

MINUTE FOR MISSION

REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

Look around you this morning. Go ahead, look around. Isn't it good to be in the house of God today? I bet that some of us, when we were growing up, were told that there were certain ways to behave in the church building, because it is God's house. Maybe it was not to run, or to keep our voices quieted, or maybe we were taught to invite others in. This is God's house.

In Isaiah 58, the author is addressing a people who have returned to Jerusalem, where the Temple—God's house—was in shambles. I imagine it was a heartbreaking scene. And in that rubble, the prophet challenges the people, not to rebuild the building or to restore their religious rituals, but to care for the hungry, the weak and the vulnerable—the prophet called the people to become the house of God. Look around you again. The people here, today, our church—we are the house of God, too. We are called to become, as Isaiah promised long ago, “repairers of the breach, restorers of streets to live in.”

Together, we become the household of God. Through One Great Hour of Sharing, a special offering of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we extend shelter to those who have no place to stay, offer compassion to those who have pain—be it physical, emotional or spiritual—and we set a feast, with God, for those who lack access to enough food to eat.

When the wind and water wipe homes away, or bombs destroy the dwellings of the innocent, or people lack safe and affordable housing, One Great Hour of Sharing extends a roof.

When conflict and war cause famine, or the environment endangers the land of farmers, or those who work the fields are not paid enough to feed their families, One Great Hour of Sharing welcomes them to the table.

When water becomes scarce, or when it must be accessed by walking long and dangerous distances, or when the pipes or sources become poisoned,

One Great Hour of Sharing rushes in as a spring of life-giving water.

God's house is a place where needs are met and the broken systems that cause those needs are addressed. Across this country and around the world, Presbyterians are responding to the call we hear in Isaiah. We are gathering together as God's people and becoming a household with the suffering and vulnerable. We are celebrating God's goodness and grace and giving to One Great Hour of Sharing.

We are the house of God. Let us welcome those without a home into God's house. Let us invite those without enough to eat to God's table. Let us invite those who thirst to the spring of God's fountain. May we be called, as Isaiah said, "repairers of the breach, restorers of streets to live in."

Let us pray,

*Draw all people together, gracious God,
and make us your house.*

*Let our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing
create a home
and a wholeness for people in need,
so that the whole
human family will know your love.*

Amen.