

Worship on February 6, 2022 PWS&D Sunday (CCLI: License Number #3156883)

(Welcoming Elder: Kevin Johnston)

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 585 Christ, you call us all to service
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: Mark 12:28-34
- Sermon: 75 years of Loving our Neighbour through PWS&D (By Guy Smagghe)
- Communion & Prayer after Communion

We Respond

- Offering & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 592 I, the Lord, of sea and sky

We Serve

- Benediction

Announcements:

. Welcome! Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us today. This is Sunday, February 6, 2022. Today, we are remembering and honouring the works of Presbyterian World Service and Development. It is the name of the PCC's ministries and mission outside Canada. The director of PWS&D, Guy Smagghe, who served PWS&D since 1997, will share his stories with us through the video prepared by the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

. The Session of St. Andrew's decided to resume in-person worship from Feb. 27, regulations permitting.

. The Rev. Soong will have his office hours on Wednesday mornings and Saturday mornings.

. The Rev. Soong will take two week vacation from Feb. 7 to Feb. 20. The Rev. Robert Royal will provide emergent pastoral care.

. We will have the Communion during our worship. Please prepare your own elements.

. 150th Anniversary Coffee Mug, 2022 PCC Calendar are on sale. Please message Anne or Soong or your district elder.

. Thank you for your continuing support with your gifts. As we offer our gifts to the Lord, let us give our hearts and our lives to the Lord as well. May God be in the centre of your hearts.

As we come into the presence of our God, let us calm down our hearts and minds, and focus on our Lord.

Responsive Call to Worship

One: In the bulb, there is a flower.

All: In the seed, there is a tree.

One: In the midst of this community, there is a Spirit

All: That awakens us to God's vision of abundant life

One: Revealed most fully in and through Jesus Christ.

All: Let us worship God who creates, redeems and sustains us!

Praise song – BOP 585 – Christ, you call us all to service

<u>Vs. 1</u> Christ, you call us all to service Call us all who follow you Plant in us a deep commitment All your work and will to do Fire a passion for your justice; In us kindle love of peace Help us heal the brokenhearted To the captive bring release	<u>Vs. 2</u> Teach us how to work together Brother, sister, side by side Equal partners in the struggle In the cause of truth allied To each one some gift is given man or woman, young or old Help us use each skill and talent Your great purpose to unfold
<u>Vs. 3</u> Let us be a servant people Reconciling ending strife Seeking ways more just of sharing And of ordering human life Fill us with a glowing vision Of this world as it should be Send us forth to change that Vision into blest reality	

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God of life, we gather as your people, ready to do your will, we gather as your children, who have learned to love because you loved us first, we gather as disciples, prepared to imitate Christ's loving actions.

In Jesus Christ, you have shown us compassion and boundless grace. You have shown us a new way to love one another. You are the Creator of heaven and earth, and we are creatures, yet you have called each one of us by name. You are the Holy One, yet you sent your Son to serve us.

In awe and wonder, we listen for your word, we wait for your call, we prepare our hands and hearts to serve you and all the world.

Merciful God, you call us to fullness of life but we confess our shortcomings. We have wandered from your ways and wasted your gifts; we have ignored your grace at work among us, and focused on loss and complaint. We have been suspicious of the motives of others, too quick to judge and too slow to forgive. Give us the courage to see clearly who and what we are. With your forgiveness, cleanse us from all our faults and failings, and inspire us to walk a new way.

This time we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those

who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers in Christ at St. Andrew's, Apostle John records that God is love and that God's perfect love casts out fear. We are promised that those who abide in love abide in God and God abides in them. Claim God's forgiveness in this Good News: God's perfect love abides in you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer for Illumination:

God of light and life, We turn to your Word for guidance and inspiration week after week. Send your Holy Spirit to move in and among us this day as we listen to the Scriptures read and interpreted. Help us to hear your challenge and your promise, and to respond with our commitment to follow Jesus, your Living Word. Amen.

Scripture: Mark 12:28-34

28 One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" 29 Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; 30 you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." 32 Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; 33 and 'to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself,'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34 When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

SERMON: 75 years of Loving our Neighbour through PWS&D (By Guy Smagghe)

'Love your neighbor as yourself.' Jesus told us that this, along with loving God, is the greatest commandment. It is also a hard one, as our society continuously encourages us to look primarily after ourselves.

