



Every gift makes a difference
in the life of someone who deserves
God's love and support.

**WE ARE THE CHURCH,
TOGETHER.**



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



The Heart of Mission

March 30, 2021

One Great Hour of Sharing is this Sunday. OGHS is the biggest special offering the Presbyterian Church USA collects during the year. You heard me say it on Palm Sunday. I thought it deserved a repeat so I am sharing the minute for mission with you in print.

One Great Hour of Sharing improves the lives of those in crisis, those who hunger and those who need emotional care and support.

It is hard to show pictures and tell stories of people who receive this One Great Hour of Sharing offering because they are vulnerable and sometimes it would exploit them to do so or put them in danger.

Our own people at First Presbyterian Church have been helped through this offering at The Refugee Center and CU at Home. Our Go and Serve youth have cared for people who are recipients of this offering like the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota and Taylorville Presbyterian Church

I can tell you about “Mama O” who is 65 years old. She is a survivor and a healer. She is part of Black Women’s Blueprint, a civil and human rights organization in Brooklyn, NY, a partner with the Self Development of People Committee, which Rev. Alonso Johnson who spoke to us recently coordinates. Our Presbyterian connections run deep. Black Women’s Blueprint focuses on the needs of Black Women and girls. Our heading picture is of some of those women.

Mama O lives with lifelong trauma resulting from sexual violence. Mama O came to Black Women’s Blueprint at a time of great need. They helped her heal.

Now she shares her healing arts and her spiritual intercessory prayer for survivors in that community. She helps carry these women through the challenges and triumphs of their lives. Mamma O was once someone who was given support and now she supports others. She is a survivor and she is a healer.

One Great Hour of Sharing has helped Black Women's Blueprint take action on social justices issues and provide educational resources and support to people like Mama O. It has provided food and housing assistance that people need in order to be whole.

Every gift to One Great Hour of Sharing makes a difference in the life of someone who deserves God's love and support. Thank you for your gift. We are the church together. When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Rachel Matthews, Mission Coordinator

Mission Closet – Thank you to those of you who brought items for the mission closet!! I know you are reading the Heart of Mission!

Canaan S.A.F.E. House – Ritchie Drennen, Itch Jones, Rachel Matthews and Brother Raymond from S.A.F.E. House met Friday and discussed dreams, goals and prayer concerns for our brothers and sisters in this recovery ministry. Here are a few of the short term and long term goals we talked about:

Short term goals:

1. Gutter repairs and spouts
2. Computer classes: To help the brothers learn how to type, check email and browse/search the web. We will also need laptops and a projector (to do courses via web).

Long term goals:

1. New truck (our current truck is on its last leg).
2. Renovating the basement: Raising the ceiling (7ft+), creating a weight room, additional storage room, placing a pool table and having our computer classes in the basement.

Let us celebrate with them and pray for their needs:

- We are thankful that the ministry is still up and running, even in the midst of this pandemic!
- We are thankful for the shelter and food that has continually been provided.
- We are thankful for the continual life lessons learned and the being able to grow from them.

- Pray for the health of their staff.
- Pray for their leadership. That our leadership be unified; that we move as one; as a body.
- Pray for wisdom; that we make the right decisions and act.
- Pray that we continue to have great ideas and act on them.
- Pray that we can continue to transform lives through this ministry (and pray for other ministries similar to ours); for now, and for many many years to come.
- Pray for increase; that we continue to be sent people who are willing to commit; people who are really wanting to change for the better.
- And pray for the brothers who have graduated and/or left the program, that they be successful in whatever task they undertake.
- Pray for those who are controlled by their alcohol and drug addictions be freed from their addictions and that they do not return back to their addictions after being freed.



