

**FIRST THINGS FIRST
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA
APRIL 2022**

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

When the People of Israel went up to Jerusalem for the great pilgrimage festivals of their faith, they developed a tradition of liturgical song. They praised God with their voices as they joined in the Psalms of Ascent, arriving in the great city and gathering at the temple to give thanks to God for the harvest, for delivery from slavery in Egypt, and for God's special care and provision for God's People Israel day-by-day. Christians inherited that rich tradition of liturgical song, and we often read or sing the Psalms in our worship on Sundays.

This Sunday, April 10th, our Psalm is 118:1-2, 19-29, and it feels like a very fine Sunday to enjoy this "Psalm of Ascent" as we gather to begin the greatest festival of our Christian Faith. I know that Christmas is a popular Christian festival, but Easter is the most important and foundational feast day for us.

Beginning on Palm Sunday (which is April 10th this year), we will gather to worship four times during the eight days of Holy Week. We will enter into the drama of Jesus' final week in the world, remembering the events that led up to his death on a cross and holding on until we can celebrate his resurrection next Sunday morning.

The words of Psalm 118 are perfect for Palm Sunday as we remember Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. We will sing together and enact his arrival in a great procession with his disciples as they entered the city with other pilgrims for the festival of Passover. We will join our voices with theirs as they prayed: *"Open to us the gates of righteousness, that we may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord."*

Friends, I do hope that you will join us for this great festival, and add your voice to the chorus proclaiming *"O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!"*

Let the people of First Church and people of faith around the world say: *"God's steadfast love endures forever."*

April 10 @ 10:30 am
Palm Sunday Worship, with a Palm Parade

April 14 @ 7:00 pm
Maundy Thursday Worship,
including Communion

April 15 @ 10:30 am
Good Friday Worship

April 17 @ 10:30 am
Easter Sunday Worship,
followed by in-person coffee hour with hot cross
buns, and then an All-Ages Easter Egg Hunt!!!

Rev. Amanda Currie

SESSION

Mark your calendars! The date for the **annual congregational meeting** is Sunday, May 1, 2022. This meeting will be held at 11:45 a.m. in the gym after worship. Lunch will be provided.

Jo Szostak

CAMP CHRISTOPHER

Camp Christopher is calling your name!

Be a part of our community this summer – there are countless ways to join in! Our ministry is made possible through your support and prayer.

- Camper registration is now open for overnight camps!
- Work at camp! We have a variety of employment and volunteer positions available. Whether you want to paint, make crafts, hand out band-aids or lead Bible Study. We would love to share the summer with you. Check out the camp website for applications and more info – www.campchristopher.ca

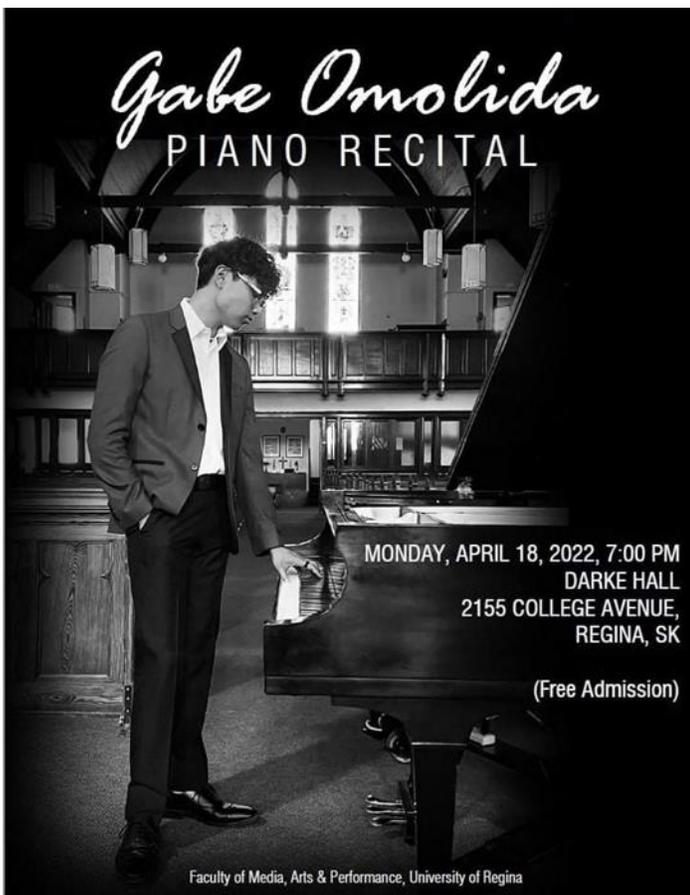
- Youth in Grade 9-12 are invited to join us as Leaders-in-Training from July 2nd – 7th, 2022
- Join us for a fellowship weekend this fall – Sept. 9th – 11th Women’s Weekend or Sept. 30th – Oct. 2nd Men’s Weekend

