

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
REPORT TO THE BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES
JUNE 2023

"There are thousands of children in foreign lands today who have no memory of their parents, no knowledge of the meaning of the words "home" and "family," and who have forgotten what it feels like to have enough to eat. There are hopeless thousands who wander among the shattered towns seeking a place to rest, seeking security and a chance to begin their lives anew. There are many who pray to God only in secret, fearing persecution if they profess their beliefs openly.

It is hard for us to comprehend grief and distress such as this because we in America are so much more fortunate. Our country has been blessed with material riches. Our homes are secure. We can go to our churches and worship God as we desire.

We know that we enjoy these great blessings not because of any special merit on our part, but because of the bounty of God. It is to His Providence that we owe the richness of our country and our heritage of freedom. Since these good things come to us from Him, we know that we must use them for the good of others in accordance with His will."

These were the words of the 33rd U.S. President, Harry S. Truman, on Saturday evening, March 26, 1949, as he began a radio address to the nation that launched what today we know as One Great Hour of Sharing. Almost 75 years ago, in response to the devastation of World War II, a national broadcast titled "One Great Hour" featured a remarkable assembly of national leaders and celebrities. The broadcast concluded by asking Americans to give generously the next morning in their churches. More than 75,000 churches responded. And the offering we know today as OGHS was birthed.

The description of the world that President Truman painted with his words in 1949 could easily apply to 2023. Today there are more forcibly displaced people—103 million worldwide—than at any other time since these records began to be tracked. "Disasters" today is as much a function of nature as they are humankind—natural disasters and their impact on millions around the world are outpaced by war, civil war, and localized conflicts. We see evidence of this every day in our network news, and out of the bounty that God provides to us, we respond through One Great Hour of Sharing.

In 2024 I will have the privilege to serve as the World Relief Officer for 20 years. Two decades of service in this ministry has afforded me the opportunity to see so very much good done around the world. It has also given me the chance to observe the challenges faced by annual offerings and giving across the ABC and the Main Line church. The trends we know---declines in attendance, declines in full-time pastoral leadership, increases in the number of congregations making the difficult decision to close and sell their property. And yet those that continue to seek a deepening of their faith and spiritual journey in an American Baptist church continue to give generously! They give from the bounty that God has placed within their care---and they give joyfully and in the knowledge that their dollars are a part of the transformative love of God made real to those in need.

OGHS GIVING TRENDS

One Great Hour of Sharing is the giving vehicle through which churches/individuals contribute to an annual appeal once a year and also periodically designate gifts in response to specific emergency relief needs. This is an important distinction. The "brand" of OGHS has been built around emergency relief, while the annual appeal seeks to provide for a broader range of ministries that include development work to improve lives and livelihoods, and ministry to displaced persons.

Here is the snapshot of OGHS giving for 2002:

Annual Appeal (unrestricted dollars)	\$ 934,787
Designated Gifts (designated for a specific purpose)	<u>\$ 1,865,690</u>
Total	\$ 2,800,477

The unrestricted dollars given to the annual appeal are the funds which the World Relief Committee, guided by a policy manual, makes decision on their allocation. It is noteworthy to recognize that while giving to the annual appeal in 2022 was \$934,787, that represents 52% of what was given in 2004—18 years ago. That is 52% less in nominal dollars; adjusting those dollars for the inflationary impact—what those dollars would buy today vs. what they bought in 2004—would paint the picture of a more dramatic decline.

Here is a retrospective of annual appeal giving to OGHS to illustrate the trend:

2004 = \$1,813,607
2007 = \$1,561,172
2010 = \$1,384,994
2013 = \$1,213,829
2016 = \$1,118,323
2019 = \$ 967,514
2022 = \$ 934,787

The decline has slowed, and it continues. This is a similar trend for each of ABC's four annual offerings; it is not unique to OGHS. What is unique to OGHS is that the overall giving figures include the outpourings of support designated to specific disaster situations which then masks the decline in giving to the annual appeal. For instance, in 2004, \$1,813,607 of the \$2,418,015 received as OGHS was for the annual appeal; in 2022, \$934,787 of the \$2,800,477 was for the annual appeal. The remaining \$1,865,690 was designated for specific disaster situations, most notably to support relief activities brought on by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The overall giving information for each of the ABC four offerings in 2004 and 2022 is as follows:

