

# DAYSPRING DAYBOOK

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

January 2023

## FOCUS ON UKRAINE

In this issue, as we draw close to the first anniversary of Russia's invasion (24 February 2022), we focus on Ukraine.

Did you know that, in the 1916 census, at least 1.36 million Canadian residents reported at least one of their ethnic identities as Ukrainian. 369,090 of those Ukrainian-Canadians live in Alberta. That is nearly 10% of Alberta's population.

Most of us Dayspringers have at least one friend or neighbour who is of Ukrainian origin. Some of us have several Ukrainian neighbours or friends. There are even some Dayspringers who proudly claim their Ukrainian heritage.

Ukrainian church buildings abound in our communities - some of them Orthodox (two different denominations) and a few of them Ukrainian Catholic. All of them are quite ornate.

And of course, Alberta is now home to many Ukrainian refugees from the current conflict - 20,000 in total. 8,000 of these (mostly women and children) have settled in Calgary; about 6,000 are in Edmonton; and the rest are dispersed to other Alberta population centres.

Dayspring Church has not had any formal involvement in the provision of assistance to our Ukrainian sisters and their children. However, some of us, as individuals, have made contributions to fundraising efforts of one kind or another.

Here are some ways to help.

First of all, and most importantly, we can pray for our Ukrainian sisters and brothers and their children as they experience this very difficult situation (see page 4). Prayer alone will not change this situation but prayer helps us to "frame" (understand) this political and humanitarian crisis from a hopeful (hope-full) perspective.

We can also offer words of understanding and hope-filled comfort to persons of Ukrainian origin who are our neighbours and friends.

There are some other things we can do.

We can respond to the fundraising efforts of Edmonton Ukrainian churches and allied agencies. See the info at the following link.

<https://www.justserve.org/ukrainianrefugeesupportedmontonarea>

And we can provide financial assistance through Presbyterian World Service & Development. (see page 3)



**You don't have  
to see the whole  
staircase, just  
take the first  
step.**

**- Martin Luther King,  
Jr**

## In This Issue

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## WHY SOME UKRAINIANS CELEBRATED CHRISTMAS WITH THE WEST

The Julian calendar, proposed by Roman consul Julius Caesar in 44 BC, was a reform of the Roman calendar.

It took effect on 1 January 45 BC, by edict. It was designed with the aid of Greek mathematicians and astronomers such as Sosigenes of Alexandria.

The Julian calendar became the predominant calendar in the Roman Empire and subsequently most of the Western world for more than 1,600 years until 1582, when Pope Gregory XIII promulgated a minor modification to reduce the average length of the year from 365.25 days to 365.2425 days and thus corrected the Julian calendar's drift against the solar year.

Worldwide adoption of this revised calendar, which became known as the Gregorian calendar, took place over the centuries following its proclamation by Pope Gregory in 1582, first in Catholic countries and subsequently in Protestant countries of the Western Christian world. However, Eastern Orthodox countries continue to observe the Julian calendar. (Source: Wikipedia)

This year, the usual celebration of Christmas, for some Ukrainians, was differently arranged.

They would have celebrated Christmas on January 7, along with the Russians, but that did not happen. Some Orthodox Ukrainians decided to celebrate Christmas on December 25, like many Christians around the world.

This choice had to do with Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The idea of commemorating the birth of Jesus in December was considered radical in Ukraine until recently, but the Rus-

sian invasion changed many hearts and minds.

Last October, the leadership of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, which is not aligned with the Russian church, and is one of two branches of Orthodox Christianity in the country, agreed to allow the faithful to celebrate on December 25.

This was a big step because never in their history had Ukrainians celebrated Christmas on the same day as the Western world. "All the time we have been separated" said Roman Ivanenko, a local official in Bobrytsia, and one of the promoters of the change.



With the switch, he said, we are "breaking this connection with the Russians."

The same expression came from a Bobrytsian resident: "What began on February 24 [2022], the full-scale invasion, was an awakening and an understanding that

we can no longer be part of the Russian world." (adapted from an article in the Russia - Ukraine Associated Press by Renata Brito and Hanna Arhirova)

Worldwide events shape people in different ways - socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

News reports of some Ukrainians celebrating Christmas with the West instead of the Eastern tradition, influenced some Edmontonians to likewise celebrate Christmas only on December 25, in order to be in solidarity with the choice Ukrainians made.