You are invited to attend the Open House on July 2nd, 2022, from 2-5pm. This is an opportunity for you to see the updates of the last few “quiet” summers, meet the staff, enjoy the lake and help us launch our 77th summer!

Donna Wilkinson
Camp Christopher

GABE OMOLIDA IN CONCERT

Gabe Omolida is a member of First Church, a music student at the University of Regina, and an amazing pianist. Gabe has been serving as a Music Scholar at First Church for several years, accompanying hymn singing, choral anthems, solos, and other ministries of music.



Last year, Gabe's student recital was cancelled because of Covid, but he recorded his performances at First Church and gave us the gift of an online recital as a fundraiser for our

refugee sponsorships. If you missed seeing that performance or want to watch it again, you can find the [2021 Recital Video on YouTube Here](#). And now, you're invited to a live recital with Gabe Omolida on the piano at Darke Hall (2155 College Ave.) on Monday, April 18th at 7:00 pm. Please consider attending, and feel free to invite your friends too. Admission is free.

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPEMENT: Ukraine Crisis Update



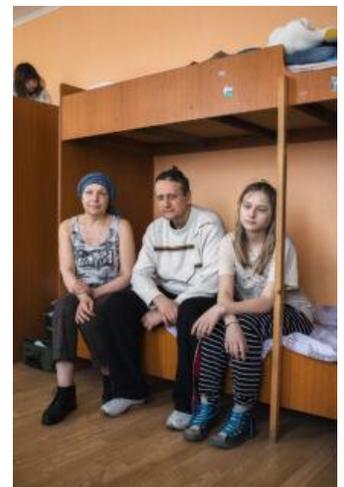
Less than one month since the war in Ukraine began, millions of people require humanitarian assistance. As of March 18, over 3.2 million Ukrainians had fled to neighbouring countries. Those remaining in Ukraine are in desperate need of essential services, including food and other emergency support.

Through the ACT Alliance, PWS&D is supporting Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) as they respond to the ever-changing situation. Since the beginning of the conflict, HIA has been assisting both those who have fled into Hungary, as well as those displaced within Ukraine.

Larysa, her husband and daughter fled Ukraine and are now in Hungary. Credit: Antti Yrjönen / FCA

Every day people are leaving their homes to find safety. Larysa is one of them.

Larysa, her husband, daughter and their cat Bella, escaped Kharkiv on March 1, after having spent four nights in the basement of their home due to bombing in the city. “Everyone wanted to travel out of Kharkov. There were a lot of people at the train station. The train ride was free of charge but getting on the train was difficult due to the crowds,” shares Larysa.



The family found shelter in a refugee centre supported by Hungarian Interchurch Aid. “We are happy to have a place to sleep and where it is warm. We get food three times a day, we can wash and do our laundry, because there is also a washing machine here.”

Refugees and displaced people, like Larysa and her family, are receiving cash assistance and emergency mental health and psychosocial support. In total, HIA will assist 14,000 households. As part of this response, PWS&D is helping provide emergency food assistance and other essential non-food aid, including hygiene kits and medical supplies. HIA is also helping to restore emergency basic services in Ukraine, including sanitation and drinking water.

