



Our love offering to the world.

Your offering helps rebuild from disaster, feed the hungry, provide clean water to the thirsty, empower the oppressed, and restore hope.

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)



**One Great
HOUR
OF SHARING**

ucc.org/oghs

photos: @disciplephoto and Paul Jeffrey

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“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)

Dear friends,

While traveling to UCC congregations across the country, I see evidence of their commitment to One Great Hour of Sharing. I'm always gleefully taking photos of OGHS offering envelopes and posters hung on the wall. I've found them in rural Pennsylvania, in the suburbs of Washington D.C., and from the West Coast to the East Coast. It's the privilege of my work to see this evidence – many churches working together to spread love in the world.

The impact of One Great Hour of Sharing is similarly dispersed. Our gifts don't support a single cause, but rather a network of partners worldwide. These connections mean we can respond quickly when needed and preemptively equip partners with the resources they require. This is a true love offering, sent forth with prayer and hope.

I will be praying this year over this Spirit-filled abundance of connections. I invite you to join me as you give generously out of love. I also invite you into the transformation that comes from being in this expansive community. The suggested date for the OGHS offering this year is March 15, 2026, but we welcome your gifts whenever your church calendar allows. Many congregations even designate a whole month for the offering.

Thank you for sharing in this love offering. If you have questions about how to best promote One Great Hour of Sharing in your congregation, I'd love to talk more.

With thanks,
Rev. Rachel McDonald
Generosity Officer, Our Church's Wider Mission and Special Mission Offerings
mcdonaldr@ucc.org



Promotional Materials Guide

2026 Leader's Guide

Overview of the offering as well as summary materials to orient any clergy or lay leader to confidently promote One Great Hour of Sharing.

Video

Brief video appropriate to share in worship or through digital channels to tell the story of the theme Our Love Offering for the World. Available on youtube.com to stream or for download at www.ucc.org/oghs

One Great Hour of Sharing Poster* **(available in English and Spanish)**

Create a display at your church to tell the story of One Great Hour of Sharing.

Printed Bulletin Inserts*

Use this printed, eye-catching insert as a storytelling aid in worship, in your newsletter, or at other church meetings.

Offering Envelopes*

Share envelopes in worship, in letters to the congregation, or even as reminders for individuals to donate through your digital giving platforms. (Note: update your giving platforms with an option to designate a gift for OGHS!) Place envelopes in several convenient locations.

Worship Resources

Utilize worship resources for preaching, children's sermons, intergenerational activities, and more. Adapt freely for your context and to spread joy about the impact of One Great Hour of Sharing.

*Order these print resources at www.uccresources.com. For assistance, contact Rachel McDonald at mcdonaldr@ucc.org

What is One Great Hour of Sharing?

For over 75 years, the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (OGHS) has been helping Christians bring God's hope and healing to hurting people both in the US and around the world.

OGHS's mission is to support domestic and international development, fight poverty and its consequences, bring aid and relief to communities torn by war or ravaged by national disaster, provide advocacy and resettlement assistance for refugees and displaced persons, and combat injustice in its many forms. OGHS provides funding and hands-on assistance in collaboration with local and international partners.

Each year, OGHS is gathered by several denominations and Church World Service (CWS) under a single theme developed by the ecumenical OGHS Committee. In addition to posters, brochures, and interactive media, the Committee commissions a Planning and Resource Guide that contains a variety of resources and activities for pastors and church leaders to use as they promote and receive the offering.

In the United Church of Christ, the Global H.O.P.E. team oversees the distribution of the offering. You can learn more about this team at www.ucc.org/global-hope.

Thank you for supporting One Great Hour of Sharing for over 75 years. You continue to embody a love offering to the world.

Where does the offering go?

Here are a few examples of organizations supported through gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing. Your gifts travel to East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, South America, and beyond.

