

Thanks to you...

Change is Happening!



Let your light shine
before others, so that
they may see your
good works and
give glory to your
Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16



Presbyterian
World Service
& Development

Worship Resource

Contents

Preparation for Worship	3
Worship Service	4
Children's Story	10
Sample Sermon	12

For information or to order copies, please contact:

Presbyterian World Service & Development

50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301 ext. 293
www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd
pwsd@presbyterian.ca

The development and relief agency of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Written by The Rev. Iona MacLean, First Presbyterian Church,
Pictou, Nova Scotia

All hymns are from the Book of Praise 1997

Photos by PWS&D and ACT Alliance

Copyright 2010 The Presbyterian Church in Canada. All rights reserved.
Exception: permission is granted to reproduce this material for worship use.

Preparation for Worship



Here are some things you may do to help prepare for worship:

- Consider making PWS&D educational materials available such as the Annual Report and PWS&D Developments newsletter to anyone who might like to learn more about PWS&D
- Order PWS&D's bulletin covers for worship from the PCC Book Room
- Post the PWS&D poster
- Create a special bulletin board or PowerPoint presentation using quotes and scripture along with stories, maps, photos and resources from the PWS&D website
- Request a PWS&D audio-visual presentation for use during or after service, such as the PWS&D "Change is Happening!" video
- Photocopy the Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness to use as a bulletin insert (the text can also be downloaded from the PWS&D website at www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd)
- Make available the *Gifts of Change* catalogue which provides simple ways individuals and congregations can support specific themes, such as water and sanitation, agriculture programs, etc.
- Consider having a special PWS&D offering using PWS&D offering envelopes that can be ordered from the PCC Book Room.

Worship Service



Call to Worship

(Psalm 112:1, 4)

Leader: Happy are those who fear the Lord,
who greatly delight in his commandments.

All: **They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright;
they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.**

Welcome and Introduction

Today, on Presbyterian World Service & Development Sunday, we remember the work of PWS&D in prayer and with thanksgiving.

PWS&D is the development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is *our* agency! Through PWS&D, Canadian Presbyterians work with partners around the world to take part in the mission of Christ by combating long-term poverty, responding to emergencies, protecting refugees and advocating for change.

Sometimes, when we see all the need in the world — the poverty, crisis, wars and disasters — we feel overwhelmed and wonder what we can do. But Jesus has given us the strength and the opportunity to respond, and change *is* happening. Today, we remember how our gifts can serve God's work and do God's will. Today we are reminded how, in God's hands, our gifts have the power to lift spirits, to spark hope, to nurture love and transform lives.

Come, let us worship God.

Suggested Hymns

- 63 O sing a new song to the Lord
474 The love of God comes close
630 When we are living
661 We give thee but thine own
674 In the bulb there is a flower
712 Arise, your light is come
722 Lord, whose love
736 For the healing of the nations
760 Where cross the crowded ways of life
762 When the poor ones
784 Thy kingdom come — on bended knee
802 For the fruits of all creation

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)

Psalms 112:1-9 (10)

Matthew 5:13-20



Prayer of Adoration

God of compassion and justice,
the worship you choose for us is to loose the bonds of injustice,
to let the oppressed go free,
to share bread with the hungry,
to shelter the homeless poor.

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn
and your healing shall spring up quickly.

So in praise and wonder, we come to worship you
not just with our words
but with our hearts and our lives.

Glory and honour be to you, O God,
Creator of a new heaven and a new earth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.





Prayer of Confession and Supplication

Merciful God,
you call us to be salt of the earth and light of the world.
We confess that our witness is often bland and gloomy.
Forgive us when we fail to be an influence for good,
and when we condone or do what is wrong in your sight.
Help us to flavour the earth with righteousness
and to reflect the light of your love in a dark world;
through Jesus Christ the Light of the world. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.
The old life has gone; a new life has begun.
Believe the good news of the gospel:
in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Thanks be to you, O God, for life and love and hope;
for the wonders and beauty of your creation;
for the signs of your grace in our lives;
for the life we share as your people in unity with your people
of every time and place.

Thanks be to you, O God, for courage and faith and
perseverance:

for calling people in every generation to stand for the right;
for inspiring international program partners, missionaries
and development workers to bring your good news
and compassion to the world;
for giving us the opportunity to contribute toward
this holy and life-giving work.

God of all peoples, we pray for the world.