Larysa hopes for peace in the future. “We would like to live in Kharkov again, but right now we can’t live there because there are bombings and people are dying. It is safe here. I am glad our children are alive.”

A LETTER FROM



I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus. – 1 Corinthians 1:4

Dear Friends at First (Regina) Presbyterian Church,

Every year, Presbyterians across Canada faithfully respond to God’s call by supporting mission and ministry through The Presbyterian Church in Canada with gifts of time, money and prayer. Together we equip congregations, start new faith communities, support international partners, empower youth, encourage new ministers, equip theological students, support Indigenous ministries, respond to emergencies, break cycles of poverty, pursue justice—and so much more.

Thank you for giving \$22,660 to Presbyterians Sharing and \$10,070 to Presbyterian World Service & Development. Your commitment to Christ’s continued mission and ministry through the church is vital to the work that we dream of doing together when we gather at General Assembly.

When we put our gifts into God’s hands, God does remarkable things

Congregations and individuals across Canada, the Women’s Missionary Society, Atlantic Mission Society and others gave over \$9.9 million to PCC ministries in 2021, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in Canada and around the world.

- \$5.7 million was given to support ministry in Canada and around the world through Presbyterians Sharing
- \$2.6 million was given for international development and relief programs of Presbyterian World Service & Development
- \$350,000 was given to PWS&D’s account with Canadian Foodgrains Bank
- \$148,000 was given for special mission and ministry programs
- \$1.46 million was given in designated and undesignated bequests to The Presbyterian Church in Canada

The impact of each dollar has been multiplied by government funds, where possible, and by the many hours contributed by volunteers, staff and committees.

We shared the good news through congregations and mission partners

“I can’t say enough how much it means to be supported through the darkest days of life, to be accepted and yet held accountable for my actions. That’s what the staff at WICM do. They provide me with the support I need to make it through the scariest of days.”

Murray, Winnipeg Inner City Missions (WICM), Manitoba

Despite the challenges of 2021, The Presbyterian Church in Canada continued to share God’s message of hope and love. Together, we equipped 32 mission partners working in 14 countries with grants and/or mission staff, focusing on leadership development, Bible translation, Christian education, theological education, and evangelism. We supported ministries in Canada serving refugees and other newcomers to Canada, sex workers and people with addictions, mental health issues, disabilities, and other barriers to traditional social engagement. We hosted websites for over 300 congregations,

camps, presbyteries, synods, and specialized ministries. We helped congregations take steps towards new directions in ministry and explore ways of sharing faith during a pandemic.

Nine ministries operated in, by and for Indigenous communities in Canada provided care and support for Indigenous people who continue to be impacted by the legacy of Residential Schools run by the church. Christian educators explored practical ways to help children, adults and families grow in their faith. The theological colleges, national committees and staff helped equip ministerial candidates and presbyteries to discern calls to ministry. Grants provided seven Presbyterian camps with curriculum and an opportunity for monthly gatherings for their directors to discuss best practices on topics including anti-racism and LGBTQI2+ inclusion. Innovation and technology grants helped congregations run discipleship and public witness programs during COVID-19. Grants were provided for experimental projects, creative work with children and youth and to support rural and remote ministries. More than 240 people served on 34 committees or working groups that reported to or through General Assembly. The time, skills and energy of volunteers, staff, committees and groups working together to develop resources, lead events, raise funds and participate in outreach ministries multiplied the impact of financial gifts in immeasurable ways.

We responded to emergencies and helped combat chronic poverty

“PWS&D is a partner in times of need. I am thankful for all that PWS&D is doing in our community.” *Ida James, farmer, Malawi*

Through a network of partners and relief agencies around the world, and with some government matching funds, we helped vulnerable people recover from disasters and access food, shelter and medical care. We also accompanied 52 congregations and six presbyteries, who worked to bring 266 refugees to Canada.

