

# Life-Giving Generosity

An Adventure of Grace



OCTOBER 27-29, 2018



# Thermometers of Grace

## A Message from Matt Heard, Lead Pastor

Read about Pastor Matt at [northlandchurch.net/pastormatt](http://northlandchurch.net/pastormatt).

**GRACE.** It's a word most people in and out of church have heard. But do we understand it? God's grace is His loving posture toward us that gives us not what we deserve, but what we need. And instead of being gracious toward us in a sparse or grudging way, He does so in an extravagant fashion. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he refers to "the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us" (Ephesians 1:7-8, NIV).

Amazement over this grace God has exhibited toward us through Christ is what feeds our relationship with Him, our submission to Him and our engagement with one another. God took the first step toward us, and our response to His graciousness is what should fuel our lives, our relationships, our fulfillment, our obedience and our stewardship of everything He's given us.

Our new vision at Northland is engaging people to be fully alive in Jesus. Being fully alive includes taking a swan dive into the ocean of God's grace and experiencing it on a daily basis. But how do we know if we're experiencing His grace? What are some indicators?

In his letter to the church in Corinth, Paul refers to one particular gauge of grace that would surprise many. He explained, "We want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity" (2 Corinthians 8:1-2, NIV). And later Paul even used the phrase "this grace of giving" (v. 7).

A biblical truth that can transform a person's walk with Christ – and a church community's health – is a simple but liberating reality: extravagant grace leads to extravagant generosity. In fact, our generosity and patterns of giving can provide a "thermometer" reading of the degree to which we are grasping the grace of God. If there is a lack of generosity in our lives (with our time, our abilities or our finances), that is an indication of a lack of authentic engagement with God's grace.

This new season at Northland presents an exciting opportunity for us to embark on a Life-giving adventure. And a key component of this journey we are taking together will involve an open and honest evaluation of our grace-fueled generosity – toward one another, our church's new chapter and ultimately our world.

## UPCOMING SERVICES

### WEEK 44 » November 3-5

Life-Giving Generosity: An Adventure of Grace | Thermostats of Grace | 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 | Lead Pastor Matt Heard

### WEEK 45 » November 10-12

Life-Giving Generosity: An Adventure of Grace | A Loving Challenge | Mark 10:17 | John Cortines



# Generosity

This week we're learning how our generosity is a reflection of our spiritual condition. Our understanding of God's love and generosity to us leads us to extend love and generosity to others.

## WATCH THE VIDEO

[NorthlandChurch.net/Studies](http://NorthlandChurch.net/Studies)

Afterward have someone read the discussion questions in the "Hear God's Story" section and start the conversation.



## Share Your Story

Begin by praying together. This should be a brief, simple prayer in which you invite God to give you insight as you study. You can pray for specific requests at the end of your time together or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

*Then begin your time together by discussing the following questions.*

- When have you experienced generosity from someone else?
- What makes it hard to be generous with others?

## Hear God's Story, and Create a New Story

### READ 2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-7 (NIV) & LUKE 6:32-36 (NIV)

- What practices did God's grace prompt in the Macedonian church?
- What practices should God's mercy prompt in us, according to both Paul's exhortation in the 2 Corinthians passage and Jesus' call in Luke 6?
- The Macedonian church was extremely poor, yet they were insistent in their giving. How is that example of "rich generosity" different from or the same as what we think of as generosity in our modern culture?
- What are some practical ways you can practice "rich generosity"?
- What kinds of people did Jesus call us to love? What did He tell us to expect in return?
- What do we usually look for in the people we want to love or practice generosity toward? How is this practice of love and generosity different?
- Where have you seen God's generosity at work in your own life in this way? What have you experienced in times when you've practiced that generosity and love toward others?

*Give each person an opportunity to share prayer requests.*

## Find Your Story in God's Story

If you feel God is nudging you to go deeper, take some time between now and our next discussion to dig into His Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own, jotting your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. Want to go deeper? Select a few verses, and try paraphrasing them, writing them in your own words. If you'd like, share them with the group the next time you meet.

**When God sent Jesus to die for us, He set in motion a new paradigm of love and giving. Instead of approaching generosity from a give-what-you-get mentality, God was showing us that true abundant living is rooted in giving yourself away to meet the needs of the people around you. Then Jesus called us to follow God's example, knowing that as freely as we gave of ourselves, God could continue to meet our needs out of His abundance.**

### READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19 (MSG)

- What's the difference between the "life that is truly life" and the life we build from our own riches?
- What are the riches God bestows on us? What are some of the riches you've experienced from God in your own life?

### READ JAMES 2:14-18 (MSG)

- What makes it hard to practice material generosity?
- According to this passage, why is it necessary to put faith into action?
- What are some ways you can put your faith into action through material generosity? Who are some specific people you can help, or what are places you can give?

**This week's study is also available on Northland's apps or at [NorthlandChurch.net/Studies](https://NorthlandChurch.net/Studies).**

# What's Current

Get info and sign up at [NorthlandChurch.net](http://NorthlandChurch.net), or ask a connection team member for assistance.

## Healing Service

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4 | 5 P.M. | ROOM 2111 | [northlandchurch.net/healingservice](http://northlandchurch.net/healingservice)

---

## Welcome to Children's Ministries Luncheon!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4 | 12:45-2:30 P.M. | ROOM 5100, CHILDREN'S WORSHIP WING

Search: [children's ministries luncheon](#)

---

## Community Life

SUNDAYS STARTING NOVEMBER 4 | 9-10:30 A.M. | ROOMS 4206-07 | Search: [community life](#)

---

## LUGrox (Middle Youth Group)

SATURDAYS | 6:30-8:30 P.M. | THE RINK | [northlandchurch.net/lugrox](http://northlandchurch.net/lugrox)

---

## Stewardship Report

Week ending October 15, 2018

---

**\$204,500**

AMOUNT  
EXPECTED

**\$158,601**

AMOUNT  
RECEIVED

**\$487,337\***

BUDGET DEFICIT  
YEAR-TO-DATE

**\$662,956**

DEBT PAID  
YEAR-TO-DATE

*\*We have reduced this deficit by spending \$322,168 less than budget during the first nine months of 2018. The current shortage is being covered by our beginning cash balances.*

### How to Give – There are three ways to give tithes and offerings:

- At the kiosks in the foyer (electronically or by cash/check).
- Online at [Giving.NorthlandChurch.net](http://Giving.NorthlandChurch.net).
- Mobile via text. Text any amount, followed by the word "northland," to 45777. (e.g. 50 northland)

## Disaster Response Fund

---



In the wake of Hurricane Michael, our Disaster Response team (with the mobile kitchen) deployed on Wednesday, October 17, to Marianna, in the Florida panhandle. Many are still without electricity, and the town has experienced mass destruction. We are serving in partnership with, and at the request of, First United Methodist Church of Marianna and the Jackson County Sheriff's Office. On Wednesday, the team began providing a meal a day to more than 500 people at the Madison Square Park Shelter. We anticipate serving meals and helping with debris cleanup for at least two to three weeks. Contribute directly toward this great cause on our website ([giving.northlandchurch.net](http://giving.northlandchurch.net)) or by texting a dollar amount and "Northland Disaster" (for example: "50 Northland Disaster") to 45777. All funds go directly to the relief effort.

**Funding questions?** Matthew Shiles at [matthew.shiles@northlandchurch.net](mailto:matthew.shiles@northlandchurch.net) or 407-937-1768

**Deployment questions?** Judy Head at [judy.head@northlandchurch.net](mailto:judy.head@northlandchurch.net) or 407-388-5798