Where there is war or strife, grant peace;
where there is oppression, grant freedom;
where there is hunger and poverty,
grant justice and enough for all;
where there is prejudice and intolerance,
grant acceptance and mutual respect.

We pray for all ministries supported through *Presbyterian World Service & Development*, that our contributions may be “salt” and flavour your world with grace and goodness.

We pray for all staff, volunteers and partners who work with *Presbyterian World Service & Development*. Grant them courage, faith, encouragement and perseverance in their work. May the gospel of peace be brought to every corner of the earth and may the whole creation join in one chorus of praise to you, its Creator.

Holy One, hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards of the fragile bounty of this earth so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Children's Story

"A Pinch of Salt"

Possible props: salt shaker, recipe book, baking utensils such as a big bowl

Ask the children if they like to help bake or cook. Do they use recipes? As you're talking, use the props to highlight key points.

It's important to use the right ingredients and the right amounts to have the recipe come out right. But some ingredients you need only a small amount of to make all the difference.

For example, many recipes call for only a "pinch of salt."
(Demonstrate how much a pinch is.)

Only a small bit but how bland and unsatisfactory without that pinch!

Jesus tells his disciples they are "salt," meaning they are making a big difference in the world by loving others and sharing with one another. By their actions, they make the world a better place.

So, we are like salt — by our words and deeds we show God's love and make the world come out right. And we must never think that because we are small or young that we cannot make a difference or that we do not matter. Remember the "pinch of salt" — the small bit that brings out the flavour of the recipe and makes it so good. Maybe we cannot do it all, but with God's help, little by little, bit-by-bit, the kingdom of God grows.

And, of course, we work together. One grain of salt doesn't help much on its own but with other grains it can do what it is meant to do. So together as followers of Jesus, we can "flavour" the world with love and joy and peace. Every penny we give to Presbyterian World Service & Development is important; every prayer we say for the people who need our help is important and makes a difference for good in the world.

There is an old hymn whose words are still true:

Little drops of water, little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean and the beauteous land.
Little seeds of mercy, sown by [faithful] hands,
Grow to bless the needy, here and in all lands.
Little deeds of kindness, little words of love,
Make our earth an Eden, like the heaven above.



Sample Sermon



“Salt of the Earth”

Matt. 5:13 — You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

Everyday, common salt — what an odd thing to call the disciples!

We put salt in our food — or not, if we have high blood pressure.

We spread it on our icy roads and sidewalks and then complain about it staining our boots, coating our cars and polluting our fresh water lakes.

We use it, but we don't really give much thought to salt, it is so common, so available.

But if salt is common, it certainly is not unimportant.

In ancient times, salt was considered so valuable that it was used as currency — that's where we get the word “salary” — originally meaning “soldier's salt-money.”

Salt was a necessity of life in biblical times. Used as a condiment and a preservative, it was also part of the sacrificial rituals of the Temple. Salt was used with cereal offerings, burnt offerings and incense in the prayers offered to God.

Because salt has always been important to eating, it became a symbol of hospitality. To “eat salt” or “share the salt” with a person was to enjoy table companionship and to forge an unbreakable bond with that person, giving rise in the Book of Numbers and Second Chronicles to the expression a “covenant of salt.”

We know that salt can make quite a difference. It has a special ability to permeate and penetrate. It flavours food, keeps things from going bad, helps to clean things. People who exercise vigorously need to make sure when they drink lots of water that they do not deplete the salts in their system.

So when Jesus calls his disciples “salt of the earth,” he is not giving them a compliment the way we use that phrase about people who are particularly fine people. He is telling them what a disciple of the kingdom of God is like.



First, Jesus' disciples are to "flavour" the world with the values of God's reign: justice, love, peace, compassion.

Second, they are to preserve human life and prevent decay in society.

Third, they are to work quietly, even invisibly, to bring out the best in humanity.

Fourth, they are to embody the companionship and hospitality that salt represents.

And finally, disciples are not to live in isolation from the world. Salt is never complete in itself. It is an ingredient in a greater whole. Its job is to be mingled with, to be lost in, to affect other things.



In calling his disciples “salt,” Jesus is saying what the prophets (including Isaiah) said time and again to Israel: that faith in God is real only when it is lived out in society and in the context of the whole creation. The covenant with God includes our connectedness with our human brothers and sisters. As we hear in Isaiah 58, we cannot worship God and at the same time pursue our own interests, oppress workers, quarrel and fight. Sharing food with the hungry, removing the chains of oppression — these are as important as prayer in the worship of God.

