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 gather for 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 difficulty, struggle and loss, the Church continues to declare its presence in the world, through numerous means, certainly, but toward the same purpose.

In Isaiah 58, the prophet reminds us time and again that God’s people belong with those in need, releasing people from the bonds of injustice and also with the hungry whom we are to welcome into our homes. And in Matthew 25, Jesus calls the Church to be with those who are thirsty, imprisoned and suffering illness.

Through our Church, we connect with one another, in whatever way we are able, and celebrate the many ways God connects with us. During Lent, we celebrate that God connects *with us* through Jesus’ resurrection and connects *us with* “those who have least” — that’s how Matthew 25 puts it — and that’s what One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is all about. Connecting. People who experience oppression, need, loss or lack, *those* are the people with whom Jesus connected, and they are the people with whom we are invited to connect today.

I 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. On ??? we will be having a potluck where our 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. Small changes can 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 One Great Hour of Sharing 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, **???** as we collect our offering, 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. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_