

The First Sunday of Advent

Mark 13:24-37

Leader: On this first Sunday in Advent, we are reminded that one day the world as we now know it will come to an end.

People: **The Holy Scriptures assure us that the Day of the Lord will come suddenly—like a thief in the night.**



*Liturgy composed by the
Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson
Produced by Presbyterian
World Service &
Development*

Leader: When that day comes, our Lord will gather all his faithful ones from the four corners of the earth.

People: **The present heavens and earth will cease to be, but God will then provide a new and glorious place for his people: a place where death will reign no more and where all sufferings and injustices will cease forever.**

Leader: We now light this candle—the Candle of Hope, symbolizing our longing for the day of Christ’s return; symbolizing our hope for the future. Come Lord Jesus.

The candle is lit.

Leader: Let us join in prayer.

Prayer: **Gracious God, in the living of our daily lives, keep us ever ready, ever faithful and ever hopeful for the day of Christ’s return. This we ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.**



New Hope for Women in India

Packiyalakshmi's husband passed away eight years ago, leaving her with four children. Living in India's Kosakulam slum, Packiyalakshmi struggled to care for her children, but she was unable to send them to school and too often had little to feed them. She tried to create new opportunities by taking out a loan, but the high interest rates offered by private lenders set her even farther back.

Then Packiyalakshmi discovered the self-help group which PWS&D partner, Madurai Non-Formal Education Centre (MNEC), had established in the slum to try and help break the crippling cycles of poverty faced by so many. Packiyalakshmi joined the group and was soon able to access a modest loan to help her start a small business selling tiffin, a rice snack.

With the encouragement and support of the self-help group, Packiyalakshmi has now paid back her loan, acquired a small shop for her business and is making a steady income. The extra money has made a big difference. Packiyalakshmi's children are no longer going to bed hungry, and her daughter is able to continue her education.

With support from PWS&D, MNEC helps women in southern India work together to improve their living conditions. With assistance from social workers and other professionals, the women work together on literacy, health, education, leadership and legal programs. They also lobby local government for basic services.

Your regular support of PWS&D will help improve lives for poor people in India. To learn more and join the fight against poverty, contact PWS&D today.



Presbyterian World Service & Development

The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7

1-800-619-7301 ♦ pwsd@presbyterian.ca ♦ www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

The Second Sunday of Advent

Mark 1:1-8

Leader: On this second Sunday in Advent, we once again hear the Baptist's cry urging us all to "Prepare the way for the Lord and make straight paths for him."



*Liturgy composed by the
Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson
Produced by Presbyterian
World Service &
Development*

People: John the Baptist brought the people of his day renewed hope that God's Messiah would soon appear.

Leader: In a world filled with conflict, war and violence, they hoped for the day when God's Messiah would usher in a new era of peace and justice: a day when any and all weapons of war would be no more.

People: As the people did back then, we too long for the day when all swords will be turned into ploughshares; the day when all conflicts, wars and violence will come to an end; the day when true peace will reign supreme.

Leader: We now light this candle—the Candle of Peace, symbolizing our longing for the day of Christ's return; symbolizing our longing for peace. Come Lord Jesus.

The candle is lit.

Leader: Let us join in prayer.

Prayer: Loving God, while we patiently wait for Christ's return and for your peace to ultimately prevail, enable each of us to work for peaceful solutions to the various conflicts which abound locally, nationally and globally. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.



Organic Farming in Nicaragua

Many farmers in Nicaragua rely heavily on chemical fertilizers to make the most of their small plots of land. But in addition to being very expensive, the chemicals can contaminate water supplies, have long-term consequences on the health of field labourers and lead to pest resilience. While the farmers are dependent on the chemicals in the short-term, the long-term results can be very destructive.



Rosa displays her pineapple crops

PWS&D and Canadian Foodgrains Bank are working with the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD) to help small-scale farmers learn sustainable, organic agricultural techniques. This helps communities get the most out of their land, while avoiding harmful chemicals and pesticides. The program also helps farmers increase their incomes by training them in marketing so they can sell their products effectively and efficiently.

Rosa is just one of many farmers benefiting from the work of the program. Rosa used CEPAD's training to transform her small plot of land into a lush and thriving oasis of pineapples, mangos, mandarins, avocados, cinnamon and plantains. She now trains others in her village, helping an entire community to have nutritious diets, increased incomes and healthier, brighter futures.

Your regular support of PWS&D will help improve lives for small-scale farmers in Nicaragua. To learn more and join the fight against poverty, contact PWS&D today.



Presbyterian World Service & Development

The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7

1-800-619-7301 ♦ pwsd@presbyterian.ca ♦ www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

The Third Sunday of Advent

John 1:6-28

Leader: On this third Sunday in Advent, we remember again John the Baptist's joyful testimony about the coming Messiah.



*Liturgy composed by the
Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson
Produced by Presbyterian
World Service &
Development*

People: John's joy spurred him on to boldly encourage people to repent of their sinful ways and turn back to God.

Leader: Then Jesus came onto the scene and introduced the people to new joy in God's love.

People: Through the continuing work of God's Holy Spirit at work in our lives today, we too are able to know that same joy—and to share it, as we wait expectantly for Christ's coming again.

Leader: We now light this candle—the Candle of Joy, symbolizing our longing for the day of Christ's return; symbolizing the inexpressible joy we have in Christ. Come Lord Jesus.

The candle is lit.

Leader: Let us join in prayer.