Mediterranean Hope - Italy

Refugee and migrant service ministry

International Assistance Mission - Afghanistan

Eye care, prosthetics, mental health, and rehabilitation efforts

Children's Future International - Cambodia

Community development and anti-human trafficking program



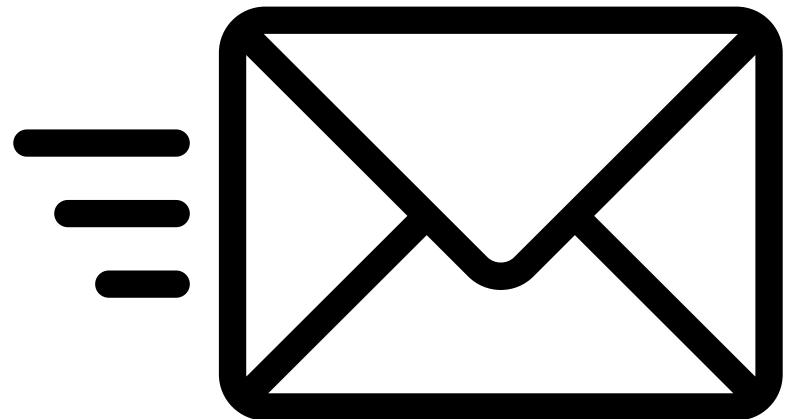


Who do I get in touch with if I have questions?

Contact Rachel McDonald, Generosity Officer for help receiving resources and interpreting the offering. You can reach her at mcdonaldr@ucc.org or 216-736-2182

When do we collect the offering?

The suggested date for the OGHS offering this year is March 15, 2026, but we welcome your gifts whenever your church calendar allows. Many congregations collect the offering not just on a single day, but throughout an entire month.



Where to send the offering?

Please mail your church's gift to your Association or Conference or send it directly to the National Ministries:

United Church of Christ

PO BOX 71957

Cleveland, Ohio 44194

Please mark "One Great Hour of Sharing" clearly on your check or money order.

Promoting the OGHS Offering in 4 Easy Steps

Thank you for your support of One Great Hour of Sharing. Each year, congregations promote the offering to help reach those in need worldwide. This guide aims to make promoting the offering easy by putting the resources in your hands and sharing where to find additional resources. Thank you, on behalf of each life that will be blessed because of our support.

- 1 **ORDER MATERIALS** at www.uccresources.com to ensure you have adequate quantities. Discuss promotional and worship service ideas with your ministry leaders.
- 2 **GENERATE EXCITEMENT** by getting others involved. Set a goal. Invite participation through a pastoral letter or regular newsletter. Get the children involved. Remind people of the offering at weekly services and gatherings or by sharing the moments for mission included in this guide.
- 3 **HELP THE CONGREGATION** learn something new about the offering. Use the mission moments, adult and children's sermon suggestions, stories, skits, and video resources. Make OGHS a special part of the service on multiple dates prior to the offering. The suggested OGHS offering date is March 15, 2026.
- 4 **SHARE THE GOOD NEWS.** After thanking the congregation for their support, announce the amount received for the offering in worship and in your church newsletter. Celebrate reaching your goal and send your congregation's gift to your UCC Conference Office making sure it is clearly marked "OGHS." Let members know they can give to One Great Hour of Sharing all year round using [the OGHS donation website](http://theOGHSdonationwebsite).

What is a Love Offering?

In 2 Corinthians 8-9, the Apostle Paul lays out his stewardship campaign to gather an offering to be sent to the Christian church in Jerusalem. Commonly known as “the collection for the saints,” the offering occupies a significant place in Paul’s missionary work.

Paul’s calling was to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. He preached generosity and hospitality. He brought Jewish and Gentile believers into one community, despite their differences of nationality, tribal affiliation, and economic standing. He encouraged unity, love, compassion, and service.

Paul’s stewardship campaign called for members to set aside money each week, above and beyond their regular tithes and offerings, to help Christians in Jerusalem. The offering was a gift, with no strings attached, no expectation of repayment or reward, and no ulterior motives. This collection was a love offering, embodying the word of Jesus:

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35, NIV)

Members of the early church took seriously the command to love God and neighbor. The Apostle’s focus on the collection highlights the hallmarks of community life that God and Jesus emphasized: care of the poor and vulnerable; use of resources to benefit those who need help; loving one’s neighbor; caring for the environment; and advocating social justice so all can live and thrive. Communities grounded in Jesus’ sacrificial life and death embody radical generosity, often pooling their resources for their common good (see Acts 2:44-47).