We hear our politicians say "we will only do something if it is in Canada's interest," "we will agree only in our province's interest" ...honestly, it irks me when I hear those phrases as they encourage us to close our minds to the needs of others, of our neighbours nearby or far away who may actually need a little more compassion and solidarity from places like Canada.

We live on a relatively small planet in a vast universe. How is our human family doing on this small planet?

It is a pretty uncomfortable question to answer given the divisions we have created for ourselves, all these little kingdoms that prevent us from collaborating for the greater good of all.

The recent pandemic has brought to light the injustices and inequalities in access to health services, and to vaccines in so many countries. Did you know that only 4% of the population of Malawi has been vaccinated so far?

How are we caring for our neighbours?

Can we begin to think differently and to put the well-being of all ahead of our own self-interest? Jesus called us to care for our neighbour as ourselves. How can we do that?

Isn't my neighbour not only the one who lives next door but also the one who is living in a slum in India, the one affected by drought in a remote rural area of Malawi, the one who had to leave her home in Syria to seek refuge in Lebanon, the one who can't find enough food to feed her family in Afghanistan?

Jesus was indeed also referring to all of them when he asked us to love our neighbour.

Can I love my neighbour but be indifferent to his sickness,to her hunger?

For the last 75 years, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has acted on this call from Jesus by setting up mechanisms for relief and development internationally so that we can reach our neighbours in need, wherever they might be.

Eventually, this became known as Presbyterian World Service & Development, an effective way that allows each one of us to respond to Jesus' call to action to love our neighbour.

How did this all begin?

In 1947, Europe had been devastated by World War II and desperately needed assistance. The church asked every congregation to collect gifts to provide relief to Europe.

This endeavour became known as Canadian Church Relief Abroad of the Board of Evangelism and Social Action.

In 1968 the General Assembly responded to the emerging needs of the Nigeria-Biafra crisis. The sum of \$7,500 was given to provide relief supplies for Biafra in early 1968, particularly to support the work of Canairelief.

In 1970, the church recognized that it was not sufficient to respond only to emergencies. That year, the General Assembly report stated: "Although emergency feeding and housing are important, more and more we see the need and the benefit of development aid – seed, fertilizer, plants, pesticides, farm machinery and experts to teach their uses, digging new wells for drinking water and irrigation purposes, the prevention of soil erosion and increasing fertility for crops."

We are a small denomination and on our own, our outreach would be very limited. But the PCC has always been known for punching above our weight. We do that, first because Presbyterians are extraordinarily generous and see relief and development as fundamental to living out our call from Christ. And secondly because we have learned how to work in partnerships that exponentially improve our ability to respond.

By 1980 the General Assembly had accepted a recommendation to change the name to the Committee on Presbyterian World Service and Development. – not quite the catchiest name or acronym (PWS&D!) but one that captures well who we are. By the way, our website does have a catchier name – if you search WeRespond.ca you will find us.

It is at that time that we started receiving funding from the government of Canada through the Canadian International Development Agency (known then as CIDA). This allowed us to start engaging with partners on multi-year projects which meant that we began making a more sustainable difference in the lives of those to whom we reached out.

PWS&D joined the Canadian Foodgrains Bank in 1993. The Canadian Food Grains Bank combines the work of almost 30 Canadian Christian churches, working together to end world hunger.

Soon after we were leading large food shipments to North Korea – \$5 million worth of grains shipped yearly from Canada for the starving population of North Korea.

This continued for 10 years as we coordinated efforts with the Mennonites and the United Church. Matching funds from the Canadian government helped us tremendously to achieve this large-scale response, something we couldn't dream of doing on our own. Such an operation was risky but strong collaborations and the establishment of a local office to coordinate activities made it possible to reach out to those who were facing drastic food shortages.

I have had the opportunity to visit our partners in India many times during the years. One of the programs we had was the community health program in the tribal areas of central India, in and around Jobat.

It was Pauline Brown, a Canadian nurse sent as a missionary by the church, who introduced us to the area and for many years we helped to train community health workers who reached out into rural villages identifying the health needs, and teaching families how to stay healthy and where to seek medical attention when needed.

