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**Minute for Mission**

**‘Sometimes we just need help’**

The Rev. Sunjae Jung heard God’s call loud and clear. Although maybe not so clearly at first.

“When I heard about a Korean-American Presbyterian church in the Atlanta area, my first answer was, ‘I don’t think it’s my calling,’” he said. “Since I was living in Korea at the time, my first answer was no. Then, they contacted me again and told me the church was in a university city. I remembered being an international student in America when I was young and how much the church there helped me.”

He continued, “Serving as a minister in Korea, I remember praying that if I ever had a chance to help international students the way the church helped me when I was at Iowa State University, I would take it,” he said. “I talked with my wife and our senior pastor in Korea, who said they thought this was a good calling for me. After praying some more, we decided to come serve this church.”

The Athens Korean Presbyterian Church’s mission is to welcome and serve the larger university and especially the Korean community. It is not a “big budget” congregation, as most of its members are young and transitory. But Rev. Jung couldn’t possibly have anticipated the impact that Covid would have on both the congregation’s and his family’s finances when they moved to Athens in December 2019.

With the arrival of the pandemic in March 2020, not only did the church cease all its in-person activities and move Sunday worship to a streaming platform, but the whole town practically shut down.

Because Rev. Jung serves the congregation on a religious visa, he is not permitted to earn income beyond that of his ministry and the family found itself struggling to make ends meet. In December 2021, Rev. Jung sought and received an Emergency Grant split between the [Assistance Program](https://www.pensions.org/your-path-to-wholeness/assistance-program) of the [Board of Pensions](http://www.pensions.org) and Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

This grant was made possible, in part, by the [Christmas Joy Offering](https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/christmas-joy/), which distributes gifts equally to the [Assistance Program](https://www.pensions.org/your-path-to-wholeness/assistance-program) and to [Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/racial-equity-womens-intercultural-ministries/leadership-development-leaders-color/schools-colleges-equipping-communities-of-color/).

Rev. Jung said, “I thank the denomination for the help from the Christmas Joy Offering. I can say that after going through such a difficult time last winter, the big burden on me and my family was lifted.”

Sometimes we all could use a little help, and those who serve our Church are certainly no different. Please give what you can to the Christmas Joy Offering for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

***Let us pray~***

*Thank you, God, for providing for your children in times of plenty and in times of need. Thank you for opportunities to serve your people and to bring your care to those around us.* **Amen.**