The late Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador came to his position in the 1970s as one comfortable with the ruling class and somewhat conservative in his vision of the church. But he could not remain blind to the terrible oppression of poor peasants, teachers, community workers and priests who were struggling for basic necessities such as clean water, decent housing, education and health care. Gradually, Romero became an outspoken, courageous and beloved leader of the people as he tried to convince the government and its military to stop the torturing and killings of farmers, workers, and priests. He himself then became a threat to the small but powerful ruling elite and was assassinated by one of the death squads in March of 1980 while celebrating Mass. On his death, he became an even more powerful symbol for the people working for freedom.

Archbishop Romero encouraged Christians in his country, as the Church, to be salt in the midst of their great suffering, giving flavour and remaining deeply committed even while surrounded by the threat of death.

Many Salvadoran Christians truly became “salt of the earth,” giving the flavour of faithfulness, compassion and sanity in the midst of insane cruelty of the 1970s and ‘80s, trying to prevent the decay of human life into greed and destruction.

It is the quality of saltiness that gives salt its identity and purpose.

So the quality of faithfulness to Jesus, even under hardship, gives disciples identity and purpose. Jesus knew that following him would not be easy and might well bring suffering and persecution to his followers. It would be tempting to slacken in one's discipleship and to go along with the ways of the world for safety's sake.

But Jesus likens this to salt losing its saltiness — an impossibility, really. So it is impossible for disciples to lose commitment to the way of love and justice and still be disciples. If society's pressure or persecution cause the “salt of the earth” to lose “saltiness,” they are of no more use as disciples. On the other hand, through the disciples' good works, God's love and goodness are revealed and the persecutors or scorners may change their ways and glorify God.

In a little study book written in 1963 called *Salty Christians* by Hans-Ruedi Weber, a minister of the Swiss Reformed Church involved in lay education, wrote:

“It has been said that every Christian needs a double conversion: conversion from the world to Christ, and conversion to service with Christ in the world — to ‘holy worldliness.’ This understanding of the Christian life can lead us to become “the salt of the earth” — salty Christians, who share in Christ's ministry to the world, with all the people of God. . . . [*Salty Christians* by Hans-Ruedi Weber, p. 49]

Conversion from the world to Christ, and conversion to service with Christ in the world.

“True Christians are contagiously human,” writes Hans-Ruedi Weber [ibid. p. 48]. To be contagiously human, to share the truly human life that Christ exemplifies and lifts up, is to leave behind pride, exclusiveness, jealousy, self-righteousness. It is to give up blandness and boredom and longing for the good old days. It is to take risks, to move forward with excitement following where the Risen Christ leads, to see others with compassion and welcome them in love, to share hope, “to loose the bonds of injustice” (Isa. 58:6), to share bread with the hungry (Isa. 58:7), to be “worth our salt,” “salty Christians,” “salt of the earth,” permeating the world with the love and hope of Christ.



To be “salt of the earth” is sometimes a daunting calling given the breadth and depth of suffering in the world. But the good news is that change for the better is happening by God’s grace. And we are participants in that transformation. Through the ongoing work of our church through Presbyterian World Service & Development, we work like salt with global partners to improve the flavour of life for many people in many ways.

Through our support, and the faithful work of staff and partners worldwide:

- communities are learning how to increase crop yields for more nutrition and food
- women are being empowered to start small businesses and improve their families’ livelihoods
- health care programs ensure children are able to begin life with a better chance for survival
- vulnerable children are receiving an education
- people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS are being cared for and supported
- injustices are being combated through a shared commitment to human rights
- communities are accessing clean water through programs of digging wells and teaching proper sanitation
- refugees to Canada are rebuilding their lives through support from Canadian congregations
- emergency relief is provided in times of disaster, such as in Haiti and Chile.

Change is happening by the Spirit-led generosity and compassion of Presbyterians in Canada and our sisters and brothers in Christ, both here in our communities at home and around the world. We are the "salt of the earth." We are not isolated, individual grains of salt. "Salty" Christians cannot and do not go it alone. We share in Christ's ministry to the world with all the people of God, from other places, other communions and denominations. God is able to accomplish within and among us things beyond our imagining. Properly seasoned by God's loving purpose, we discover gladly the surprising ways in which God is leading us and the world into wholeness and new life.

Thanks be to God!





 **Presbyterian
World Service
& Development**

50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301 or 416-441-1111, ext. 291

Email: pwsd@presbyterian.ca
www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd