

## GROWING OUR CULTURE OF GENEROSITY



*How lovely is  
your dwelling  
place, O Lord  
of hosts!*

*Psalms 85:1*

Recently I traveled with a former Abiding Love member and two of her friends from a Hill Country ELCA congregation. As part of the trip we visited former members now living in the Pacific Northwest. Sharing time with these fellow people of faith, I was struck by similarities of our church missions, but also by our uniqueness.

As we cruised the mighty Columbia River, we shared daily *Christ in Our Home* readings on point for each of our congregations. We exchanged photos and stories of joyfully making Lutheran World Relief quilts. One church is determining how to move forward on renovation projects, another is "gleaning" ripe produce from orchards to support food ministries. All the churches are concerned about effectively reconnecting with people who have not returned "in-person" to worship, while rejoicing as children once again enliven our services.

Abiding Love supports the Bread For All Food Pantry and the Abiding Love Food Pantry. We support the Mariposa Family Learning Center, the Abiding Love Children's Center, and additional ministries, some unique and some shared with other Christian congregations. In another community on our voyage, we noticed a 100+ year-old downtown/waterfront ELCA church that merged with another in a residential neighborhood, sharing facilities and staff, but having a presence in both locations.

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## CULTURE OF GENEROSITY



I had many thoughts, including how church life, like the rest of life, changes over time, and adaptation is necessary. But I was struck more by what doesn't change – the confidence in our Lord's promises and what he also asks of us. He promises His unfailing and forgiving love, regardless of time or location. His people respond by **building a sense of community through**

**worship, fellowship, stewardship and service.**

Maintaining vibrant church ministries, meeting the changing needs of our young in age or young in heart, those challenged by health, war, economic situation, or the trials of "life happening," these are things we do well at Abiding Love, along with churches across the country. To make these ministries relevant in our times and places **we must invest our time, our presence, skills and financial resources.**



We can all grow in our "giving" in some way – through prayer, participation and financial offerings. Please join me in reviewing your own "giving" and consider how you can step forward in ministry in the coming year.

*Greta Rymal*

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