

DAYSRING DAYBOOK

Monthly Newsletter of Dayspring Presbyterian Church, 11445-40 Ave, Edmonton, AB, CAN, T6J 0R4

February 2019

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS: VALENTINE'S DAY

Pictures of hearts, cupids and arrows are associated with Valentine's Day messages and accessories and are recognizable without reading an attached explanation. How did this come about?

Cupid is associated with classical Greek and Roman love stories and one of the most famous symbols of Valentine's Day. In Roman mythology, Cupid is the son of Venus, the goddess of love and beauty. The legend is that Cupid shoots magical gold tipped arrows at gods and humans alike, piercing their hearts with arrows, causing individuals to fall deeply in love.

During the 14th to 17th centuries, many works of art were created that showed Cupid as a baby angel. This symbol then began to appear on Valentine's Day cards in the late 1800s. Since then, the image of Cupid as a flying infant, who inspires love, has become the familiar sign of a Valentine's Day expression of love.

The heart was believed to be the seat of all human emotions and signified the selfless act of giving everything to someone you love. The ancients were not aware how the heart was pumping blood through the circulatory system but they did understand it was the centre of all feelings.

How do symbols and signs survive? and how do we use them in our communication?

The cross is a symbol. For Romans and Jews, two millennia ago, it was a sign of shame. Criminals were executed by nailing them to a cross and letting them die a slow and painful death. But Jesus transformed the meaning of a cross so that it is no longer a symbol of shame—but rather is a symbol of love.

The Celts were a collection of tribes with origins in central Europe that shared a similar language, religious beliefs, traditions and culture. It's believed that the Celtic culture started to evolve as early as 1200 B.C. The Celts spread throughout western Europe—including Britain, Ireland, France and Spain—via migration. Their legacy remains most prominent in Ireland and Great Britain, where traces of their language and culture are still prominent today.

Celtic culture is famous for the creation of buildings and other artifacts using stone. Among other things, when Celts became Christians, they wanted use their stone masonry skills to pay tribute to the central symbol of the Christian faith. However, they found that the horizontal arms of the stone crosses that they created very easily broke off.

So they supported the horizontal arms of their stone crosses with semi-circular inserts. This resulted in crosses with a circle in the middle—a form of the cross that is known as the Celtic Cross. This practical application of engineering has been "interpreted" theologically as pointing to the eternal nature of God—so that the Celtic Cross is thus understood to be a sign of God's eternal love.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

We believe that we invent symbols. The truth is that they invent us; we are their creatures, shaped by their hard, defining edges.

- Gene Wolfe

In This Issue

- Signs and Symbols: Valentine's Day
- Fresh Veggies: Brighter Futures
- WCRC Statement about Venezuela
- From Our Minister: Hearts and Crosses
- The Smuts' Journey Continues



Meena with her son and husband



World Communion
of Reformed Churches

VENEZUELA

The Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches of Latin America (AIPRAL) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) have long been attentive to and accompanying those involved in the difficult situation in Venezuela with several pastoral visits and acts of solidarity. The reality of Venezuela is complex and requires an approach that avoids simplistic looks and easy slogans. This far from being a real solution for the people of Venezuela, it further thins the situation.

In this regard and from our humble place we call all parties involved both in the country and abroad to avoid rigid positions that lead the already difficult social, economic and political situation in Venezuela to an escalation of violence without a point of return.

We also call for a process of sincere dialogue, inclusive and based on international law that has as a priority the peaceful and just solution for the Venezuelan people. It is the task of all parties and especially the sister nations to support and facilitate this dialogue rather than to make Venezuela part of a geopolitical chess game.

Source: World Communion of Reformed Churches News for January 2019

FRESH VEGGIES: BRIGHTER FUTURES

Like most mothers, Meena from Pakistan wants her children to be healthy, to go to school and pursue their dreams.

These are opportunities Meena never had.

“My family couldn’t afford to send me to school, and I was married at a young age,” she shares. “My dream to become a teacher was left in vain. I do not want the same for my children.”

But breaking the cycle of poverty is challenging for farming families like Meena’s. Unpredictable weather, water scarcity, and less available land for planting have made it difficult for farmers in Badin, Pakistan to grow enough crops to eat and sell.

Determined to give her three sons the chance for a brighter future, Meena tried her hand at kitchen gardening.

Kitchen gardening is part of a PWS&D-supported project with Canadian Foodgrains Bank that is helping families like Meena’s overcome hunger, earn an income and improve nutrition.

Through the project, Meena learned how to prepare a small garden in her front yard and water the vegetable seeds she received.

Today, Meena is growing apple gourds, spinach, carrots, beans and much more. She’s able to provide the nutritious food her children need—but that’s not all she’s proud of.

“My garden has allowed us to save the money we previously spent on purchasing vegetables and fruits from the market,” Meena reports. “In addition to meeting the nutritional needs of my family, selling my produce has helped me generate revenue.”

