



40 DAYS



# ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

---

DEVOTIONAL BOOK

# ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

---

## DEVOTIONAL BOOK

40 Daily Devotionals for Your Lenten Journey

Presented by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR),  
the humanitarian relief and development arm of the United Methodist Church.

Copyright © 2014 by The General Board of Global Ministries

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof  
may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever  
without the express written permission of the publisher  
except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

Printed in the United States of America

First printing, 2014

United Methodist Committee on Relief

General Board of Global Ministries

475 Riverside Drive, Room 1520

New York, N.Y. 10115

Toll-free: 1-800-554-8583

Email: [umcor@umcor.org](mailto:umcor@umcor.org)

[www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org)

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to offer you this One Great Hour of Sharing Devotional eBook as we prepare our hearts for the upcoming One Great Hour of Sharing offering on the third Sunday of Lent. As United Methodists, our mission always comes from devotion – our devotion to God, being grounded in Jesus Christ and following Christ's Spirit into the world.

How appropriate it is during this season of Lent to have opportunity to reflect on how we can meet the needs of God's children around the world. Lent is a season of repentance, self-examination, and awareness, not just of our own spiritual needs but also of the needs of others. When we journey through Lent, we come to a greater understanding of Christ's call to minister to the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ's name.

These daily readings will share the reason we do what we do through UMCOR. It is my privilege to see countless lives touched each day thanks to the generous efforts of so many. Moved by God's generosity to us, we reach out to share the goodness of life with those who hurt. This is the vision that I pray you will share more deeply through these forty days of simple readings.

UMCOR has been known, for more than seventy years now, to remain alongside devastated communities long after their plight has been pushed from the headlines. We continue thoughtfully to provide the help that is most needed, whether cleaning kits, emergency food distributions, strategic support, or spiritual and emotional care.

The support of your local congregation is critical as we aid so many recovering communities around the world. I thank you for generosity already expressed. I'm excited to see how God will continue to use us as the hands and feet of Jesus in a hurting world.

I hope you are blessed by these devotional readings and your heart is moved to action on behalf of the helpless.

May God bless you and those you love.

Warmest regards,

**Rev. Dr. J. Denise Honeycutt**

Deputy General Secretary

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## How to Use These Devotionals to Enrich Our Lenten Journey 6

### Daily Devotional Readings

Day One	7
Day Two	8
Day Three	9
Day Four	10
Day Five	11
Day Six	12
Day Seven	13
Day Eight	14
Day Nine	15
Day Ten	16
Day Eleven	17
Day Twelve	18
Day Thirteen	19
Day Fourteen	20
Day Fifteen	21
Day Sixteen	22
Day Seventeen	23
Day Eighteen	24
Day Nineteen	25
Day Twenty	26
Day Twenty-One	27
Day Twenty-Two	28
Day Twenty-Three	29
Day Twenty-Four	30
Day Twenty-Five	31

Day Twenty-Six	32
Day Twenty-Seven	33
Day Twenty-Eight	34
Day Twenty-Nine	35
Day Thirty	36
Day Thirty-One	37
Day Thirty-Two	38
Day Thirty-Three	39
Day Thirty-Four	40
Day Thirty-Five	41
Day Thirty-Six	42
Day Thirty-Seven	43
Day Thirty-Eight	44
Day Thirty-Nine	45
Day Forty	46
<b>About UMCOR and One Great Hour of Sharing</b>	<b>47</b>

# HOW TO USE THESE DEVOTIONALS TO ENRICH OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

Writing about the 9.0 earthquake that struck Japan three years ago, Wisconsin Bishop Hee-Soo Jung said, “There are days when the world seems to be spinning out of control.”

“In our own lives,” he continued, “we are reminded of another moment in time when the earth shook and our world was forever redirected. In the wake of Christ’s Resurrection, the good news of God’s sacrifice for our sins has become an ageless message of hope and the promise of life eternal.”

In The United Methodist Church, we mark our Lenten journey through fasting, prayer, study, sacrifice, service and more. “The practice of Lenten disciplines,” Jung said, “offers us the opportunity to deepen our faith, renew our commitment and prepare ourselves for the gift of Christ’s Resurrection.”

Jung, who serves on the General Board of Global Ministries, is one of several writers of a new collection of devotionals that share the life-changing ministries of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Through the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we lay the foundation for UMCOR’s ministry of relief and hope.

Each devotional shares an aspect of UMCOR’s work that alleviates human suffering in more than 80 countries, including the United States. Here are some ideas for using this resource:

- Share this resource with your congregation or print a week’s worth of devotionals and insert them in the worship bulletin. Encourage individuals and families to use the devotionals as a focus for their daily walk with God.
- Use the devotionals in Sunday and midweek worship services. Read the Scripture, message and prayer before receiving the offering. Remind the congregation that they can give to One Great Hour of Sharing at any time, not just on the designated Sunday (March 30, 2014).
- Invite members of all ages to design banners or drawings to illustrate the one – or two -word themes related to the devotionals. The first week of the lectionary-based series, for example, uses such verbs as “pray,” “deliver,” “counsel,” “be glad” and “remember.” Ask the artists to tell how their creations share the devotional message.
- Connect the devotionals to your congregation’s experiences. If your community received help from UMCOR after a disaster, tell your story and share a devotional about another community UMCOR helped following a tragedy.
- Use the devotionals as a springboard for other One Great Hour of Sharing-related opportunities for personal growth and learning through Bible studies, classes, discussion groups, ecumenical activities, prayer and public witness.

As you prepare for Lent, we pray that these devotionals will inspire you and enrich your journey.



