

## March 2017

“I want to be a generous pastor who leads a generous church!”

That was the statement I made when we began our journey together eight months ago. I described generosity in terms of our being present for one another and our community, being hospitable, being compassionate, being joyful and being intentional in the giving of our money and other resources.

How do we know when we are growing in this goal?

There are a variety of ways to measure but allow me to suggest one for your consideration: Responding to dire human need without first determining whether or not those to be assisted are worthy of our care.

The parable of the good Samaritan, in Luke chapter 10, illustrates this measurement. Of the people who observed the need of the man robbed, beaten and left for dead, one responded generously... with his presence, compassion and resources. His response revealed his character. It was not his gender, his nationality, his religion, or his career/economic status that revealed his character...It was his response to the known need.

Five families at Christmas who were relocated from Venezuela and Guatemala to our community received money, clothes, furniture, bedding, kitchenware and appliances.

Over thirty families who are food-challenged receive weekly assistance through the backpack program.

Members of our church family and our community are regularly assisted through the Pastor's Discretionary Fund (which is made available through our Communion Sunday special offerings).

Close to ten thousand dollars was given to assist students, teachers, & administrators at the Utila School in Honduras by providing plumbing repair and expansion.

School supplies, food and games were provided to the families of 67 children from our metro Richmond community during our Winter Carnival

8-10 church members have committed to loving our “Skipwith Elementary School children” (and teachers) by expanding our reading program and helping in various classrooms.

A community meal is being planned which will intentionally invite the families who benefit from our backpack ministry so that we may learn to know them and try to nurture them into our fellowship.

***...And so much more, WITHOUT first asking, “Are they worthy? Do they deserve our help?”***

***.....All because we ARE growing in faith, love and generosity.***

~ PASTOR TODD