

Thanks and

By Wendy Ellison

(Based on a true story)

"Freely ye have received, freely give"

(Matthew 10:8).

Kate scooped creamy mashed potatoes onto her plate. She couldn't help but grin. She loved Thanksgiving, and there was a lot to be thankful for. Soon she'd get to eat Grandma's famous apple pie. Plus, her aunts, uncles, and cousins were all crowded around the table for dinner, and she loved being with her family!

But the best part of Thanksgiving was at the end of the day.

"Gather around!" Grandma said once dinner was over. She handed out an envelope to each family.

Kate opened it and saw money inside.

"Who remembers what we do with the money?" Grandpa asked.

Kate raised her hand. "We use it to help someone else for Christmas!"

"That's right," Grandma said. "I hope you find wonderful ways to help."

When they got home, Kate and her family talked about how they could use their money this year. They could buy a Christmas tree for a neighbor. Or help another family buy presents. Then Kate had an idea! Once when she had to stay in the hospital, someone had given her a warm, fuzzy blanket. Maybe her family could make blankets for hospital patients! Kate's sisters, Hailey and Rachel, loved her idea.

A few days later, Mom took the family shopping for supplies. They had fun picking out fabric together.

"I like this one," Hailey said. She held up some orange fleece with flowers.

"I do too," Mom said. "And we have enough money for two more."

What would Kate's family do with the money in the envelope?



Service is super!

Go to page 20 to read another story about service.

Giving

Rachel pointed to some fabric with lions and tigers on it. “This would be *purrrr*fect for *lion* around!”

Kate laughed. Her sister was so goofy. Then Kate picked up a pattern with bright colors and shapes. It reminded her of the blanket she had gotten in the hospital.

Mom and the girls spent the rest of the day at home, cutting and tying the soft fleece into blankets. It was so much fun!

Just before Christmas, Kate’s whole family brought the blankets to the children’s hospital where Kate had stayed. As they walked in, Kate recognized the bright colored walls and the sounds of beeping machines. It was fun to see the kids smile when they got their blankets.

On Christmas Eve, Kate’s family gathered at Grandpa and Grandma’s house again. She was excited to hear what her cousins had done with their Thanksgiving money. After dinner, each family talked about their holiday service adventure. One family bought gifts to donate to a charity. Another family gave their money to help a neighbor. Kate’s family told about the blankets.

At the end of the night, Kate’s heart felt as warm and fuzzy as fluffy fleece. Thanksgiving had been about thanks *and* giving, and that felt really good. ●

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Our uncle passed away a couple of years ago. On his birthday right before he died, he asked us to help the homeless instead of giving him a present. So now every year on his birthday, we do things for the homeless. This year we made kits to give them. We can show Jesus love by helping others.

**Ben and Paisley C., ages 8 and 3,
Utah, USA**



ILLUSTRATION BY BETHANY GRANDALL