The term “love offering” may not be a familiar one in your tradition. A love offering is a voluntary monetary gift: to show appreciation for a beloved pastor, a guest preacher, or special speaker; to support a specific occasion, like an anniversary or commemoration; or, to support a particular church or community program, mission, ministry, or project. The love offering is separate from one’s regular tithe and giving and is often collected on special days or occasions.[1]

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) has been gathering love offerings for over 75 years. Each year, we are invited to participate in a giant love fest—giving our dollars and time for the sake of sisters and brothers around the globe. Our contributions are our love offering to the world!



Through contributions to OGHS, our love offering is embodied in collaborations with local and international partners to help rebuild after disasters; to provide nourishment and shelter when people are displaced; to provide aid and expertise so the most vulnerable can dream for a better future. For over 75 years, OGHS has gathered love offerings for the world. OGHS continues to show up when there is a need, here at home and at places around the globe.

Paul reminds us that how we give is as important as what we give. We give cheerfully, gladly, unselfishly, and generously as God has given to us. We live our lives, transformed by God's grace, with open hearts and hands.

We live in a world where people are hurting, resources are concentrated in the hands of fewer people, and compassion is diminishing. This world needs love in ways that matter and make a difference for the better. We are asked to give, even as needs grow.

We are invited to give, not because our pockets are overflowing, or to keep up with the Joneses, or because we are shamed into giving. Rather, we remember God's sacrificial love for us that keeps blessing us with resources we can share.

We give because our hearts are touched as we witness God at work in ourselves, in one another and throughout the world. Our response to God's love for us is to love others, near and far. We are agents of grace when we choose to give, trusting that God's Kingdom/Kindom is being built through us and among us.

We cannot be in all of the places where our love offering will eventually go, but our gifts will bless the world far beyond what we can imagine.

OGHS is your, our, love offering to and for the world. Let us share generously and cheerfully.

1] <http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PopupCulturalAid.asp?LRID=29>, January 10, 2025.

Worship Resources

Call to Worship

One: God invites us to be a people of generosity.

All: That's our love offering to the world.

God invites us to remember our blessings.

That's our love offering to the world.

God invites us to build a legacy of love.

That's our love offering to the world.

God invites us to give cheerfully.

That's our love offering to the world.

Prayer of Invocation

You provide for all of our needs, O God, even when we do not realize or recognize it. You are the source and we are the resource. You modeled generous giving when you freely offered us your Son, Jesus Christ. Nothing is too wonderful for you. As we begin worship on this One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday, stir up in us the desire to give cheerfully from the great wellspring of gifts you have gifted to us. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

Litany or Responsive Reading

One: When communities are impacted by disaster,

All: Our love offering is comfort, provision and a hand to rebuild.

When people are displaced,

Our love offering is shelter, nourishment and safety.

When groups are afflicted by prejudice, economic hardship, or difficult circumstances beyond their control,

Our love offering is empowerment, strength to rise and dreams for a better future.

Our love offering is

loving our neighbor, next door and on the other side of the world.

Our love offering is

not just for this hour, but forever.



Invitation to Communion

“It only takes a spark to get a fire going,
And soon, all those around can warm up in its glowing;
That’s how it is with God’s Love,
Once you’ve experienced it,
You spread the love to everyone
You want to pass it on.”

Hymn writer Kurt Kaiser was sitting in his den by the fireplace where the remnants of a fire and light from the embers reminded him of the simplicity of starting a fire. One spark and, in the right conditions, it can take off.

The sacrament (or time) of Holy Communion is a moment that reminds us that on special occasion, Christ took the simple elements of bread and wine and told those who were gathered there that evening that they would be the spark which would become a blaze, spreading love and light and even the resources of their hands throughout the world.

In this meal, we witness the generosity of Jesus shared with his disciples – not just those present that evening – but all of us who have followed their spark ever since. Holy Communion was Christ’s love offering to the world and now, we receive it as we share in the fellowship of one another and with Christ.

We rise from the table to be generous people who share this same love with the world. It is our offering and we share it generously, as Christ shared generously with us. One spark of generosity passed on.



