts, chapter 21:17-19, we read that Paul finally arrives in Jerusalem, though there is no mention of the Jerusalem Collection and how it is received (or not received) by the Church in Jerusalem. Paul does share with Governor Felix that the purpose of his trip to Jerusalem was to "...bring alms to my nation and to offer sacrifices" (Acts 24:17). Is Paul's reference to alms the Jerusalem Collection? We could speculate, and many Bible scholars do speculate. Or we can simply find hope in the promise that God's grace is sufficient and our simple and generous response to that grace is always reward enough.

8. Opening Reflection Questions

A. We never learn about how the Jerusalem Collection is received (or not received) by the Church in Jerusalem. It remains a mystery. As Christians how important is certainty for our faith? And how much room might we leave open for mystery?

B. We don't always get to see the direct results of the gifts and resources we share. In the Letter to the Hebrews 11:1, we read, "*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*". What role does faith play in our generosity to God, the Church, and to others?

Leader Study #6: Sharing Generosity

9. Study and Conversation

A. Paul's Travel Plans (read Romans 15:22-33)

1. Name some of the places that Paul intends to visit.
 - a. **Rome: the reason Paul writes this letter**
 - b. **Spain: Paul hopes that the Romans will help him get to Spain after he delivers the collection to Jerusalem (see Romans 15:24; 28).**
2. Did Paul ever make it to Rome or to Spain?
 - a. **Rome: yes. (see Acts 28:16) Spain: no.**
3. Rephrase Romans 15:27 in your own words. What is Paul getting at in this verse?
 - a. **They (Gentile Christians from Macedonian and Achaia) were happy to take up the collection, out of sacred duty. Since they received all the spiritual gifts that flowed out of the Jerusalem Church; it is only right that they do what they can to help the Jewish Christians.**
 - b. **The Gentiles enjoy all the blessings that God originally promised to the Israelites. The Gentiles are "grafted in" and also included as the people of God (see Romans 11:17-24).**
4. In Romans 15:31, Paul asks the Romans to pray for two specific things. What does Paul ask for?
 - a. **That he may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea**
 - b. **That his ministry (contribution) may be acceptable to the saints in Jerusalem**
5. Paul is worried about travelling to Jerusalem? What do you think he is worried about? Should Paul be worried? See Acts 21:27-32. What happens?
 - a. **Paul is seized by a mob in the Temple. They try to kill him, but he is saved by a group of Roman soldiers, who arrest him.**
6. What are some things that you worry about when you travel? How do you quiet these worries?

B. Paul Arrives in Jerusalem (read Acts 21:17-19; and 24:17)

1. How is Paul greeted by the Church leaders in Jerusalem?
 - a. **They welcome Paul and his traveling companions warmly**
2. What is Paul's stated reason for traveling to Jerusalem. What does he tell the Roman Governor Felix? Could Paul be referring to the Jerusalem Collection here? What do you think?
 - a. **To bring alms (Jerusalem Collection?) and to offer sacrifices.**

Leader Study #6: Sharing Generosity

10. Closing Question: What is your one take away from today's study? With whom might you share this "take away" this week?

11. Homework:

- Schedule a celebration lunch (or dessert) with your group for completing this study
- Schedule and take a study group "field trip" to learn first-hand about a Christian ministry in your neighborhood / community that is making a difference in the lives of people
- Develop a yearlong plan with your study group to support the above Christian ministry with your gifts of time and finances. Please note that "time" is listed first. Our generosity is about more than simply making a financial donation.

12. Closing Prayer: **Look with mercy, gracious God, upon people everywhere who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Rouse us from our complacency and help us to eliminate cruelty wherever it is found. Strengthen those who seek equality for all. Grant that everyone may enjoy a fair portion of the abundance of the earth, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship pg. 79)

12 Cs of Leadership

There are 12 Characteristics that are essential for leadership. They fall into 3 categories – those that reflect our **relationship to and with God**, those that reflect our **relationship with others**, and the **personal characteristics** that are expressive of the way we lead and live our life.

Leaders embody and exhibit the following 12 Characteristics:

Characteristics that reflect a Leader's relationship with God:

1. Committed to Christ

- Daily and regular prayer Life
- Engagement with Sacred Scripture (not sermon prep)
- Regular Worship (not while leading)
- Tithes (or working toward the tithe)
- Active in Service (within / outside church)

2. Centered (in God's will)

- Lives daily to follow Jesus
- Continually works at centering oneself in God's will and gets caught up in the mystery and grace of God
- Sees Church as the 'Body of Christ' (for the sake of the world)
- Family and friends are central relationships to experiencing God
- Knows the world, near and far, is deeply loved by the Crucified and Risen Jesus

3. Called

- Deeply believes God lives and works in and through us
- Remains open, curious and attuned to what God is doing personally and with the community
- Senses, hears and responds to God's urging, voice, calling
- Listens to the word of God and shares in the Lord's supper
- Is confident, through internal experience and the validation of others, that one has a part to play in the story of God's love for the world

Characteristics that reflect a Leader's relationship with Others:

4. Chemistry

- Able to play well with others
- Brings energy to the room
- Surrounds self with great and gifted people
- Emotionally Intelligent
- Interacts well with others

12 Cs of Leadership

5. **Compassion**

- Watchful and attentive
- Really sees others for who they are (Image of God)
- Empathetic
- Thoughtful, kind and responds to others' needs
- Aware of boundaries and keeps others safe

6. **Connectedness**

- Connected to Jesus
- Connected to Others
- Connected to the Church
 - Locally (with colleagues – ELCA, ecumenical and/or ministerial association, service organizations; knows and is known by key community leaders)
 - Synodically (provides synodical leadership, invests time and money)
 - ELCA (Churchwide and the larger Church)
 - Global (Lutheran World Federation and companion Churches)

7. **Creator of Community**

- Invites friends and strangers into conversation
- Hospitable
- Makes time and safe space for communication, conversation, and presence
- Networks, makes connections and builds community with others (on many different levels)

Personal Characteristics of a Leader:

8. **Character**

- Leads with Humility
- Lives with Integrity
- Cooperative and Intentional
- Self-Motivated and Loyal
- Has a Sense of Humor (able to laugh at self)
- Curious

9. **Capacity**

- Knows and shares one's spiritual and ministerial gifts and talents
- Spends intentional time in skill-building activities
- Can identify, invest in and foster growth in others (teacher / coach)
- Invests in self-growth (25% of professional time); reads, learns, grows; reads, learns, grows; reads, learns, grows

12 Cs of Leadership

10. **Courage**

- Acts bravely in difficult situations
- Makes tough decisions to achieve the mission
- Holds oneself and other people accountable
- Challenges / disciplines difficult behavior
- Holds high expectations and goes after what seems impossible
- Is Relational and connected to other curious and courageous people

11. **Catalyst**

- Inspires through communication / motivation
- Promotes, facilitates and leads adaptive change
- Challenges the norm for the sake of the Gospel mission
- Stimulates dreaming and vision for the future
- Strives for justice and peace

12. **Competent**

- Capable, skilled and knowledgeable in areas of leadership and relating to others
- Preaches and Teaches the Gospel (Lay or Ordained, knows how to share Jesus in words and actions)
- Cares for self and others effectively
- Leads a parish, team, group or community effectively
- Serves all people, following the example of Jesus