They particularly focused on maternal health, ensuring healthy pregnancies and healthy deliveries, thereby reducing the number of maternal and infant deaths. We have since undertaken similar maternal and child health programs in Afghanistan and in Malawi with great life-saving and life-changing results.

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An event of particular significance for the world and for PWS&D took place in 2004, on Boxing Day morning, when the news came that a great earthquake and tsunami occurred in the Indian Ocean.

For many of us, it was the first time we grasped the biblical magnitude of a tsunami.

We were immediately in contact with our partners in Tamil Nadu, India, to find out what the situation was – and it was bad. Thousands of fishermen along the coast had suddenly lost relatives, homes, livelihoods. We quickly joined with the Anglicans, the United Church, and the Mennonite Central Committee to create a joint response and put together a \$6 million proposal to the Canadian government.

For the next five years we engaged in rebuilding houses, building community shelters, training youth in trades other than fishing, providing nets and boats to those who would continue to fish, supporting women with establishing small businesses, and providing psycho-social care for so many who had experience loss and trauma.

Our joint initiative, known as PUMA (standing for Presbyterian, United, Mennonite and Anglican) ended up being the largest that the Canadian government funded in India in its tsunami response. We were able to do this thanks to the ACT Alliance and our partner CASA in India.

Every year, we respond to large and small disasters around the world whether or not they are covered in the news. We respond because we are called by our faith to respond. As we read in our Living Faith statement: We cannot claim to love God, whom we do not see, if we hate those about us, whom we do see. Love of God and of neighbour fulfils the law of God.

Through our partnerships with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and the ACT Alliance we have a broad network that gives us the ability to respond rapidly to emergencies. We contribute resources to a Rapid Response Fund at the ACT Alliance which allocates resources for quick responses to disasters as they happen.

I cannot name the exhaustive list of disasters we've responded to in our history but I have to mention the Haiti earthquake of 2010, Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013, and Cyclone Idai in southern Africa in 2019, all of which received generous donations from Canadian

Presbyterians. Unfortunately, there are disasters that are much more complicated to respond to and that have deeper and more lasting consequences. We tend to call those ‘human-caused’ disasters as they originate from conflicts that force families to leave their homes and seek safety far away.

Sometimes across borders, sometimes for many years, sometimes indefinitely.

On September 2nd, 2015, a 3-year old Syrian refugee boy named Alan Kurdi died in the Mediterranean Sea, his body washed up on a beach in Turkey. Alan and his family were Syrian refugees trying to reach Europe from Turkey. This event was a trigger for Canada to wake up to the tragedy of the Syrian refugee crisis.

PWS&D and the Presbyterian Church in Canada scaled up their refugee sponsorships efforts to respond to the needs.

Prior to that, we had one part-time staff focusing on refugee sponsorships, now we have two full-time staff dedicated to that ministry.

As we speak, we are looking to support sponsorships of Afghan refugees but there are many roadblocks. Canada has come short so far of meeting its promise to bring in 40,000 refugees from Afghanistan, with only 15% of that number having arrived so far. I still receive messages from current and former staff from our partner there, asking us to help them to get to Canada as their lives are seriously threatened under the Taliban, because their work was linked to our Christian outreach.

PWS&D is also ready to assist people in Afghanistan with food assistance to get through the winter months but are facing new challenges. The global community faces pressure to prevent a widespread famine that has its origins in global sanctions against the Taliban, which has been labelled as a terrorist group.

We hope that our country can soon provide the legal framework to make humanitarian assistance possible as the vast majority of people in Afghanistan, who are the innocent victims of this tragedy, are facing serious food shortages.

North Korea, Afghanistan, why do we decide to work in those places under such tyrannical regimes? ...Our call from Christ transcends political differences - a hungry person is a hungry person and we have an obligation to respond to need regardless of where it occurs. They are our neighbours too, even if they are hard to reach, even if they are not Christians.

So here we are, in 2022, looking back at 75 years of work and looking forward at the challenges ahead of us. Climate emergencies, political instability, conflict, all of these are creating new parameters with new challenges to reach out to those who are left out.

Christ calls us to turn the tables so that we don't favour economic interests of the few at the expense of those who don't have the basic necessities needed for minimum human dignity – a safe place to stay, access to education, access to health services, access to resources to meet the needs of their families.