# DEVOTIONAL READINGS

# DAY 1 — PRAY

*“Therefore, let all who are faithful offer prayer to you. At a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.” --Psalm 32:6, NRSV*

The powerful Wesleyan tradition of concern for the vulnerable was at work in 1940, at the onset of World War II, when U.S. Methodists started what we know today as the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Its founding was triggered in part by memories of the horrendous effects of World War I on civilian populations. Bishop Herbert Welch conceived the idea as a loving response to a world of violence.

God’s grace equips us. As the embodiment of United Methodist disaster response, UMCOR offers services and presence without regard to religion, race, nationality, politics or gender. It responds both to small disasters and large, well-publicized disasters.

John Wesley admonished Methodists to do as much good and as little harm as possible in the world. Those are guiding precepts in our response to disaster. The church’s disaster response expresses our faith, confirms our discipleship and witnesses to our love for our neighbors.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, we pray that our gifts through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering will continue to witness to your amazing grace. Amen.

## DAY 2 — DELIVER

*“You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.” --Psalm 32:7, NRSV*

As United Methodists go about the work of disaster relief and rebuilding, strong theological themes from our Wesleyan heritage guide us.

The disaster response of the church and its members is an expression of faith, a confirmation of discipleship and a witness to love our neighbors worldwide. We do not distribute cleaning buckets and rebuild homes to convert others; we do so as the practice of a theology of presence that requires few words.

We work in partnerships that recognize the fullness and wholeness of God’s creation; we work with others to restore and preserve. We allow God to work through us, serving in both humility and confidence. We realize that everyone needs and has access to God’s grace.

Every annual conference in the United States has trained disaster response teams. Equipping these teams is a matter of both practical and theological importance in being alert.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, you deliver us from distress. Show us how to work in partnership with your children everywhere as we respond in love. Amen.

## DAY 3 — COUNSEL

*“I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go. I will counsel you with my eye upon you.” --Psalm 32:8, NRSV*

Tennessee and Kentucky are no strangers to tornadoes and floods. We forget that west Tennessee and western Kentucky sit on or near the New Madrid Fault. It is not beyond the realm of possibilities that the next disaster could be a major earthquake.

Following the 2003 tornado in west Tennessee, Christy Smith oversaw United Methodist Committee on Relief case management, construction and volunteers for recovery in three counties.

“I stopped at a client’s house several months into the recovery,” she recalled, “and apologized that it had taken so long for us to get to her. What she said changed my life. ‘That’s OK, honey. I knew God would send someone!’ What? Me? I knew behind me was the invisible strength of God’s hand and people – praying, giving, organizing, training, preparing. I finally stammered. ‘God sent me.’ I had never really thought of myself in ministry – until that moment.”

*--Bishop William T. McAlilly, Nashville Episcopal Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, remind us often that we are all ministers, reaching out in love and offering counsel to our sisters and brothers. Amen.

## DAY 4 — BE GLAD

*“Be glad in God, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!” --Psalm 32:11, AILL*

A week after the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Melissa Crutchfield led a small team to the island to start assessing emergency needs for the United Methodist Committee on Relief. The ability of her team to get to Haiti quickly was due in part to One Great Hour of Sharing, an annual churchwide offering taken on the fourth Sunday in Lent.

To Crutchfield, who coordinates international emergency response for the relief agency, One Great Hour of Sharing “is the backbone of what makes everything possible.” Because that fund pays for everything from staff salaries to electricity to cell phones, UMCOR promises to use 100 percent of donations earmarked for specific disasters and projects on the projects themselves.

And by supporting UMCOR’s headquarter operations, One Great Hour of Sharing allows for both emergency and long-term responses to a wide range of domestic and international disasters and ongoing hunger and development projects.

*--Linda Bloom, United Methodist News Service*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, even in times of great sorrow, may we discover and offer reasons to rejoice as we comfort your suffering people. Amen.

## DAY 5 — REMEMBER

*“It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” --Matthew 4:4b, NRSV*

Eight days after the tragic 2010 Haiti earthquake, a colleague and I traveled there to cover the story for United Methodist News Service.

I was not prepared for the destruction. I remember flashes: mothers feeding babies by the blue glow from a cell phone. A tiny boy getting a bath and his teeth brushed by a loving father in a soccer field. Attending a memorial service for the Revs. Sam Dixon and Clint Rabb. A lunch of coconuts in rural Mellier. The miracle of turning dirty water into clean drinkable water. The smell of death.

I’ve returned to Haiti twice and seen lots of progress. The United Methodist Committee on Relief continues to do great work, and United Methodist mission teams still stream steadily into Haiti. The hole that opened in my heart on that day in 2010 remains full of love and prayers for the sweet people of Haiti.

*--Kathy Gilbert, United Methodist News Service*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, we remember times of tragedy and thank you for the countless people who bring help and hope. Amen.

## DAY 6 — REACH OUT

*“Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it.” --Song of Solomon 8:7a, NRSV*

“They say these are floods of biblical proportions. We are people of biblical proportions,” Pastor Steve Warren reminded the congregation of Mountain View United Methodist Church.

In September 2013, I visited two Boulder, Colo., churches in ministry amid catastrophic flooding. Mountain View and St. Paul’s were among the many congregations involved in response to drenched church facilities, parsonages, members’ homes and communities. Homes were swept away. Lives were lost. Yet, the rain continued.

But people are amazing in a disaster. They checked on one another, helped rescue precious family mementos, offered a hot meal and searched for lost pets. Warren invited the Mountain View congregation to reflect on the story of Noah. And at St. Paul’s, Pastor Scott Schiesswohl said part of our recovery is being present with one another, noticing who is missing, and reaching out.

Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we, too, reach out, enabling the United Methodist Committee on Relief to be in ministry.

*—Bishop Elaine J. W. Stanovsky, Mountain Sky Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, as you have made water a sign of your kingdom, cleansing and rebirth, grant us vision to see new life on the other side of disaster. Amen.