Communion Prayer

Your generosity, God, has been evident from the creation of the world. You spent your time creating the sky, the water, the earth, the animals, even the first person. And when that person needed a helper, you created that too. You generously gave them the garden to tend, seeds to plant and water to drink.

That generosity was not always returned to you as humanity often turned away to make their own path through the world you so lovingly created. They did that by turning away from your love and grace, demanding a king and then refusing to listen to the prophets who came to show a different way.

They warned the people that their gestures—devoid of genuine thanksgiving and devotion to God—were not pleasing to God. We forgot your commands to care for each other. Widows and orphans were neglected. Strangers were excluded. The poor were exploited. The sick were ostracized. The hungry were not fed.

So you sent your son, Jesus, who also showed your generosity as he taught us a new way to live and love others, through his daily interactions, his teachings and his sacrificial offering for all of humanity. He preached and taught the stories of ancient Israel to remind the people of who they were and to whom they belonged—the God who showed up with mercy, grace, compassion, and love. Jesus reminded the people that God still cared about the plight of the least and the vulnerable.

After his death and resurrection, you generously gave us the Holy Spirit so that we could continue the ministry of Jesus into the world. As we continue our generous offerings to the world today, we boldly proclaim this truth which we believe, live and proclaim:

Continue with the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) and the Great Thanksgiving as your tradition practices.



Invitation to the Offering

Let each one give as (they have) chosen
With a heart of gratitude,
Not with grumbling or reluctance,
But with a cheerful attitude
And God is able to make all grace
Abound toward you
So you will be fully equipped
And be blessed in all you do.

This poem by New Zealand poet Michelle Lowndes reminds us that we are called to give with the right attitude and from that, blessings flow not only for the giver but also for the receiver.

God invites us to give not because our pockets overflow or because we feel guilt. God invites us to give because our hearts are stirred, and we witness God at work in one another. We are agents of grace when we choose to give because we believe in the kingdom of God being built among us.

This is the generosity that you are invited to offer through One Great Hour of Sharing. Your offering helps rebuild from disaster, feed the hungry, provide clean water to the thirsty, empower the oppressed, and restore hope.

The apostle Paul's admonition to give generously and cheerfully is bolstered by the words of the Psalmist: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever" (112:9).

We cannot be in all of the places where our offering will eventually go, but like seeds scattered throughout the land by the wind that blows even where we cannot see it, our gifts bless the world far beyond what we can imagine. This offering IS our love offering TO the world. Let us share generously.

Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, we offer these gifts in the spirit of generosity and with a heart full of gratitude for what we've been given. These offerings are one way of showing our commitment to sharing with those who are in need, neighbors near and far, whom we are unlikely to meet. We offer these gifts with a cheerful heart as our love offering to brothers and sisters we may never meet. Bless the gifts, just as you have each of us, with an extra measure of your grace. In Christ's name, Amen.



Charge and Benediction

One: God has shown us there is enough. When things are tight and the future seems uncertain,

All: We choose to give a love offering to the world.

God's love shapes us and molds us to share from our own blessings.

We choose to give a love offering to the world.

Go forth from this place and be

a love offering to the world.

Hymn Suggestions

- Amazing Grace by John Newton
- Come, Ye Thankful People, Come by Henry Alford
- Draw the Circle Wide by Mark Miller
- Demos con algeria (Give with a Cheerful Spirit) Sonia Andrea Linares M.
- Give Thanks, with a Grateful Heart by Henry Smith
- God of Grace and God of Glory by Harry Emerson Fosdick
- Great God, The Giver of All Good by James Skinner
- In the Midst of New Dimensions by Julian B. Rush
- Love God, Love People by Danny Gokey
- Now Thank We All Our God by Martin Rinkart
- O God, You Send Us Out to Walk by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (written for CWS CROP Hunger Walks)
- Pass It On by Kurt Kaiser
- Take My Life and Let It Be by Frances Ridley Havergal
- The Church of Christ in Every Age by Fred Pratt Green
- There Shall Be Showers of Blessings by Daniel Whittle
- You Are the Seed (Sois la Semilla) by Cesáreo Gabaráin



Children's Activity

Children's Activity – Cheerful Giving

This children's lesson is written for a 60-minute session. The majority of the time should be spent on the object lesson, which is an adaptation of Lectio Divina. There are optional activities for different age groups offered as a beginning to the lesson. Time adaptations can be made to the Lectio Divina activity for different age groups.

