

SMALL GROUP GUIDE **NOV 22, 2026**

A Community Church of Uncommon Generosity

After Jesus' resurrection and ascension, the young Church in Jerusalem faced its first real opposition. Peter and John were arrested, threatened, and ordered to stop speaking in Jesus' name. When they were released, the believers prayed for boldness, and "*the place where they were meeting was shaken*" (Acts 4:31). What follows is not a new program, but a new way of holding things: "*All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.*" Luke the Gospel writer tells us that "*there were no needy persons among them*" – the fulfillment of God's ancient hope for His people, first seen in Deuteronomy 15:4. In a culture that tells us security comes from what we own and keep, "The Acts of the Apostles" tells a different story. Their generosity was not a burden they carried but a new freedom they discovered – the overflow of a Savior who "*though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor*" (2 Corinthians 8:9). The distinguishing mark of the Church is its uncommon generosity.

- Think of a time someone was unexpectedly generous with you – with their time, their home, their money, or their attention. Share it with your group and how it affected you.

- Read Acts 4:32–37. What is notable about the way these believers held their possessions? Does anything surprise or challenge you and what you believe?

- Luke, the Gospel writer and the writer of *Acts*, sets two sentences side by side: "With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus," and "there were no needy persons among them." What do you think the connection might be between the Church's witness and its generosity?

- What do you think generosity frees us from – and what does it free us for? Where do you feel most held by your money, your possessions, or your time right now?

Prayer

Read aloud together:

Lord Jesus, though You were rich,
for our sake You became poor,
so that through Your poverty we might become rich.

Forgive us for holding tightly what You have freely given,
for trusting our savings more than Your provision,
and for calling things ours that were always Yours.

Make us one in heart and mind.
Open our hands, our tables, and our homes.
Give us the courage of Barnabas
to lay what we have at Your feet.

Let there be no needy among us,
and let our generosity speak of Your resurrection
to a world that is watching.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Practice

The first Christians didn't just talk about generosity; they practiced it, laying what they had "at the apostles' feet." This Christmas, Browncroft is partnering with families at RCSD East High to provide over 100 Christmas meals. We want to challenge you and your group to practice **uncommon generosity** together by giving financially – not out of what's left over, but sacrificially, in a way you will actually feel.

East High Christmas Drive

browncroft.org/christmas

Scroll to the drive and give online toward a turkey or ham for every meal. Leftover funds support our ongoing work in the Beechwood neighborhood. Gifts close Friday, Dec 11, at Christmas Jam.

Browncroft Mission Fund

browncroft.org/give

Give online and designate your gift to the Mission Fund, which supports Browncroft's mission partners in Rochester and around the world.

This week, set aside 5 minutes and ask:

- What would sacrificial giving look like for me this Christmas – not what is easy, but what I would notice?
- Is there something I could go without this season so that a family at East High could have a Christmas meal?
- Could our group give together, with each of us bringing what we can?

Pray before you give, and consider making it a group gift. Be sure to share with your group how it went afterward – not what you gave, but what it stirred in you.