## DAY 7 — HEAL

*“Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority ..., and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.” --Luke 9:1-2, NRSV*

In 2008, The United Methodist Church chose malaria as a lens through which to view health issues around the world holistically in order to develop a strategic response. “Malaria is not endemic in all parts of the world,” said Shannon Trilli, health and development director for the United Methodist Committee on Relief, “but it is widespread, preying especially on children and pregnant women. It can kill — yet is preventable.”

Malaria became the starting point in developing a comprehensive global health strategy. To meet the challenges, UMCOR assessed the capacity of the denomination’s health system across Africa. “As a result,” Trilli added, “we saved lives and laid a foundation of learning to strengthen our health ministry worldwide.”

UMCOR has made significant strides in the fight against malaria and in building local capacity and infrastructure to confront a spectrum of health issues and needs. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we enable UMCOR to respond through lifesaving and life-changing ministry.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for showing us that fighting malaria opens doors to healing and health for our sisters and brothers around the world. Amen.



## DAY 8 — CARE

*“What are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?” --Psalm 8:4, NRSV*

The United Methodist Committee on Relief helped annual conferences in Africa organize 12 health boards affecting 16 countries. Participants learned about governance, ownership, capacity building and sustainability and were encouraged to apply for Imagine No Malaria funds. They became centers of accountability for each conference, making them reliable partners for donors, large or small.

“Building up highly capable, self-governing health boards has significance beyond Imagine No Malaria,” noted Shannon Trilli, UMCOR health and development director. The boards “envision the global health needs of an entire annual conference and find ways to meet those needs.” They establish plans, promote partnerships, develop and implement policies, and encourage excellence in the delivery of preventive and curative health care.

Thus far, Trilli said, UMCOR has “mobilized more than 5,400 community health agents who provide their communities with information about health issues and introduce changes for healthier living.” Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we enable UMCOR to be an agent of change.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, just as you care for each of your children, help us to wrap loving arms around our sisters and brothers and help them to become agents of change. Amen.

## DAY 9 — REFRESH

*“Jesus said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.’” --John 4:13-14a, NRSV*

Today, United Methodist mission gifts feed hungry children in Liberia. Today, United Methodist mission gifts assist in the recovery from Hurricane Sandy in the northeastern United States. Today, United Methodist gifts aid a school in Vietnam.

In these, and hundreds of other ways, your gifts nurture mission with people in need around the world. This is all because United Methodists share generously through One Great Hour of Sharing, which covers the United Methodist Committee on Relief’s costs of doing business.

We feel the generosity of the connection in North Carolina as we continue to recover from the hurricanes of 2011. Damaged homes are restored, and new homes are built. Volunteers put those gifts to good use. May the fourth Sunday in Lent be a great day of sharing across The United Methodist Church so that we can continue to open wide this channel of generosity. Thank you for your gifts.

*--Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, Raleigh Episcopal Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, you give us living water. Fill our cups to overflowing so that we may pour out your love to others. Amen.

## DAY 10 — BLESS

*“I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.” --Genesis 12:2, NRSV*

I am a United Methodist because I observe and experience the presence and working of the Holy Spirit among us. Not everywhere, not all the time, but often and unmistakably.

I see committed, faithful people — lay and clergy — engage in life-changing ministries. I see sacrificial leadership offered at every level of the church. Not by everyone, not all the time, not perfectly, but faithfully. I am humbled and awed. The risen Christ is among us.

One way I see the church at its best is through the work of the United Methodist Committee on Relief. As God’s children around the world recover from disaster, UMCOR provides hope and healing. I encourage you to support UMCOR’s ministry and to change lives through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. This Lenten offering is an opportunity to reflect on what Jesus did for us and on what we can do for others.

*--Bishop James E. Dorff, San Antonio Episcopal Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, you bless us in so many ways. May we put the phrase “blessed to be a blessing” into thoughtful action. Amen.

## DAY 11 — LISTEN

*“The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.” --John 3:8a, NRSV*

As United Methodists, we take a broad view of partnerships in disaster relief and rebuilding. In the continuing response to the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the United Methodist Committee on Relief serves with Methodist and ecumenical partners not only from the Caribbean and Latin America but also from Canada and the United Kingdom.

We cooperate with nonprofit agencies not affiliated with the church. After the devastating 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia, we worked with other Christian, nondenominational and Muslim organizations.

UMCOR has long-term plans for response to the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. UMCOR’s response entails collaboration with Japanese Christians, putting particular emphasis on economically marginalized ethnic communities and on issues such as agricultural production where nuclear contamination exists.

Such partnerships address a theological objective: to recognize the fullness — the wholeness — of God’s created order and to restore and preserve all creation, including human families and communities.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, through earthquakes, tsunamis and other disasters, open our ears to listen — and to hear — the cries of our sisters and brothers. Amen.

## DAY 12 — REMEDY

*“Jesus answered Nicodemus, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, one cannot see the realm of God.’ --John 3:3, AILL*

The Moringa plant offers the potential to lower cholesterol, purify the liver and even prevent blindness. Thanks to the efforts of the United Methodist Committee on Relief and the West Africa Initiative of Liberia, farmers are learning Moringa harvesting to support themselves and their community.

The Moringa seed is a tiny powerhouse of nutrition, with 25 times the iron in spinach, 17 times the calcium in milk and 10 times the Vitamin A in carrots. This little wonder can survive drought and poor soil and still yield fruit within six months. That is why this amazing plant is known as “the miracle tree.”

In a country where widespread disease results in the death of one in every nine children before the age of 5, the Moringa brings potential to remedy malnutrition, treat skin infections and prevent disease. “Whenever you are sick,” said Korpo Sendelo, “you use this tree to help.”

--UMTV

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, a simple seed can renew life. That is amazing! Thank you for the miracles of your creation. Amen.