- Article by the editors. The image is of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

## FROM OUR MINISTER



The Rev. Brad Childs is on short-term leave owing to the illness of a family member out-of-province

We hope that he will be able to return in time to resume this column next month.

### Ukraine Crisis Appeal

The invasion of Ukraine has created a humanitarian crisis. This devastating conflict has already displaced hundreds of thousands of people. The most urgent needs are for food, water and shelter.

To help respond quickly to the escalating situation, PWS&D is receiving donations for Ukraine. As a member of ACT Alliance and Canadian Foodgrains Bank, we are well placed to provide urgently needed food and non-food support.

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

Refugees and displaced people are receiving cash assistance and emergency mental health and psychosocial support. In total, Hungarian Interchurch Aid will assist 14,000 households. PWS&D is helping them 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.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank members are also planning a response with urgently needed food assistance.

In Ukraine, The Presbyterian Church in Canada partners with the Transcarpathian Reformed Church.

## Presbyterian World Service & Development

PWS&D is the agency of the Presbyterian Church in Canada through which Canadian Presbyterians can participate in alleviating suffering and assisting with efforts to prevent suffering wherever it occurs. For the most part, PWS&D partners with local leadership and with other agencies present in those situations.

### NOTES

The **ACT Alliance** is a global faith-based coalition organized in national and regional forums operating in more than 120 countries.

**Canadian Foodgrains Bank** is a partnership of 15 Canadian churches and church-based agencies working together to end global hunger. CFG works with locally-based organizations in developing countries to meet emergency food needs, achieve long-term solutions to hunger, and works to foster informed action by Canadians and governments to support this international cause.

The **Reformed Church in Transcarpathia** took on the responsibility to take care of mothers with their kids coming from central Ukraine, giving them accommodation and health care.

The Home Care project of the Reformed Church, which operates in six working points, takes care of more than 200 elderly people unable to leave due to illness and isolation.

The church also takes care of children with special needs and their families by helping them with food packs and sanitary parcels.

The bakery of the diaconal centre bakes more than 400 breads each day and cooks hot meals every day for those who are in need.

See more info here.

<https://presbyterian.ca/pwsd/2022/02/28/ukraine-crisis/>

**A Prayer:** God of the Powers, and Maker of all creation; God of justice, and Lover and Maker of peace, we are distressed by the violence and the threats of violence and destruction in the world, and especially by acts of war and brutality that people experience in Ukraine.

In solidarity with them, we pray for those  
who are suffering and in danger,  
who live in fear and anxiety,  
who fear what tomorrow will bring,  
who are anxious for their lives and the lives of those they love and care for, and  
who mourn the dead.

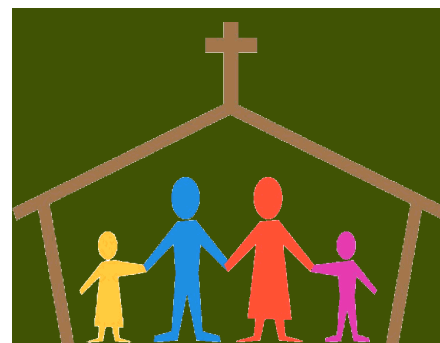
We pray that those with power over war will lay down weapons, and that those who have power to accomplish peace will have wisdom and compassion.

God of Grace, the Giver of Life, send your Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who is everywhere present and fills all things, to sustain the hope of all those who seek justice and peace and to inspire the leaders of nations to do what is right.

Glory to you, O God, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, now and forever; in the strong name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, we pray.

Amen.

*This prayer and other material in this issue are re-produced from the website of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.*



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#### DayBook Deadlines

3rd Sunday of the month

## SESSION

**Moderator:** Brad Childs

**Session Clerk:** Gina Kottke

**Deputy Clerk:** Iris Routledge

**Roll Clerk:** Darlene Eerkes

### Other Elders

Jane de Caen	Jan Ray Moncada
Peter Eerkes	(on leave)
Sam Malayang	Heather Tansem

## MINISTER

The Rev Brad Childs

## CHURCH STAFF

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**Youth Coordinator:** Fionna McCrostie

### Music Director

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**Administrative Assistant:** Linda

**Custodian:** Jim