



MINUTE FOR MISSION

November 1, 2006

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"Last year, when folks working on One Great Hour of Sharing were looking at how most people recognized the offering, we realized that the fish was probably its most recognizable symbol," said Alan Krome, Associate for Special Offerings. "People have been calling it One Great Shower of Herring for years. It seemed like a natural to make the fish an actual character in our children's materials, and we wanted to offer the children a chance to name the fish."

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Fish with Invisible Wings,” told how the little fish learned how caring about others helped it to grow in unexpected ways. But even at the end of the story, the little fish still didn’t know its name or even its gender, and the resources invited the children to help give the fish its name.

“We were astonished by the response,” recalls Gary Cook, Director of the unit that houses all three One Great Hour of Sharing programs, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Self-Development of People, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program. “We received more than a thousand submissions. Not all appeared to be the ideas of the children—I’m guessing that not that many of our kids tend to throw around words like Kairos too often—but there was quite a range of suggestions.”

“Many children suggested the names of people that they admired, from their congregation or family or even professional sports,” added Krome, “while others gave entirely inventive names like Princess Gloria Backhoe and Professor Snipper Doodle. But many offered heartfelt explanations for their choice. You might think that Miracle Whip was suggested as a joke until you read that the children chose the name ‘For the way the little fish could use the wings God give him to whip around the ocean and help others—we know that took a miracle which he can provide with God’s help.’

“At a time when a lot of Presbyterians are spending a tremendous amount of energy and creativity trying to address some of the issues that threaten to divide us,” Cook reflected, “it’s a joy to see how much creativity the church’s children are willing to put into One Great Hour of Sharing, one of the things that the church seems pretty much to agree on.”

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For more information on the Witness Season mission education emphasis contact Billie Healy, Associate for Mission Education Resources (888) 728-7228, ext. 5689, or Bhealy@ctr.pcusa.org.

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