Friends of PEB – Mr. Benjamin Dwight Childs, Coordinator for Academics and Spiritual Formation at Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan, shared this good news in a recent newsletter,

*“Last month, I learned that the government of Pakistan was undertaking an initiative to implement a standardized curriculum nationwide in all public and private schools. **This curriculum will be comprehensive, covering every subject including a number of minority faiths, including Christianity, which would then be made available for the hundreds-of-thousands of minority Christian (Protestant, Catholic, etc.) students in Pakistan.** In an unexpected turn of events, I have been absorbed into the group tasked with overseeing the Christian curriculum, and furthermore, **I have become the lead writer for the Christian curriculum**, and PEB is very pleased to give me the necessary time (and resources) to work on this monumental project. Fortunately, most work is done remotely, and so I am still able to work my regular office hours while writing the curriculum.*

We at PEB are awed by this opportunity for Kingdom impact in the next generation of children from the minority “Christian” population, and we long that the Lord would use our work towards a reformation among so many who have only rudimentary understanding of

Biblical truth. May God grant that many would catch the vision to see the Lord of Glory made famous in all the Earth, and especially in Pakistan."

Frontera de Cristo on their Coffee, Conversation and Compassion – This week we learned that Frontera de Cristo and our friends at Café Justo need to be in our prayers, *"Café Justo lost one of its founding members last week. Doña Soraida Santiago went to be with her Lord on Wednesday, March 17, three months shy of her 91st birthday. She will be greatly missed: her contagious laughter and her happy spirit brought joy to whomever was blessed enough to meet her. Doña Soraida helped to start the coffee co-op to address the root causes of migration. Because of Café Justo, her son Edmundo Ballinas was able to return from Atlanta, Georgia, to be with his family and is now a member of the cooperative. We are grateful for Doña Soraida's vision and perseverance, as well as that of all the first generation founding members of Café Justo. Please enjoy this Café Justo video that talks about the importance of keeping families together. Doña Soraida, presente!"*

We can join our border mission partners early Good Friday morning, April 2 , when they journey through Border Stations of the Cross. We'll start at 5:00am Arizona/Sonora/Pacific time 7am Central. If you are interested, email rachel@firstpres.church and I will get you the zoom link.

Frontera de Cristo graciously recorded the March 25 zoom conversation so you can learn how to make Mexican bread pudding! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOb0njci12M>

Here is the calendar for the rest of the Spring. Don't forget you can order coffee from them as well. It takes about 2 weeks after your order. Here is the link for that:
<https://fronteradecristo.networkforgood.com/events/26394-coffee-conversations-and-compassion>



March 25 de marzo

Capirotada y Conversaciones con DouglaPrieta Trabaja /
Capirotada and Conversations with DouglaPrieta Trabaja
(Learn how to make Mexican bread pudding!)

April 8 de abril

Postales de la Frontera / Postcards from the Border:
An Interpretation of the Border Delegation Experience
through Watercolors and Poetry by Nancy Arbuthnot

April 22 de abril

Migracion, Hospitalidad, y Incidencia Politica /
Migration, Hospitality, and Advocacy

May 6 de mayo

Madres y Niños en la Frontera /
Mothers and Children in the Borderlands

May 20 de mayo

Servicio Tras Fronteras: Un Panel de Internos Actuales y Pasados /
Service Across Borders: A Panel of Current and Former Binational Interns

We want to keep our mission partners in our prayers, those who are waiting to go back to their place of ministry and those who are able to work where they are. Listen for God's call to you in their ministry.

Our PC(USA) Mission CoWorkers:

Mark Adams and Miriam Maidonado Escobar (Mexico)
Farsijanna Adeney-Risakotta (Indonesia)
Jeff and Christi Boyd (Central Africa)
Bob and Kristi Rice (South Sudan)

Our regional and global mission partners:

Kemmerer Village (and Camp Carew)
Lifeline Pilots
Marion Medical Mission
Mission Aviation Fellowship
Opportunity International
Friends of Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan Presbyterian Cuba Partnership
Special Offerings of the PC(USA)
Theological Education Fund
Young Adult Volunteers

Here in Champaign – Urbana:

CU at Home
CANAAN S.A.F.E. HOUSE
CANTEEN RUN
COURAGE CONNECTION
DREAAM
eEMPTY TOMB, INC
FAITH IN ACTION
JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY
THE REFUGEE CENTER
RESTORATION URBAN MINISTRY
SALT & LIGHT

Here at First Presbyterian Church

FPCC Amateur Preachers
FPCC Environmental Committee working with Faith in Place
FPCC Presbyterian Women
FPCC ESL
FPCC Children, Youth and Families
FPCC Mission Possible/Go and Serve
FPCC Mission Team, World Mission and Community Mission Deacons



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