Christ calls us to name our blessings and to share our blessings as much as possible. Each child of God is born in a place they have not chosen. For some it means access to an abundance of resources, for others it means a lifetime of struggle to stay alive.

The church has recognized the need to act so that all children of God may have life with dignity. God has provided us with a planet of abundance, with enough for all. It is our challenge to build bridges of solidarity and to reach out.

Presbyterian World Service & Development is an agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada with the mission to build a more sustainable, compassionate and just world, and more challenges lie ahead. Thank you for being part of this great story of solidarity so far, and, as Jesus invited us, I invite you to continue to love your neighbor – the one you can see and the one you can't see but to whom you can reach out through Presbyterian World Service and Development.

Thank you and may continue to God bless you as you continue to accompany us on this journey of solidarity.

The Lord's Table THIS is time for the Communion at the Lord's Table.

Jesus said: I am the bread of life. Those who come to me will never be hungry and those who believe in me will never be thirsty. No one who comes to me will I drive away. Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

*(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say **BOLD print together**)*

L: The Lord be with you. **ALL: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **ALL: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **ALL: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: It is our greatest calling and greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, Father God. You commanded light to shine out of darkness, divided the sea and dry land, created the vast universe and called it good. You made us in your image to live with one another in love. You gave us the breath of life and freedom to choose your way. With abundance of love and unending patience, you love us and wait for us. Therefore, **we lift our hearts in joyful praises.**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: We praise you most holy God for by your mercy you have given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and that does not fade away. Mighty God, heavenly Sovereign, we praise you. with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we worship and adore you as **we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, and upon this bread and wine, that we may be one with Christ and he with us. Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honour and glory are yours, Tender and Mighty God, now and forever.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE – prepare your Bread and Wine

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (BREAD)

“This is the **body** of Christ, broken for you.” (Let us take it)

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (CUP)

“This is the **blood** of Christ, poured out for you.” (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

Father God, thank you for your love. Thank you for your Son. Thank you for your patience. You are Lord, you are King. We worship you through this Communion with

you and with each other. We glorify you and we confess that your Lordship in our daily lives. Hold our hands and walk with us.

Gracious Father God, we pray that we live in you. We took your body which is broken for us. We drank your blood which is poured for us. Now we have you. Work in our body. Let each cell of our body shout out your Lordship. Let each drop of our blood cry out your Kingship. Therefore, we give you glory and honour through our lives.

We pray for your church. Thank you for your presence and power upon us. Thank you for the connectedness we have amongst ourselves. As your light, help us shine your light to the world. As your salt, help us be absorbed in the world and preserve it clean and eventually holy. Help us work for you.

We pray for Presbyterian World Service and Development. Thank you for taking care of the service for 75 years. With PWS&D, carry out your Lordship to the darkness. Show your Kingship to the people in need and bring them to you. Be worshiped and be praised through this.

We pray for our congregation. Gracious Father God, there might be relationship problems, health issues, financial struggles, and more. Shine upon us. Show your greatness. Strengthen us so we can overcome our difficulties. Touch us, so we are healed. Fill us with your love, so we love one another. Show your heaven through us.

You are precious and you are beautiful. Help us be still and enjoy your presence daily. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering.

Today we honour the work of Presbyterian World Service and Development. Its partnerships and service take our gifts into places of deep need around the world and in our own country. With God's blessing, our offering truly makes a difference, touching lives with God's love and mercy in Jesus' name.

Offering prayer:

God of surprising generosity,
Jesus encouraged his disciples to keep fishing when they thought their nets were empty.
Encourage us to keep giving even when needs seem overwhelming and resources scarce.
We entrust our gifts to you with the faith you can surprise us and others through all they can accomplish in Jesus' name. Amen.

Song for the Journey: BOP 592 I, the Lord, of sea and sky

Vs. 1 I, the Lord, of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry All who dwell in dark and sin, my hand will save. I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.	Vs. 2 I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain I have wept for love of them; they turn away I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone
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Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?	I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
Vs. 3 I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame I will set a feast for them; my hand will save Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?	Chorus Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night; I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Jesus called each and every one of us for his own plan. We all have God's mission. Are you the fan of God or the disciple of God? Let us follow his way and walk with our God.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.