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2022</u>
America for Christ (AFC)	\$2,134,505	\$ 882,869
One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)	\$2,418,015	\$2,800,477
Retired Ministers and Missionaries (RMMO)	\$1,764,749	\$1,107,080
World Mission Offering (WMO)	\$4,870,471	\$1,768.284

Note: The decline in AFC has been more than offset by the giving to Region Offering, a category of giving that was first available to churches/individuals in 2004. In a comparable manner, the decline in WMO has been more than offset by the increase in giving to Targeted Giving, a category of giving that was first available to churches/individuals in 2004. There have not been new categories of giving for the ministries supported by OGHS and RMMO—they remain annual offerings.

USE OF ANNUAL APPEAL DOLLARS

The World Relief Committee allocates the unrestricted annual appeal dollars to support ministries of development, ministry to displaced persons, and small grants to emergency relief for situations that either do not make the news or require an immediate response—before designated dollars are received. Here are how those funds were allocated in 2022:

PROGRAMMATIC FUNDING

International Ministries Development Grants	\$ 290,000
American Baptist Home Mission Societies Development Grants and Ministry to Displaced Persons	\$ 190,000
Ecumenical Partners	
Church World Service	\$ 50,000
World Council of Churches	\$ 20,000
Baptist World Aid	\$ 5,000
ACT Development	\$ 5,000
Hunger Program – Bread for the World	\$ 14,000
Emergency Relief Grants	
Domestic	\$ 112,500
International	<u>\$ 112,500</u>
PROGRAMMATIC FUNDING SUBTOTAL	\$ 799,000
ADMINISTRATION AND PROMOTION	
Administration	\$ 101,000
Promotion of OGHS	<u>\$ 87,000</u>
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 987,000

Note: The allocation of \$987,000 was more than the \$934,787 received in 2022 and made possible by unrestricted funds from a prior year. There are no longer funds available from prior years. The World Relief Committee recognizes that unless the declining trend in annual appeal giving is reversed in 2023, they will need to make cuts to how much support is available for grants for the ministries supported by the annual appeal dollars. Giving through April 2023 does not show a reversal of the declining trend.

You will note from above that International Ministries (IM) and American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) are allocated funding for development grants. These allocations do not support organizational programs of IM or ABHMS, but rather providing funding to their partners and/or global servants pursuing ministries of development and ministry to displaced persons.

It is also interesting to view the use of the programmatic dollars in terms of world population—dollars used within the U.S./Puerto Rico, and the rest of the world. In 2021, according to the World Bank the total world population was 7.89 billion people—just shy of 8 billion people; 332 million of which lived in the U.S./Puerto Rico. When we view the above allocation of programmatic funds in terms of what % supported, we see this:

- U.S./Puerto Rico represents 4% of the world's population and received 43% of annual appeal funds given.
- The rest of the world represents 96% of the world's population and received 57% of the annual appeal funds given.

This is noteworthy not because it is right/wrong to use a proportionately large percentage of funding on ministries domestically, as there are many needs right here, but rather to note that the World Relief Committee has not made these decisions without keeping in mind the dynamics of world population.

The following is a listing of the emergency relief, development, and ministry to displaced persons grants made in 2022.

EMERGENCY GRANTS

INTERNATIONAL

Democratic Republic of the Congo
Dominican Republic
Hong Kong
Myanmar
Nicaragua
Philippines
South Africa
Ukraine

SITUATION

Convention of Baptist Churches of Western Congo - Tribal Violence
Mission Marantha - Hurricane Fiona
New Life Church Hong Kong & Moming Society - COVID-19 Resurgence
Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Churches - Civil Unrest
CEPAD - Hurricane Fiona
Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches - Typhoon Odette
Baptist Mission of South Africa – Flooding
European Baptist Federation - Russian Invasion