PWS&D’s development programs helped people access food security, education, health services, sustainable livelihoods and human rights. Farmers in Haiti, Malawi, Guatemala and

Nicaragua learned how to improve crop production and nutrition by using practices that protect water sources, restore soil fertility, save seeds and diversify food sources. Programs for vulnerable youth in Nicaragua, Malawi, Afghanistan and India helped increase self-esteem, prevent teenage pregnancies, reduce violence and improve nutrition. In Afghanistan, a project hoping to increase access to education for 2,000 young girls more than doubled its target when student enrolment increased to 4,500 girls. In Malawi, mothers and their babies and toddlers received immunizations, essential medical care and family planning support.

Food, housing, sanitation and support to rebuild livelihoods was provided to people whose lives were devastated by natural disasters and conflict in places around the world including Indonesia, Guatemala, Malawi, India and Madagascar. PWS&D also continued to respond to the devastation caused by long-term crisis in Syria, Yemen, Ethiopia, Haiti and Afghanistan.

These good news stories are possible because of your faithful support

We celebrate the gifts of time, money and prayer that congregations across Canada share with people around the world through The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Your gifts are a symbol of hope, a reminder that we serve a living, vibrant and generous God. We thank God for you, the lives you are touching in your community and the love we are sharing together in communities across Canada and around the world. We look forward to working with you in 2022 and into the future.

In Christ,

Karen Plater
Associate Secretary
Stewardship & Planned Giving
Life and Mission Agency

Maggie Leung
Gifts and Database Administrator
Stewardship & Planned Giving
Life and Mission Agency





APRIL EVENTS

- Apr. 10 10:30 am Worship ~ Palm Sunday**
(In-Person & YouTube)
Sunday School
(In-Person)
1:00 pm Coffee Hour:
With "TRC Learning in Lent" (Zoom)
- Apr. 12 12:30 pm Freedom 55ers (Zoom)
- Apr. 13 12:00 pm Bible Study (Zoom)
- Apr. 14 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Worship**
(In-Person & YouTube)
Followed by a Choir Practice
- Apr. 15 10:30 am Good Friday Worship**
(In-Person & YouTube)
- Apr. 17 10:30 am Easter Sunday Worship**
(In-Person & YouTube)
Sunday School
(In-Person)
Followed by Coffee Hour in the Gymnasium
And an All-Ages Easter Egg Hunt!!!
- Apr. 18 7:00 pm Piano Recital by Gabe
Omolida at Darke Hall
(2155 College Ave.)

- Apr. 19 12:30 pm Freedom 55ers (Zoom)
- Apr. 20 12:00 pm Bible Study (Zoom)
- Apr. 21 7:00 pm Choir Practice
- Apr. 24 10:30 am Worship**
(In-Person & YouTube)
Sunday School &
Coffee Hour (In-Person)
- Apr. 26 12:30 pm Freedom 55ers (Zoom)
- Apr. 27 12:00 pm Bible Study (Zoom)
7:00 pm Book Club (Zoom)
- Apr. 28 7:00 pm Choir Practice
- Apr. 30 3:00 pm Welcome & Inclusion Team
(Zoom)

MAY EVENTS

- May 1 10:30 am Worship**
(In-Person & YouTube)
Sunday School
(In-Person)
- 11:45 am Lunch & Annual
Congregational Meeting
Including the Election of New Elders**
- May 2-9 Rev. Amanda Currie is away on
study leave
- May 3 12:30 pm Freedom 55ers (Zoom)
- May 5 7:00 pm Choir Practice
- May 8 10:30 am Worship**
(In-Person & YouTube)
Rev. Devon Pattermore preaching
Sunday School & Coffee Hour
(In-Person)
- May 10 12:30 pm Freedom 55ers (Zoom)
- May 11 12:00 pm Bible Study (Zoom)
7:00 pm Session Meeting (Zoom)
- May 12 7:00 pm Choir Practice