Option 1 – Play a Game (2nd – 5th graders)

Supplies Needed: Wrapped and decorated box with slips of paper inside with words such as the Fruits of the Spirit (love, peace, patience, joy, etc...). The Fruits of the Spirit are found in Paul's letter to the Galatians 5:22-23. Children should be able to take out the slips easily.

Have the children sit in a circle. The leader will provide these instructions:

The person to my right is going to take this box and retrieve a slip of paper. Look at that word and then act out the word or tell a story about the word.

Discuss

- What is it like to receive a gift from another person?
- What is it like to give a gift?
- How could you give _____ (one of the words) as a gift to another person?
- What is it like when someone gives you _____ (one of the words) or is _____ with you? For example, gives you love or is patient with you?
- How does our giving gifts connect to the way we love others?

Option 2 – Read a Book (Younger Elementary through 2nd grade)

Read the book Extra Yarn by Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen. From the seemingly endless box of yarn, Annabelle knits clothing for everyone around her, tempering the ill-tempered, and creating beautifully patterned warmth for people, animals, and objects, alike. When a greedy clothes-loving archduke tries to buy – then steal – the box for himself, he discovers that ill-gotten gains bear no fruit – or in this case, yarn.

After reading the book, lead a discussion in which you ask participants how they can give gifts to others and give those gifts cheerfully. You can also point out that when we give gifts, we are offering them with love for others in the world around us.



Children's Activity – Cheerful Giving Continued

Scripture Reading

Read the One Great Hour of Sharing focus text in these two versions:

2nd Corinthians 9:6-7 from The New International Version:

⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

1st Corinthians 9:6-7 from The International Children's Bible:

⁶ Remember this: The person who plants a little will have a small harvest. But the person who plants a lot will have a big harvest. ⁷ Each one should give, then, what he has decided in his heart to give. He should not give if it makes him sad. And he should not give if he thinks he is forced to give. God loves the person who gives happily.

Activity - Find the Scripture

Supplies needed: Notecards with the phrase “God love a cheerful giver” broken up so that no one has all of the words or letter. They will have to rely on one another complete the phrase.

Example:

GO D LO VES AC HE ER FUL GI VER

The leader will provide these instructions:

Each of you is going to take one of the cards and you will work together to complete the phrase on the cards, which is based on the scripture you just heard.

Discuss

- What it was like to work together – like each had a gift to offer the group.
- What happened during the activity?
- Did everyone get along?
- Were there any problems?
- Did you see how it could be loving (or unloving) when we share (or do not) with others?



Children's Activity – Cheerful Giving Continued

Object Lesson - Lectio Divina for Children

Supplies needed: Art supplies as desired, a Bible

This lesson is an adaptation of the ancient practice of Lectio Divina. In the simplest terms, Lectio is “divine reading” or a reflective process of reading scripture in four stages. Generally, the same passage of scripture is read 4 times – reading (lectio), meditate (meditatio), pray (oratio) and contemplate (contemplatio).

In this exercise with children, they will hear the One Great Hour of Sharing scripture from the International Children’s Bible (above) or any translation of choice.

After reading the scripture the first time (reading), ask the students if there was a word or phrase which they remembered. Have them turn to their neighbor and share the word. Give them about 2-3 minutes to do this.

After reading the scripture the second time (meditating), ask the students to draw a picture depicting the scripture. Give them about 10 minutes to do this.

After reading the scripture the third time (pray), ask the students to offer different ways they can be generous and giving toward others. After everyone has had a chance to share, take time to offer a short prayer. Give about 2-3 minutes for this portion of the exercise.

