



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®



Offering Talk:
WORLD COMMUNION
SUNDAY

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World Communion Sunday

In just a few minutes, we are going to take today's offering. If you've already given online or digitally, I want to thank you for your gift.

While we prepare our hearts to give today, I want to share a story with you about a man named Bobby Pearce.

Bobby was an Olympic rower from Australia in the 1920s and 1930s. There weren't many rowers better than him. Going into the 1928 Olympics, there was a big rivalry going on between him and another renowned rower named Vincent Saurin from France.

It was the quarterfinal of the 2,000-meter race, and Bobby and Vincent were going head to head. Halfway through the race, Bobby was winning — he was more than 30 seconds ahead of Vincent.

Suddenly, he heard the crowd frantically screaming and pointing at something in the water. He turned around to see a *mama duck and her five ducklings crossing the lake*.

Bobby had the choice to run them down or sit and wait, and kiss his Olympic medal dreams goodbye. You know what he did? **He waited.** *He leaned forward on his oars and waited in the middle of an Olympic race.*

Vincent made a different choice. When he saw Bobby at a complete stop, he went through the ducks, blew past Bobby and took the lead.

But the race wasn't over. As soon as the ducks were out of his way, Bobby went back to work.

In the final half of the race, Bobby not only caught up to Vincent, he won the race a full 30 seconds ahead of him. Bobby went on to set several world records at that Olympics and even came home with the gold medal. Isn't that incredible?

When we zoom out from that story, it's so much more than a great sports triumph.

It's a story about a guy who was willing to sacrifice something he treasured in order to make sure someone (or, in this case, a family of ducks) was taken care of. He sacrificed something without ever knowing how it would turn out.

I think World Communion Sunday is a great day to remember this story. The Olympic Games are always a time of world unity, and that is one of the things we celebrate today. Bobby's story reminds us that sacrificing something for someone who is often overlooked or "blown past" can lead to some incredible things — both for us and for those we help.

Today, a portion of every gift is given to international or national graduate and undergraduate students who, like the ducks of our story, are often not cared for. These students are often overlooked or "blown past" by others.

If you decide to make a financial sacrifice today, I want to remind you that, unlike Bobby, we know what the outcome will be. God promises us, over and over, that He takes care of and rewards the generous.

Luke 6:38 says this:

"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."

We don't have to wonder whether we'll win our metaphorical "race." We know we will. Our gifts today empower tomorrow's leaders, and our gifts today change us.

I encourage you to join thousands of other congregations today in giving generously this World Communion Sunday.



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