



## MINUTE FOR MISSION

### “Is this not the fast I choose?”

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING HELPS US ANSWER GOD’S CALL

The Christian season of Lent is historically marked with fasting, a traditional practice of giving up food and devoting yourself to prayer.

But this isn’t the only type of fasting the Bible talks about. Isaiah 58 describes a new kind of fast, not to give up bread but to share it. Isaiah calls us to “loose the bonds of injustice,” to “let the oppressed go free,” to “share bread with the hungry” and to “invite the homeless poor into our homes.” We are called to offer help to those in need and restoration to those who have been broken down. One way we answer this call is through our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing.

Our gifts to this Offering helped “loose the bonds of injustice” for Olga Pedraza and others like her who received support in accessing a job after a prison sentence and beating drug addiction. Self-Development of People invests in communities responding to their experiences of racism, oppression, and injustice, and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these societal ills. By investing in those like Olga who have reformed their lives after prison, we help reduce the number of people who end up back in prison.

Our gifts helped alpaca farmers in Peru whose livelihoods were threatened by the poisoning of their water sources. What began as an apparent need for assistance with irrigation grew into a partnership between these farmers and the Presbyterian Hunger Program to support a host of environmental initiatives. Environmental degradation and climate change are primary threats to the world’s hungry and vulnerable, and the Hunger Program’s work is part of our response.

Gifts to the Offering also rebuilt 40 apartments and houses destroyed during the Syrian civil war, so that those made homeless by its violence could return to a home of their own. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has provided essential support to refugees throughout this crisis, including education for refugee children, emergency supplies for refugees journeying to new lands, and assistance for US congregations receiving refugees into their communities.

Our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing will do much more than these few examples. They will join congregations all over the country as we seek to answer God’s call and make a difference in the lives of many more people. As we respond through our sharing, Isaiah 58 also provides a promise. As we respond to injustice, feed those who are hungry, and provide places for those without homes, our “light will break forth,” and we shall be called “repairers of the breach, restorers of streets to live in.”

**Please give generously.**

**Let us Pray:** *God, your call to us is both great and challenging. May the gifts we share bring justice and help to those in need, and may your light break forth in our lives and in the lives of those served through our shared ministry. Amen.*