## DAY 13 — REJOICE

*“For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” --Isaiah 55:12, NRSV*

In southeast Africa, the Malawi United Methodist Church health board works with the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kan. The nearly 14,000-member Kansas congregation funds most of the Malawi church’s ministries in health and nutrition, water and sanitation, and early childhood development.

“These community-oriented programs focus mostly on preventive care,” said Mercy Chikhosi Nyirongo, health coordinator for the Malawi United Methodist Church. “As part of the nutrition program, we plant Moringa trees. Moringa leaves are edible and packed with vitamins and protein. They have a lot of health benefits for our population, including prevention of malnutrition, especially in children under age 5, for whom the nutrition program provides one meal per day.”

The Kansas church also focuses on malaria prevention. It supports UMCOR’s training of community health workers and the integration of community evangelism and health programs. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we find reasons to rejoice as UMCOR feeds bodies and souls.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for your amazing gift of the Moringa tree. Be with the people of Malawi as they benefit from UMCOR’s wide-ranging community health ministries. Amen.

## DAY 14 — GIVE

*“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” --*

*Luke 6:38, NRSV*

Mercy Chikhosi Nyirongo had always wanted to be a nurse. Public hospitals in Malawi are free, but they have a severe staff shortage. “I wanted to be part of the solution,” Mercy said.

When she finished her basic nursing and midwifery training, Mercy worked in one of Malawi’s public hospitals. She noticed “a very big service gap between the rich and the poor. Hospital personnel handled people differently depending on their socioeconomic status.” She decided to become an agent of change.

Supported by a scholarship from The United Methodist Church, she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from Africa University. “The only way I had of saying ‘thank you’ to the church for my scholarship,” Mercy explained, “was to give something back.”

Today, nurtured by the United Methodist Committee on Relief, she is the health coordinator for the Malawi United Methodist Church. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we enable UMCOR to provide help and healing.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, you give us so much; yet, we take so much for granted. Thank you for people like Mercy, who realize that the biggest part of receiving is giving. Amen.

## DAY 15 — EMPOWER

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth.” --Acts 1:8, NRSV*

Mercy Chikhosi Nyirongo, health coordinator for the Malawi United Methodist Church, envisions a brighter future for her country. High on her wish list are mobile clinics. “We could visit very remote areas where people are dying because they simply do not have access to health care,” she said.

Mercy is grateful for the global United Methodist connection. “It has helped us break the cycle of discrimination based on gender, religious affiliation or socioeconomic status,” she said, and to “reduce the oppression of the poorest members of society.”

Mercy added, “Our connection could be strengthened, allowing more church-to-church partnerships, but only if there is a clear understanding of partnership on both sides. The church in Malawi does not seek to be a receiver only, but also a contributor to the global ministries of the church.” Through the United Methodist Committee on Relief and our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we empower our sisters and brothers as they minister.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, remind us that ministry is a united effort and that working with, rather than for, your children, strengthens us all. Thank you for opportunities to be in ministry. Amen.



## DAY 16 — HELP

*“I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come? My help comes from God, who made heaven and earth.” --Psalm 121:1-2, AILL*

The United Methodist Committee on Relief is skilled in post-disaster case management that helps people get back on their feet economically and socially. Sometimes a new start can take place in the disaster-affected area, but often people must start over in a new place.

UMCOR received major public contracts in case management following Hurricane Katrina, which devastated large areas of the U.S. Gulf Coast in 2005. Much of the response was in collaboration with mission volunteer teams, which is always the case after disasters in the United States.

Equipping trained disaster-response teams in every annual conference is a matter of both practical and theological necessity. Jesus said, “Whoever have has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” Like the boy who shared his lunch so that Jesus could feed a multitude, we must be ready when God invites us to respond.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, “help” is a little word with big implications. Help us to be ready when you invite us to respond. Amen.

## DAY 17 — RESTORE

*“It won’t be long before this generous God who has great plans for us in Christ — eternal and glorious plans they are! — will have you put together and on your feet for good.” --1 Peter 5:10,*

### *The Message*

“When disaster strikes a community,” said Melissa Crutchfield of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, “images and accounts of distress fill TV screens and airwaves. If the emergency remains in the news for more than a week or two, it seems like long-term coverage.”

While mass media often cover only the first phase of a disaster, UMCOR’s long-term disaster-response work unfolds over several phases and can last months or years. “Meeting basic needs simply to keep people alive, the emergency relief phase begins in the immediate aftermath of a disaster,” Crutchfield explained. “People need food, water, shelter and medicines. Those with severe injuries need urgent medical help.”

After an initial community assessment, UMCOR works with partners and supports churches already on the ground. Emergency relief can continue for a long time or end quickly, depending on the nature of the situation and available resources. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we play a key role in UMCOR’s lifesaving ministry.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, when life seems hopeless and out of control, you are present. Help us also to be present, restoring lives and getting people back on their feet. Amen.

## DAY 18 — NURTURE

*“It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” --Matthew 13:32, NRSV*

Community development, said Melissa Crutchfield of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, is a pillar of UMCOR’s work, whether or not a disaster has occurred.

In disaster recovery, it is a means of improving on the “normal.” For UMCOR, remaining in an area after a disaster provides opportunities for important long-term engagement. Once the population is back to a relatively stable daily life, UMCOR addresses the root causes of circumstances that significantly challenge the community. After years of putting recovery systems in place, UMCOR can leverage those systems to improve people’s lives beyond disaster recovery.

“Sometimes,” Crutchfield said, “UMCOR will set up a field office, such as in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake or in Indonesia and Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami. Then UMCOR’s global health work, sustainable agriculture and development programs, hunger and poverty programming, livelihood strengthening, and education and empowerment initiatives can take root.” Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we help UMCOR plant seeds of hope.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, we are grateful that even our smallest gifts, when nurtured in love, grow into giant, life-changing ministries. Teach us generosity. Amen.