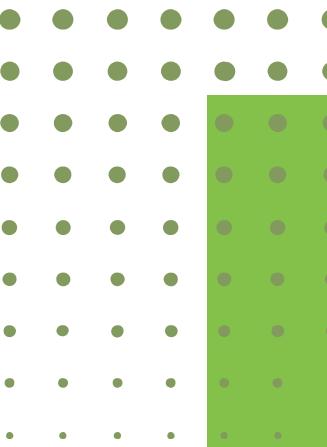
After reading the scripture the fourth time (contemplate), ask the students to work together to perform a skit or write a short song incorporating the scripture. Give them about 10 minutes for this portion and then allow them to share what they develop.

** Please note, this activity can be adapted for younger age groups by either choosing one or more of the four segments of Lectio Divina or shortening the particular activity to a more appropriate time frame (like instead of 10 minutes, it could be five minutes.)

Mission Moment

Empowered to thrive

Your love offering provided eco-stoves to Esmerelda Robles and 58 families in rural Honduras so they can prepare meals without increasing environmental pollution. Esmerelda explained, “Now we don’t need as much firewood to cook, unlike the stove we had before. And it is very helpful for our lungs that there is no smoke.” Because of your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing, she and others use less firewood, cook faster, and save time preparing meals for their families. In addition, Esmerelda and her neighbors receive training on planting crops, producing fertilizers, and implementing irrigation techniques. Your dollars to One Great Hour of Sharing empower families like Esmerelda’s to thrive in unimaginable ways. Her community is more food secure and healthier, because of your generous love offering.



Mission Moment

YWCA of Palestine – Jalazone Kindergarten and Community Center

What better way to support a more sustainable and hopeful future than to support and educate future generations? The YWCA of Palestine, a United Church of Christ partner through Global Ministries and supported by One Great Hour of Sharing, has engaged local Palestinian communities since 1893.

Today, it offers programs of economic empowerment, women's rights, youth leadership, and children's education. An example of the latter is the YWCA's nursery schools and kindergartens in refugee camps, schools the YWCA has run for decades. In addition to regular classes, the YWCA offers skill-based camps such as photography and sports, as well as other extra-curricular activities at its schools.

In the occupied Palestinian West Bank, roughly one-fourth of the 900,000 Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations live in 19 refugee camps. The YWCA kindergarten in the Jalazone Refugee Camp near Ramallah is a sign of hope for a community that has endured over 75 years of displacement.



Mission Moment

YWCA of Palestine – Jalazone Kindergarten and Community Center (Continued)

The school and connected community center address the needs of over 80 children and their families within the camp. In a place that is often subjected to raids and night-time patrols by the Israeli military, children are not immune from the trauma the residents of the camp experience. As a result, the YWCA has added awareness and counselling sessions to regular classes to help improve the psychological well-being of the children there.

The opportunities that the YWCA affords the community through the kindergarten benefit the children, their families, and the teachers as well, providing a safe space for play and employing techniques to cope with the stress of daily life living in sub-par circumstances of a refugee camp under military occupation.

The pride the children have when they dress up for their graduation ceremony is palpable. They enjoy the celebration of their accomplishment, and anticipate their next stages of education and life better able and prepared for the challenges they will face.





A congregation can earn the designation of being 5 for 5 if it participates in the four Special Mission Offerings of the UCC, as well as giving to Our Church's Wider Mission, Basic Support. The Special Mission Offerings provide congregations with a curriculum of generosity that helps teach about giving internationally and locally, through advocacy and direct service, to those inside our community and those far beyond. Our offerings provide a common witness and make a collective positive impact.

Learn more about the designation at
www.ucc.org/ocwm

One Great Hour of Sharing is received on the fourth Sunday of Lent. It supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response.

Strengthen the Church is received on Pentecost Sunday. It supports church growth, pastoral and lay leadership development, and youth and young adult ministries within conferences.

Neighbors in Need is received on the first Sunday of October as part of World Communion Sunday and supports the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) and Love of Church. It supports a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants.

The Christmas Fund is received the Sunday before Christmas. It provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premiums.

Additional print resources can be ordered online - www.uccresources.com

Electronic resources can be found online - www.ucc.org/oghs

OGHS DONATIONS

Please mail your church's gift to your Association or Conference or send it directly to the National
Ministries:

United Church of Christ
PO BOX 71957
Cleveland, Ohio 44194

Please mark "One Great Hour of Sharing" clearly on your check or money order.

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