

Generosity in Motion ~ October 2020



What does a generous church look like? To be sure, it looks like many things. It is, for example, the ELCA World Hunger ministry. NJ Synod congregations participate regularly in this through many ways, whether it be through virtual fundraisers like those recently held featuring Bishop Eaton and the popular television travel host, Rick Steves; whether it

be through NJ Synod launches such as ‘the Cow Challenge’ where over \$360,000 was raised and celebrated at the 2019 NJ Synod Assembly; or whether it be through every congregations’ discrete efforts bringing attention to this vital and vibrant ministry -*there* congregational generosity is found.

Congregational generosity looks like annual appeals. It looks like congregations holding annual pledge seasons which serve as spiritual revivals where members are reminded that we have been created for giving and sharing. It is having the joy of giving named, claimed and taught in ways that are contagious and life giving.

Congregational generosity: it looks like the NJ Synod congregation who -two months into this season of COVID19 distancing and disruption, and as part of their discernment for service-forecast that some of their spending would be going down. And so, they agreed to meet quarterly to track these changes resulting in *increased* Mission Support shared following these quarterly assessments and as part of their 2020 giving!

Congregational Generosity looks like many things. And located within it all, there one finds the love of God. The love of God which compels the people of God to share out of their abundance. The love of God which enriches others’ lives through advocacy, feeding, community and more added to all this. The love of God which is about experiencing one’s true identity in Christ; the event where the line between the one who gives and the one who receives is blurred so that all which is left is tears of joy and thanksgiving for the mercy we have received and the vessels of blessing God calls us forth to be.

In the name of Christ,
Rev. Dean R. Brown
Assistant to the Bishop