Prayer: Loving God, while we patiently wait for Christ's coming again, may each of us rejoice in our salvation; and may that joy permeate all aspects of our lives and be freely shared with others. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.



Emergency Relief in China

When a massive 8.0 magnitude earthquake shook central China on May 12, 2008, PWS&D and the Action by Churches Together International network immediately helped provide food, clean water, shelter and other essential items through the Amity Foundation.



China suffered widespread damage in Sichuan province following the earthquake

Nearly 70,000 people were killed, hundreds of thousands injured and millions left homeless in this devastating earthquake. Families were torn apart, homes were destroyed, livelihoods were lost and infrastructure was left in shambles.

But relief efforts were swift and effective. “You really helped us a lot and we can’t imagine how you provided these goods so quickly,” said a beneficiary in the area.

Canadian congregations responded overwhelmingly to PWS&D’s earthquake appeal, bringing in over \$180,000 for relief efforts—which was further matched by the Canadian International Development Agency. The money ensured that those who were in the most need received the necessary support.

Your regular support of PWS&D will help ensure aid is available when it is needed most. To learn more and contribute to emergency relief efforts around the world, contact PWS&D today.



Presbyterian World Service & Development

The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7

1-800-619-7301 ♦ pwsd@presbyterian.ca ♦ www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Luke 1:26-38

Leader: On this fourth Sunday in Advent, we remember the angel Gabriel's proclamation that God's love for the world would be revealed in a child that would be born to a young girl of low estate.



*Liturgy composed by the
Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson
Produced by Presbyterian
World Service &
Development*

People: But the way this love was revealed was totally unexpected—even scandalous.

Leader: By coming in human flesh, God let the world see into the very heart of the Creator of the Universe.

People: From the One who came into the world on that first Christmas Eve, we learned the extent of God's love and we also learned that each of us are truly beloved children of the Almighty.

Leader: We now light this candle—the Candle of Love, symbolizing our longing for the day of Christ's return; symbolizing the amazing love of God shown through Christ. Come Lord Jesus.

The candle is lit.

Leader: Let us join in prayer.

Prayer: Loving God, while we patiently wait for Christ's coming again, help us to marvel on the fact that your love for each of us knows no bounds. May this love now be mirrored in all aspects of our lives as we freely share it with others. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.



Conflict Rips Through Kenya

Jane is 12-years-old. She came to a camp for the internally displaced in Molo, Kenya, when violence broke out in her community. Her family had fled their home in the middle of the night when they heard people shouting and telling them to flee for their lives. When they returned later, their home had been burnt down and all their possessions were gone.



Jane at the refugee camp

It took Jane and her family a day to travel from their home to the Molo Camp where the seven of them settled in a small tent with the few belongings they had managed to carry with them. Jane was in grade five but her education was put on hold when she fled her home. She wants to continue her schooling but her family cannot afford to buy her school books or supplies. Instead, Jane clings to the one book she was able to salvage and takes turn telling stories with other children at the camp.

PWS&D works hard to care for people caught in war and conflict. When violence broke out in Kenya after the general elections in December 2007, PWS&D worked through local partners and the Action by Churches Together International network to provide food, shelter, clothing and essential supplies to those living in camps. In times of crisis, relief items help families prevail despite enormous challenges.

Your support of PWS&D will help ensure aid is available when it is needed most. To learn more and contribute to emergency relief efforts around the world, contact PWS&D today.



Presbyterian World Service & Development

The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7

1-800-619-7301 ♦ pwsd@presbyterian.ca ♦ www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

The Christ Candle

Christmas

Luke 2:1-20

Leader: On this Christmas Eve, we remember the humble birth of that special child who came into the world two thousand years ago.

People: It took place in a lowly stable in a little place called Bethlehem—the Town of David.

Leader: That special child was none other than the Son of God.

People: He came to bring us hope for the future; the promise of peace; the experience of joy; and most importantly, the knowledge that each and every one of us is greatly loved by our God.

Leader: We now light this candle—the Christ Candle, symbolic of Christ’s continuing presence in the world; and of our longing for the day of his coming again in glory. Come Lord Jesus.

The candle is lit.

Leader: Let us join in prayer.

Prayer: Loving God, while we patiently wait for Christ’s return and the establishment of your kingdom, enable hope, peace, joy and love to burn brightly among all your people—and be faithfully shared with this world that you love so dearly. This we ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.



*Liturgy composed by the
Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson
Produced by Presbyterian
World Service &
Development*



Presbyterian World Service & Development



*"...to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord."
Luke 2:11*

Christ is Born!

In the midst of disaster, poverty, disease and war, hope finds a way.

Presbyterian World Service & Development is the development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We work with global partners to share Christ's hope, peace, joy and love.

These partnerships are possible thanks to your support and faith in action. During Christmas celebrations this year, let us also remember our brothers and sisters around the world.

Dianne Ollerenshaw, PWS&D Convenor

PWS&D development and relief activities include:

- ◆ fighting poverty through education, healthcare and income generating projects,
- ◆ rebuilding homes after earthquakes and other natural disasters,
- ◆ constructing wells to provide access to clean water,
- ◆ teaching farmers new skills to increase crop yields,
- ◆ responding to emergency situations with food and medical supplies,
- ◆ helping refugees start new lives in Canada,
- ◆ caring for people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS.



**Presbyterian World Service
& Development**

The development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7

416-441-1111 ◆ 1-800-619-7301

pwsd@presbyterian.ca ◆ www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd