

I am not Generous

But I have witnessed and experienced abundant generosity.

Fifty years ago I started my first real job after graduating from a Scandinavian Lutheran College in Nebraska. I was a research technician at the University of Nebraska's Department of Food Science and Technology. I didn't hunt for this job. I don't recall even interviewing. This job, by my reckoning, was generously arranged for me by my undergraduate professor of genetics. That professor, Dr. Larrie Stone, figured my interest in genetics, microbiology, and chemistry might find good application in the field of Food Technology. Dr. Stone gifted this job to me through a research colleague he knew at Nebraska's Ag campus. From this technician job, my graduate education, my entire 50-year career in Food Technology, and many of my most dear relationships generously sprouted.

If I could ask Dr. Stone a question today, I loved to ask questions then and I still do, it might be "why were you so generous to me?" I'm pretty sure he would kindly respond "Have you not paid attention?" Dr. Stone would likely clarify by asserting that all generous gifts come from God. He was merely one of many stewards.

Almost 150 years ago the congregation of Augustana Lutheran Church was founded by Scandinavian Lutherans in Colorado. From that beginning there has been witness to an abundance of God's generous gifts shared within and outside the congregation. If I could ask one of those original members of Augustana if they could have possibly foreseen the results of their generosity, they too might reply "We were not generous; and were you not paying attention in Sunday School and during your Confirmation classes?"

Today as I think about generosity in the sharing of stories and consider the future hopes and dreams not just for our congregation, but Christ's Church, it is helpful for me to stay grounded in the Doxology that apart from God there are no blessings, there is no generosity. Like Dr. Stone 50 years ago, or congregational founders 150 years ago, I and all of us have been called to be a steward of God's generosity.

Larry Rasmussen Class of 1974 (still trying to pay attention and learn more about God's love)