DOMESTIC

AZ
ID
IN & KY
IN & KY
IN
PA
PR
PR

SITUATION

Monte Vista Cross Cultural Church, Phoenix - Good Samaritan Program
First Baptist Church, New Plymouth - Building Fire
ABC of Indiana & Kentucky, Greenwood - Tornado Relief
ABC of Indiana & Kentucky, Greenwood - Flood Relief
Disciples of Christ, Indianapolis - Hurricane Fiona
American Baptist Home Mission Societies, King of Prussia - Hurricane Fiona
Iglesia Bautistas de Puerto Rico, Carolina - Hurricane Fiona
Primera Iglesia Bautista de Rio Piedras, San Juan - Hurricane Fiona

DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

INTERNATIONAL

China
India
Latin America
Latin America
Lebanon
Lebanon
Myanmar
Myanmar
Myanmar
Myanmar
South Africa
South Africa
Thailand
Togo

MINISTRY

China Christian Council - Employment for Recovering Drug Addicts
North East India Christian University (NECU) - Capacity Training Center
Christian Ecumenical Council of Guatemala - RECONPAZ Human Observatory to Defend God's Creation
Talita Cumi Girls Club Program
Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development - Tuition Assistance for Beirut Baptist School
Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development - Ministry Support
Myanmar Baptist Convention - Community Managed Development Program
LOGOS Myanmar - Teacher Training
Kachin Light - Shapan Orphanage
Max Help - Education for the Next Generation (E4NG) Project
Bethel Health Builders - Medical Equipment
Baptist Mission of South Africa - Poultry Project
Integrated Ministries for Ethnic Minorities Foundation (IMEMF)
Good News Soldiers - Good News Farm Project

DOMESTIC

CA	First Baptist Church, Maywood: Refugee and Immigration Ministry Grant
CT	Creation Justice Network, Windsor - Growing the Congregational Network
DC	Invested Faith, Washington DC - Invested Faith Fellows Program
IN	Iglesia Bautista Betesda, Indianapolis - Refugee and Immigration Ministry Grant
IN	Hope for Tomorrow, Indianapolis - Hope After-School Program
KS	Stitching Change, Kansas City - Helping Refugee Women Empower Themselves
KS	Chin Community Church of Kansas, Kansas City - Refugee and Immigration Ministry Grant
MA	Christ the King Deaf Church, Groton - Refugee and Immigration Ministry Grant
MA	Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries Inc. (MBMM), Lowell - Advocating for New Americans
MA	Refugee Immigration Ministries, Malden - Strengthening and Rebuilding RIM's Cluster Network
MI	Detroit Friendship House, Hamtramck - Bridging the Communication Gap with Bengali Clientele
MN	University Baptist Church, Minneapolis - Food and Shelter Grant
MT	Friendship House of Christian Service, Billings - Food and Shelter Grant
NC	Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, Charlotte - Cultivating the Next Generation of Peacemakers
NJ	Stelton Baptist Church, Edison - Church Van
NY	Iglise Baptiste de la Communion Fraternelle, Inc., Brooklyn - Refugee and Immigration Ministry Grant
NY	Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, Jamaica Plain - Food and Shelter Grant
NY	Alliance of Haitian Baptist Churches of NY Region & ABCMNY, New York - Refugee & Immigration Ministry Grant
NY	Trinity Church of Northborough, White Plains - Refugee and Immigration Ministry Grant
OK	Wichita Community Baptist Church, Anadarko - Food and Shelter Grant
OK	All Tribes Baptist Church, Geary - Food and Shelter Grant
OK	Redstone Community Baptist Church, Redstone - Food and Shelter Grant
OK	Watonga Baptist Church, Watonga - Food and Shelter Grant
PA	ABWM, King of Prussia - Equipping Faith Leaders & Laity to Address & Prevent Domestic Violence
PA	ABWM, King of Prussia - Be Strong, Be Courageous: Leadership Training for Women and Girls
PR	Corporacion Milagros del Amor, Caguas - Assisting Homeless in Times of Crisis
WI	Milwaukee Christian Center, Milwaukee - Food and Shelter Grant

Respectfully Submitted,
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 Jan Fletcher, Chair, World Relief Committee