Meena is also addressing problems of water scarcity. With her earnings, she and her husband constructed a small pit to store water. Now even in dry spells, Meena can pump the water she needs to hydrate her crops.

Meena’s kitchen garden has become an important way to bring her family out of poverty and hunger and make sure her children’s story is one of hope instead of hardship.

**This project received support from Canadian Foodgrains Bank. PWS&D is a member of Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a partnership of 15 churches and church agencies working together to end global hunger. This project was undertaken with matching support from the Government of Canada.*

Information Source: Presbyterian World Service & Development

continued on page 4)

FROM OUR MINISTER: Hearts and Crosses

Elsewhere in this edition of the *DayBook*, the editors mention how the heart symbolizes love and how the Celtic cross can also be understood as a symbol of God's eternal love.

What a great confluence of symbols and their meanings this is. When one does a google search on the two, it's amazing how many visual representations there are of hearts and crosses. Some are in pendants, others in pottery shapes and the variety is almost infinite.

Clearly these have captured the human imagination in endless ways.

Without sentimentalizing any of it, this reflection seeks to ponder on the two, the heart and the cross.

As we celebrate the ways God reveals God's self to us, it's helpful to know that the sacrifice that Christ made by dying on the cross makes all the difference for the Christian faith.

This sacrifice shapes the actions of Christianity, or hopefully it does, some of the time. How often have we wanted to dominate, rule over others and had the urge to manipulate people to do what we want them to do? This easily happens in the name of spreading the Good News.

Perhaps we need to remind ourselves that our efforts to be Christian could be characterized by love and self-sacrifice. This way, by losing myself, I gain true life. I don't seek to find true life. It becomes a result without ever looking for it.

Let's make this time of "Valentine's Love" and of entering Lent quite soon a time of giving happily without necessarily expecting back.

This way the world may just be a better place because of the Christian message, freer of domination and telling others what to do.



Heinrich

FROM CORNELIUS AND SUSERA SMUTS

We have passed the 2,000 km mark. The mountains are spectacular. Some of the rivers are hard to cross and others are easy. It is not a pleasure to walk the whole day with wet feet but there are no other options but to cross the multiple braids of the New Zealand rivers. The sand flies are still driving us crazy.

SOME PICTURES FROM THE JOURNEY



VENEZUELA *(continued from page 2)*

From our Christian faith we are called to peace: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9). Furthermore, we are convinced that dialogue based on peace, justice and love of neighbour are the only possible bases on which conflicts can be overcome and durable alternatives for the common good can be built. The negotiation of a complex situation requires and deserves perseverance and an unwavering will in search of agreements and consensus.

We commit ourselves to collaborate in everything that is within our reach to favor spaces for dialogues and peace building. “... The harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace” (James 3:18).

We commit ourselves to continue praying for Venezuela and all its people in the certainty that God with the Holy Spirit accompanies us in the creation of times of peace.

NOTE: The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a member denomination of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches is called to communion and is committed to justice. Through robust engagement with the Word of God and the call of the Holy Spirit, the World Communion of Reformed Churches is always being transformed as it strives for the full and just participation of all. In our diversity, we seek to be a living expression of “unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). We work to renew and restore the economy and the earth, so that all humanity and the whole of creation might live life in its fullness (Deuteronomy 30:19; John 10:10).



Contact Us

Dayspring Presbyterian
Church
11445-40 Ave
Edmonton, AB, CAN, T5J0R4
Admin@DayspringChurch.ca
780-435-3111
Visit us on the web at
www.DayspringChurch.ca

DayBook Editors:

Marilyn & John Carr
DayBook@DayspringChurch.ca
DayBook Deadlines
3rd Sunday of September, October and June
2nd Sunday of December, January, February, March, April, and May

SESSION

Moderator: Heinrich Grosskopf

Session Clerk: Gina Kottke

Deputy Clerk: Iris Routledge

Roll Clerk: Jim Jeatt

Other Elders

Bill Davis	Jan Ray Moncada
Jane de Caen	Walters Munde
John Carr	Nick Nation
Darlene Eerkes	Stanley Ngwa
Peter Eerkes	Laura Patterson-
Carina Grosskopf	Fortin
Ransford Kusi-	Todd Shipman
Menkah	Darleen Springstein
Sam Malayang	Heather Tansem
Samuel Mforteh	Mary Waugh

MINISTER

The Rev. Dr. Heinrich Grosskopf

CHURCH STAFF

Church School Coordinator: Lynn
Vaughan

Youth Coordinators: Shane Johnson &
Zachary Bruce

Worship Arts Coordinator
Gordon McCrostie, B.Mus., M.T.S.

Pianist: Binaifer (Binu) Kapadia, B.Mus.

Alternate Pianist
Darolyn McCrostie, B.Mus., P.D.A.D.
(Education)

Administrative Assistant: Linda

Custodians: Lindsey & Jim