## DAY 19 — UNDERSTAND

*“My child, if you accept my words and treasure up my commandments within you, ... Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity; every good path.” --Proverbs 2:1, 9, NRSV*

Accompanying a community through disaster recovery requires long-term commitment by The United Methodist Church. “It is only after the injured have been treated, the hungry fed and the thirsty provided with clean, potable water that recovery begins,” said Melissa Crutchfield of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

“Even long after the rubble-strewn streets have been cleared and houses rebuilt, we may still be called to walk side-by-side with disaster survivors while they make their communities stronger and better prepared for the next calamity. ... Through UMCOR, the church accompanies them as they strive to live in God’s abundance, standing strong and hopeful even through times of crisis.”

For more than seven decades, UMCOR has been a “voice of conscience ... to act in the relief of human suffering,” much as Methodist Bishop Herbert Welch envisioned when the Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief began in 1940. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we help others to experience God’s abundance.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, sometimes we are so caught up in our own lives that we fail to empathize with your suffering children. Remind us, God, to listen, see and serve. Amen.

## DAY 20 — SING

*“O come, let us sing to God; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! --Psalm 95:1,*

*AILL*

Whenever and wherever tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, fires, famine, natural and human-caused disasters strike in the world, United Methodists respond with help to alleviate the suffering and assist in the long-term recovery.

Our response is only possible because of the generous gifts we offer through the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Once a year, you are invited through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering to replenish the funds needed to carry out the work of Christ’s love in action in the world.

I encourage you to join me in supporting fully the work of UMCOR. As a bishop and as president of the UMCOR board of directors, I hear daily of the ways we are making a difference in the lives of people. I ask you to be as generous as possible with your offering. Our God is a generous God. God calls us to respond with generous offerings.

*--Bishop Hee-Soo Jung, Wisconsin Episcopal Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, your generosity is worth singing about. Thank you! May we share with those who have little in resources but much in faith. Amen.

## DAY 21 — EXCEL

*“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed.” --2 Timothy 2:15a, AILL*

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in 2005, the United Methodist Committee on Relief brought nine faith-based or unaffiliated voluntary agencies into one case-management program called Katrina Aid Today. This program, known as “KAT,” received a \$66 million government grant administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. In the months following Katrina, KAT affiliates sometimes opened 200 new cases per day. KAT helped more than 300,000 Katrina survivors.

In addition to the FEMA grant, UMCOR raised nearly \$70 million in post-Hurricane Katrina donations, helping hundreds of thousands more.

Now, thanks to the training and tools developed during the Katrina response, disaster survivors nationwide receive better case management, said Catherine Earl, UMCOR executive for U.S. disaster response. “In the years following Hurricane Katrina, we stuck to our resolve to do our job very, very well,” Earl said. “Our goal is to give a disaster survivor the very best care possible.” Through One Great Hour of Sharing, we contribute to UMCOR’s extraordinary mission.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, inspire us to do our best work when we serve you by serving others, especially those who hurt. Amen.

## DAY 22 — PROTECT

*“God will not let your foot be moved; the one who keeps you will not slumber.” --Psalm 121:3,*

*AILL*

It wasn't until Hurricane Katrina in 2005 that I came to understand and appreciate fully the true gift of our connectional church. In the early days of the first responders, The United Methodist Church was present. UMCOR — the United Methodist Committee on Relief — was there.

With the generosity of the people called Methodists around the world; the organization of UMCOR; and the hands, feet and hearts of volunteers, the Mississippi Gulf Coast scrapped its way back.

The heart of recovery and of UMCOR is the people of The United Methodist Church. Early on, people asked, “Where is UMCOR?” My friend Ed Blakesly said, “UMCOR is us.” Some 130,000 volunteers later, there have been 13,000 homes repaired and 130 new homes constructed ... all done by the men, women and youth who came for the last seven years. We came to say, “A storm is a terrible thing to waste.”

*--Bishop William T. McAlilly, Nashville Episcopal Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, you never slumber. Awaken us to the possibilities that await us as we offer refuge through the storms of life. Amen.

## DAY 23 — PREPARE

*“This one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.” --Philippians 3:13b-14, NRSV*

United Methodist Committee on Relief supplies — such as cleaning buckets, health kits and other aids — are critically important in disaster ministry. Relief-supply kits packed by U.S. congregations go directly to disaster survivors.

Catherine Earl, UMCOR executive for U.S. disaster response, remembers meeting a woman who received a cleaning bucket during the 2011 Midwest floods. “She had always assembled the cleaning buckets and other relief-supply kits with her unit of United Methodist Women,” Earl said. “Then, suddenly, she was the recipient of a cleaning bucket, and she thought about how it all comes around in a circle of caring.”

UMCOR’s depots need continually to build up their supply of cleaning buckets, said Kathy Kraiza, UMCOR’s executive director of relief supplies. “We’ve always got to replenish our supplies to be ready for the next disaster,” she pointed out. Packing relief kits is important to UMCOR — as is our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which helps underwrite the agency’s costs of “doing business.”

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, you know what lies ahead for each of us. Help us to prepare so that we are ready to respond when your children call out in distress. Amen.



## DAY 24 — PRAISE

*“Let us come into God’s presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise!” --Psalm 95:2, AILL*

In times of disaster, the focus is often on “the least of these.” The poor and older adults characteristically have the least substantial housing and are the most vulnerable regarding immediate post-disaster needs and long-term rehabilitation. Methodists have always been strongly committed to ministry with the poor.

Restoration of housing, social institutions and the means of making a living are long-term post-disaster tasks. People recognize the United Methodist Committee on Relief as an agency that arrives early and stays the longest through disaster recovery.

