OGHS Sample pastor letter

Dear members,

The pandemic has stretched the Church in many ways — but we are still very much … *here*. Although it was surely hard at first, we have expanded our thinking, and our doing, in new and innovative ways to close the distance, and be together. We have continued to worship. We have continued to build and shape community; we have continued to take care of one another. And on top of all that, we have continued to come together to serve those in need; both here in our own community and all over the world through our participation in special offerings and in the spirit of shared mission. Despite the difficulty, struggle and loss, the Church continues to declare its presence in the world, through different means, certainly, but toward the same purpose.

Scripture reminds us time and again that God’s people belong with those in need, releasing people from the bonds of injustice and with the hungry whom we are to welcome into our homes, as Isaiah’s 58th chapter puts it. The Church finds itself with those who are thirsty, imprisoned and suffering illness, as Jesus says in Matthew 25.

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, we *build* God’s house and 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.

You will hear about just a few of these individuals over the coming weeks. These stories will connect you to those whose lives have been changed by your gifts.

I’d also like to invite you to visit the OGHS website ([pcusa.org/oghs](http://pcusa.org/oghs)) to find out more information on how your gift helps people all over the world, and offer prayers for the people and projects who receive this support. We will be having a potluck on ***???***, where the children will read a new story about Gracie the fish, and then ***???*** will lead a discussion of how, by making relatively small changes in our lifestyle, we can radically increase our gifts, which will make huge differences in the lives of siblings in need.

That brings me to my challenge. I challenge each of you to give strong consideration to increasing your gift to the offering — especially in light of the challenges we have witnessed over the past year. You’ll see how giving opens your heart to God’s work in your own life. I hope that you’ll join us on Sunday, **???,** and that you’ll join Christians all across the country in opening their hearts to witness tangibly to the abundant love of God through One Great Hour of Sharing.

Yours in the love and grace of Jesus Christ,

Rev. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_