

**2024 OGHS Children’s Time**

**Preparation**

*Before worship, gather materials to build a simple wall (cardboard or wooden blocks, or plastic cups, or fish banks if you are handing them out).*

**Gathering**

Welcome, friends! I need your help with something today. I need to build a wall using these (*point to the blocks/cups/fish banks*). Can you help me?

*(As a group, build a wall by stacking the blocks/cups/fish banks. Try to ensure that each child gets to help.)*

Wonderful! I like how we all worked together to build it.

Sometimes walls are a good thing to have. When is it good to have a wall?

*(for safety, shelter)*

Sometimes walls aren’t helpful. When is a wall a problem?

*(when it divides or separates people; when it needs repair)*

Sometimes we need to reach across walls to share what we have with people in need. What are some things we have shared in this church with those in need?

*(food, clothing, money, etc.)*

This wall reminds me how sometimes things get broken and need repair. Walls come down during disasters and need to be rebuilt. Walls go up to divide people, and systems of justice get broken. We have to cross walls and barriers to share what we have with people who are hungry or in need.

There’s a verse in Isaiah 58 where we learn that when we help others by rebuilding walls for shelter, or tearing down walls that divide us, or reaching across walls to share what we have, we are called “repairers of the breach.” The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering we collect goes to help repair the breach and fix what is broken in the world.

Through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, we help repair actual walls, houses and streets. *(Take down and rebuild a few bits of your wall.)*

Through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, we reach across walls to provide food for hungry people. *(Reach across your wall.)*

Through Self-Development of People projects, we help take down walls of injustice. *(Take down a bit of your wall.)*

This year we celebrate that the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering has been helping Presbyterians repair the breach for 75 years! Every little bit we collect combines with what others collect and it all goes to help share God’s love around the world.

*(Share details of how children and families can participate in your offering.)*

Though a good strong wall can be a useful thing, especially after a disaster, I don’t think we need this one dividing us any longer. Will you help me take it down? *(With children, remove the wall.)*

Close with a prayer using your own words, or have children repeat this prayer after you, line by line:

**Prayer**

Dear God,

Thank you for loving us.

Help us love one another.

Help us give what we can

to help repair your world.

Amen.

*(If the coloring sheet has not been shared in children’s classes, you might give it to children now. You might also give out the fish banks and Gracie story if your church is using them.)*

*Prepared by the Rev. Julie Coffman Hester. Julie is a pastor and writer in North Carolina who has served in faith formation with all ages for 30 years. Her current ministry focuses on writing curriculum and resources, and teaching workshops on writing as a spiritual practice and writing through grief. You can find her at* [*juliehester.com*](https://juliehester.com/) *and subscribe to her writing prompts at* [*writingincompany.substack.com.*](https://writingincompany.substack.com/)