One example is our work in response to the prolonged war in Bosnia, which lasted for years after hostilities ceased, covering a full decade and involving the restoration of farms. Similarly, work in Armenia and Georgia has extended for two decades. Job training and the rebuilding of homes, schools and other infrastructure in Haiti continues in close collaboration with local communities and the Haitian Methodist Church.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, with praise and thanksgiving for all you have given us, enable us to bring healing to your most vulnerable children. Amen.

## DAY 25 — BELIEVE

*“Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” --Romans 5:1, NRSV*

“Churches Shelve Theology for Disaster Relief Efforts,” ran the headline of a Tennessee newspaper reporting on a devastating 2010 flood. The article focused on how churches with different ways of thinking were working together in response to flood survivors’ urgent needs.

Yet, the headline also suggested that theology was absent from this disaster response. In reality, the opposite is true.

As United Methodists and as Christians, we do not “put our theology on the shelf” to respond to disasters. We put our theology to work! We follow Jesus by identifying with and assisting individuals and communities affected by disasters — whether those disasters are naturally or humanly generated. The mission theology statement of the General Board of Global Ministries makes this point clear: In God’s mission, “Jesus poured himself out in servanthood for all humanity” and “the church experiences and engages in God’s mission as it pours itself out for others.”

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, as we proclaim our belief in worship and witness, help us to pour ourselves out for others. Amen.

## DAY 26 — REBUILD

*“So we rebuilt the wall, and all the wall was joined together ...; for the people had a mind to work.” --Nehemiah 4:6, NRSV*

In Africa, United Methodists have worked for decades to bring community-based, primary health care to the local level. [Ganta United Methodist Hospital](#) in Nimba County, Liberia, is an example. “We started our community health programs in 1987,” said Victor Taryor, a United Methodist missionary who serves as hospital administrator.

Unfortunately, civil strife in Liberia in the 1990s took its toll. The hospital suffered heavy damage, sustaining great losses in supplies, equipment and personnel. United Methodists in Liberia — assisted by their counterparts in the wider global connection — began to rebuild the Ganta facilities, only to have them hit again in resurgent fighting in the early 2000s.

A decade later, the mission station and the hospital have rebounded. In fact, the Ganta United Methodist Hospital is planning a major construction project to build new facilities, seeking to meet the needs of 600,000 people. Thanks to our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we meet critical needs through the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, remind us that we can comfort and sustain people struggling to rebuild their lives through our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Amen.

## DAY 27 — CONSOLE

*“A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.” --Matthew 2:18, NRSV*

The Nehnwaa Child Survival Project, now in its fifth year of operation, works in collaboration with the Ganta United Methodist Hospital in Liberia to reduce child mortality by 60 percent.

Community-based programs address the principal causes of death among mothers and children — obstetric complications, neonatal conditions, malaria, pneumonia, diarrhea, measles and HIV infection. The organization uses a census-based methodology to reach every person in the community.

Community volunteer health workers, prepared by the United Methodist Committee on Relief, are essential to the program’s success. Traditional midwives, trained by the hospital, educate village women about women’s health issues and childbirth. They urge local women to give birth in the hospital if they can get there in time. Otherwise, the well-trained and well-equipped midwives deliver the babies. Each community or village has one trained community health worker who oversees health concerns. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we enable UMCOR to be in ministry in Liberia and many other countries.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, your children die needlessly because they lack medicine and medical care. Be with your servants who bring new life to hurting communities. Amen.

## DAY 28 — LOVE

*“And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.” --Mark 10:16,  
NRSV*

In Liberia, care-group volunteers, trained by the United Methodist Committee on Relief, monitor the health of families in their community. They visit their assigned households, track the health of individuals and families and encourage patients to follow prescribed treatments. Malaria, HIV/AIDS, the water supply and immunizations are all considered part of mother-and-child health.

Volunteers address problems on a family level, ensuring each mother has mosquito nets for herself and her children and that she knows how to use them properly. If a mother is not using the nets, the volunteers seek to learn why. Families can be tested for malaria and receive treatment.

The goal is to change the behavior of the whole family so that children understand the foundations of public health. Then they can seek to ensure public health in their communities as they mature and start families of their own. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, UMCOR volunteers become the loving hands of Jesus.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, you bless us so we can bless others. Just as Jesus blessed the children, may our gifts bless those who offer health and hope to children and families. Amen.

## DAY 29 — WITNESS

*“But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.” –Matthew 13:16, NRSV*

Victor Taryor, a General Board of Global Ministries missionary and administrator of Ganta United Methodist Hospital, invites United Methodists across the connection to see the health work in Liberia. The hospital is part of the Ganta United Methodist Mission Station.

“Some may feel that the money people spend to come from the United States to visit could be better spent if they just sent the money and stayed home,” he admitted. “I can see the logic of that. However, when people come, they become inspired when they see what we are doing, and they may want to be part of the service that the church provides to the community. There are so many different ways to serve that a visitor will easily find one that is personally heart moving. Also, when visitors come and see our challenges, they can go back as goodwill ambassadors.” Our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing strengthen the United Methodist Committee on Relief’s mission.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, it is one thing to hear of your wonders and quite another to witness them firsthand.

Inspire us to see your love in action and to share the good news! Amen.

## DAY 30 — WAIT

*“And hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” --Romans 5:5, NRSV*

Wait. Hope. Pray.

God provides a powerful connection to all of us who share in responding to those who experience unexpected and devastating disasters. Our United Methodist Committee on Relief is always at work connecting those who wait in need, hoping for help, with those who are expecting the invitation to share and to respond in faith.

In this way, our faith and generosity flow from the heart of who we are as United Methodists into the world. We are a dynamic community seeking to be neighbors to those in need, whether close to where we live or in the far reaches of our world. Through UMCOR, we pour out God’s unlimited love and care for humankind wherever the need takes us. We wait, we hope, we pray. We continue in our untiring efforts to make a difference, so God’s children know that through our actions, God does respond.

