

March 31, 2019
Fourth Sunday of Lent
Embracing Love
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

Jesus' story about a precious son lost and recovered was a response to self-righteous religious authorities who questioned the company he was keeping, but it's also appropriate for Lenten reflection on our own lives. Where do we find ourselves in this story? Why do we so often identify with the older brother? Are we, like that older brother, perhaps stuck in scarcity thinking, when we'd be much happier, much freer, trusting that there is more than enough for all, and great cause for celebration?

One Great Hour of Sharing

You arrive home in the evening, tired from a long day, and on the news comes a bulletin about an earthquake, or refugee crisis, or typhoon, or famine that has struck. You watch it on the television, or your computer screen and say to yourself, "There's so much misery in the world." Then, you change the channel. After all, what can you do? You have work the next day, and your life to live. In your wallet might be twenty or forty dollars. How far could that go to help thousands of people? You can do something other than look in your wallet and feel powerless. We have a way to reach into that news story and make a difference. You can watch but you don't have to stand still; you can run toward the one who needs you and give to One Great Hour of Sharing.

One Great Hour of Sharing is more than a helping organization. It's part of the mission of the Christian church. More than just the United Church of Christ, we join with eight other Christian denominations in this work. Together, with those partners, we raise approximately 12 million dollars a year. Of each dollar given, more than 90 cents is used directly for mission services on the ground in areas of need.

Imagine yourself separated from your family by a disaster and there are only strangers all around you. Then picture someone handing you something warm to drink, a blanket and a way to get home again. Give to One Great Hour of Sharing because when we join our gifts with others we can make a difference in the world. Share in this ministry because it's a way we can share the love of Christ with others.

Give generously so we can all be there to offer hope to those suffering and to restore home the lost.

