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**We Are There**

During One Great Hour of Sharing, we hear the call in Isaiah 58 to become “repairers of the breach, restorers of streets to live in.” During this Lenten season, we have heard stories of empowered and empowering women. Tenacious and faithful women, binding their families and communities together in strength.

In every time and in every place, women usually filled the role as leaders — quietly, diligently, persistently. If we all would stop for a moment to think about the women we know in our families, in our communities and right here in our church — we know this to be true. Let’s pause for just a moment to think about that. (PAUSE BRIEFLY)

It isn’t easy. As the saying goes, it takes a village. Our village is there to encourage women like Lupe, one of thousands of farmworkers in Florida’s tomato fields whose lives are made better thanks to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. As a partner of the Presbyterian Hunger Program, the Coalition receives support through gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing from people just like us, and congregations just like ours. *We are there.*

With our gifts, we are part of Lupe’s village.

*We are there* with the Dalit women of India. Dalit literally means oppressed and/or broken. Smitha is one who faced every sort of hardship imaginable following India’s last tsunami. But now her family has a more hopeful future thanks to a grant from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to the Society for National Integration through Rural Development (SNIRD) made possible by gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing. SNIRD provided new shelters and sewing machines for the community’s livelihood.

With our gifts, we are part of Smitha’s village.

*We are there*, with Paola and other women in Panama City, Panama, through a partnership with the Women’s Meeting Space — a non-governmental organization that advocates for the rights of Panama’s women, both Indigenous and from its poorest communities. They received a grant through Self-Development of People, supported by our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, and started an experimental nursery and installed a community farm stand with the goal of not only feeding the growers’ families but selling surplus food to cover the basic needs of workers.

With our gifts, we are part of Paola’s village.

*We are there.* Our work is informed by our belief that “the Church” is not an institution, but an action. For the church to be the Church, it must take action to be with those in need. For over 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided a way to share God’s love with our neighbors in need around the world. Please give what you can. As we always say … when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

***Let us pray~***

*Restoring God, you have called us to repair what in this world you love so much that has been broken. May the repairs made through our gifts bring life to communities in need and bring praise to your holy name.* **Amen***.*