*--Bishop Hee-Soo Jung, Wisconsin Episcopal Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, as we wait, hope and pray, energize us to make a difference in the lives of your people at home and far away. Amen.

## DAY 31 — QUENCH

*“The woman said to him, ‘Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.’” --John 4:15, NRSV*

The Hernandez family lives in a one-room brick home in La Pita, Nicaragua. The house, with a tile roof and dirt floor, is simple, yet clean.

Victoria Hernandez Diaz used to walk two kilometers every day to get water from a creek — waiting in long lines to draw the water. The family’s latrine was the outdoors. This practice, followed by the entire community, contaminated the environment. It led to illness, both in the people and in the animals that the people raised for food. The people knew little about healthy hygiene, so their constant illnesses led to extra family expense.

In partnership with El Porvenir, a United Methodist-supported ministry, the Hernandezes and their neighbors now have water taps just outside their doors and latrines behind their homes. Today they are grateful for El Porvenir, which means “the future” in Spanish. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we help the United Methodist Committee on Relief to provide water for bodies and souls.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, relieving thirst is so much more than offering a cold drink of water. Thank you for the living water we receive through your Son. Amen.



## DAY 32 — RENEW

*“We were saved ... in virtue of God’s own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which God poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.” --Titus 3:5-6, AILL*

In La Pita, Nicaragua, women often carried 10 gallons of water per day in one trip to and from the creek. “I had two miscarriages,” Victoria Hernandez Diaz said, “because I had to carry water from far away — one bucket on my head and one on my hip.”

She added, “Drought affected us as well. The creek where we all went for water dried up. That meant we had to drink water from the (contaminated) stream. The children couldn’t go to class because they had to help carry the water.”

Today, through El Porvenir, a United Methodist-supported ministry, families have immediate access to clean, safe water. Family members use the latrine in their backyard. They understand the importance of washing their hands. They are healthier. They are especially grateful for El Porvenir (“the future”), which has transformed their lives. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we renew lives as we enable the ministry of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, just as you renew us through your Son, Jesus, teach us mercy that we may renew others through life-changing ministries. Amen.

## DAY 33 — HOPE

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” --Jeremiah 29:11, NRSV*

Victoria Hernandez Diaz opened a small store in her La Pita, Nicaragua, home. She sells rice, sugar, snacks and her own baked bread. Her children attend school regularly. Her husband works as a day laborer on private farms and has a small farm plot. The family now earns \$6 per day — much higher than the \$1 to \$2 average for most rural Nicaraguans.

Their lives have changed dramatically because of El Porvenir, which means “the future” in Spanish. Supported by United Methodists, El Porvenir offers access to safe drinking water and sanitary latrines.

From El Porvenir, Victoria gained much more than clean water and good health for her family. She gained pride, new skills and new purpose. “My dreams,” she said, “are to have a clean and united community — one without sickness and with strong relationships with my family and our neighbors.” Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we give hope as we assist the United Methodist Committee on Relief’s ministry.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, so many of your children have little hope because of circumstances beyond their control. Thank you for the opportunities to offer hope in your name. Amen.

## DAY 34 — ENLIGHTEN

*“For once you were darkness, but now ... you are light.” --Ephesians 5:8a, NRSV*

Jesus was steeped in the Jewish tradition of holiness and instructed in the care of humanity. In the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40), Jesus encouraged his followers to love and care for our neighbors as we care for ourselves — an admonition also from the Old Testament.

In Galatians 5:14, the apostle Paul used “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” to sum up the whole of religious law.

Acts 11 told the story of what may have been the first Christian collection for disaster survivors. When the church in Antioch learned that fellow believers in Judea faced famine, “the disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers living in Judea” (Acts 11:29).

In the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10, Jesus broadened the definition of a “neighbor” as he cut across ethnic and religious boundaries for the sake of human service and dignity.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, may we walk in your light as we hold the hands of your hurting people and lead them to hope. Amen.

## DAY 35 — SEE

*“One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” --John 9:25b, NRSV*

A man blind from birth receives sight, but some people cannot believe this miracle is true. From the blind man’s viewpoint, the possibilities are fresh, exciting and endless. The skeptics see nothing but cynicism and doubt.

The difference in this story is one person: Jesus. Whatever Jesus touches is never the same. His simple touch heals the blind, stimulates possibilities and opens previously closed doors. Like the old song says, “I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.”

The touch of Jesus that brings sight to the blind is all around us. For example, stand-alone offerings have a limited measure of effectiveness. However, through the simple touch of a “One Great Hour of Sharing” offering, my gift, plus your gift, plus the gifts of others, provides the miracle of a touch that accomplishes far more than we could ever dream or imagine. That is the power of God at work, transforming simple gifts into great possibilities. Thanks be to God!

*--Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton, Pittsburgh Episcopal Area*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, open our eyes to the great possibilities that our simple gifts, added to those of others, can provide. Open our hearts to give generously. Amen.

## DAY 36 — TRUST

*“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me.” --Psalm  
23:4a, NRSV*

The United Methodist understanding of God’s mission highlights the spirit of disaster relief response necessary for post-disaster restoration.

For that reason, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is a natural part of our denomination’s mission agency. We follow and find Christ in disaster situations. “God’s light shines in every corner of the earth,” proclaims the General Board of Global Ministries’ mission theology statement. “There are no places where God’s grace has not always been present.”

Many United Methodists participate in UMCOR’s disaster relief ministries through the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering or by contributing funds through emergency channels of The Advance. A small, yet significant, number of church members volunteer for cleanup and rebuilding after hurricanes, tornadoes, floods or sometimes even armed combat. Whatever form it takes, Christian humanitarian relief is a deep affirmation of theological conviction. It is an important, integral part of being a United Methodist.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, help us to trust in you as we walk with sisters and brothers journeying through the “darkest valleys” of their lives. Amen.

