OGHS Sample pastor letter

Dear Church Family,

We are slowly coming out of a fog — not only arising from the shadow of a global pandemic, but also emerging out of the haze of our own wilderness journey through Lent. What began on Ash Wednesday ends on Easter Day. Through personal reflection and reparation, Lent brings us to our knees, but the glory of the Resurrection lifts us up into the welcoming arms of a Savior, who sees our failings, but loves us unconditionally, nonetheless. Thanks be to God!

In Isaiah 58, the prophet exclaims, “Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in” (Isaiah 58:12). As the people of Israel returned from the cloud of exile and struggled to rebuild their lives, Isaiah questioned their efforts: [Are you not called] “to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them?” (Isaiah 58:7).

Then in Matthew 25, we hear Jesus calling to us, “For I was hungry and you gave me food … I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing. … As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:35–40).

Isaiah and Jesus are making an important theological point: Faithfulness to God leads to fixing things that are broken — broken lives, broken spirits, broken hearts, broken relationships, and broken breaches of faith and trust.

When we give to the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering on Easter Day, we are helping repair peoples’ lives — people who are hurting, broken, oppressed, lost or in need. The people about whom Isaiah and Jesus spoke. The people we are invited to connect with, 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 **[date]** we will be having a potluck where our children will read a new story about Gracie the fish, and then **[Name]** 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 our siblings in need.

That brings me to my challenge. I prayerfully challenge each of you to increase 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, **[date]** as we collect our offering, and that you’ll join Christians all across the country in opening their hearts to witness tangibly to the repairing love of God in Jesus Christ through One Great Hour of Sharing.

Yours in Christ,

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