## DAY 37 — LIVE

*“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of God for ever.” --Psalm 23:6, AILL*

The reflections of the Rev. Wilma Bone, who was pastor of Henryville (Ind.) United Methodist Church when that the town was badly damaged in a March 2012 tornado, illustrate what the United Methodist connection — and the United Methodist Committee on Relief — mean.

“As soon as (landline) phone service was restored, I received calls from pastors in every state in the lower 48,” Bone said. “First, they asked, ‘How are you?’ and then, ‘What can we do to help?’

“UMCOR provided training, teaching people how to work in long-term recovery and case management,” the pastor noted. “They provided lots of media coverage so people would know how to help us and how to respond. UMCOR provided funds to help finish repairing or rebuilding at least 10 homes that other churches had started.

“UMCOR is still working in Henryville, and they have promised to be there until the last need is met.”

*--Barbara Dunlap-Berg, United Methodist News Service*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, a simple question like “How are you?” speaks volumes. May we also speak volumes in word and deed as we help people to live life to the fullest. Amen.

## DAY 38 — DON'T FORGET

*"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you." --Philippians 1:3-4, NRSV*

"It's a constant challenge to keep long-term recovery in the public eye," said Tom Hazelwood, former disaster-response director for the United Methodist Committee on Relief. "Local churches and neighbors who reach out when a disaster strikes are ... are vitally important, for disaster survivors need their support."

Recovery, the longest phase of disaster response, can take several years, depending on the situation. It can include reconstruction or relocation, livelihood support or new employment, transportation and — most importantly — the restoration of hope.

UMCOR provides resources for long-term disaster ministries, including funding, training, mentors, volunteers and relief supplies. This recovery phase is the focus of UMCOR's disaster-response work, for UMCOR is often the "last to leave," continuing to help survivors adapt to their new version of "normal."

"We count on the people in the pews to help disaster survivors feel certain that they haven't been forgotten," Hazelwood said. Through our One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we put our faith into action.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, often we respond to disaster immediately and go back to our daily routines. May we continue to remember your suffering people and reach out in love to them. Amen.

## DAY 39 — BEAR FRUIT

*“Live as children of light — for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.”*

*--Ephesians 5:8b-9, NRSV*

The devastating tornadoes that wiped out much of Moore, Okla., as well as the dozens of tornadoes in several states in May 2013, called Christians to put into practice our best theology of compassion and action.

Concern for those in distress after calamities is rooted in both Old and New Testaments. Rabbi Myrna Matsa reminds us that being a holy people means caring for people and the Earth, and leaving the world a better place.

Jesus spells out in Matthew 25 the duty disciples have to those who are in need. Assisting communities and people affected by disaster is one way we follow Jesus Christ. As with the bridesmaids who needed to bring extra oil in Matthew’s parable of the wedding guests, we must be ready when God calls us to respond to human need. The message is, “Be alert.” That is the call of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

*--Thomas Kemper, general secretary, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, when bad things happen, we often run, full steam ahead, without considering the consequences. Guide us to follow you and to bear nourishing fruit. Amen.



## DAY 40 — PERSEVERE

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses ... let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.” --Hebrews 12:1, NRSV*

When Hurricane Sandy made its devastating U.S. landfall in October 2012, the United Methodist Committee on Relief was fully prepared and ready to respond. By Thanksgiving, 1,000 members of UMCOR’s well-trained Early Response Team were mobilized. These responders were at work in severely damaged homes on Long Island, N.Y. They also had handed 4,000 cleaning buckets directly to storm survivors in New Jersey’s hardest-hit coastal towns.

All this occurred in the first month of a response and recovery likely to last three years. During that time, UMCOR will accompany Sandy survivors every step of the way.

“The connectional United Methodist Church is exceptionally alive in the wake of disasters,” said Tom Hazelwood, former director of UMCOR’s U.S. disaster response. “Rapid and effective disaster response is a powerful ministry ... . It begins when disasters strike, and it continues for years — until the last person is home.” Thanks to our support of One Great Hour of Sharing, UMCOR stays long after others have left.

*--Adapted from New World Outlook, March-April 2013, General Board of Global Ministries*

## DAILY PRAYER

Loving God, we find it so easy to rush through a task and pronounce it “done.” Remind us to take the time to do our best work for your children. Amen.

## ABOUT UMCOR

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is the disaster relief and aid arm of The United Methodist Church. UMCOR shares the goodness of life with those who hurt — those affected by famine, earthquakes, storms, and war, as well as the hungry, poor, and sick around the world. Whether hardship arises by crisis or chronic need, UMCOR offers help impartially, because we believe all people have God-given worth and dignity.

For more than 70 years, UMCOR has faithfully provided disaster relief, aided refugees, and confronted the challenges of world hunger and poverty. UMCOR offers not only temporary relief but also long-term education, training, and support — and does not leave until the whole community can fully recover.

To learn more about UMCOR, visit [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org)

## ABOUT ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

One Great Hour of Sharing is a 50-year tradition, a special Sunday that we celebrate each year on the fourth Sunday of Lent. The offerings given among United Methodist churches on this day will replenish UMCOR's general fund in order to allow work to continue throughout the year.

UMCOR does not receive any regularly apportioned funds, so without these gifts, UMCOR could not guarantee that 100% of all other donations will be used for specific relief projects. Because much of UMCOR's ministry is first response to disasters around the world, One Great Hour of Sharing also ensures that funds are available immediately when needed.

Our support through One Great Hour of Sharing allows UMCOR and The United Methodist Church to respond quickly and effectively when disaster strikes.

Show God's love to those in need. Give a generous gift now.

Visit <http://umcor.org/supportoghs>