



First Sunday in Lent

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convener)

One: On this first Sunday of Lent, we find Jesus in the wilderness, facing temptation. And forty days in the wilderness is a long time.

All: **We too experience wilderness times of temptation, challenge and change.**

One: Yet even in the wilderness and among the wild beasts the angels cared for Jesus.

All: **As we make our way in the wilderness,
we hear the good news that we are not alone —
that the reign of God has come near in Christ.**



Support Makes Dreams Within Reach



In Malawi, 19-year-old Innocent Lazalo lost both parents at a young age. Despite the challenges this created, Innocent was determined to succeed and make a better life for himself. He knew that education was the key to his future, but he couldn't afford to pay for it.

Mulanje Mission Hospital was there to help. The hospital had established a program to provide orphans and vulnerable children, as well as their caregivers, with health, livelihoods and education support.

Innocent joined the program, and since then, the hospital has been supporting him in his studies. His dream is to study Water Resource Management and Development, and with the help of PWS&D and Mulanje Mission Hospital, that dream is within reach.

"I prayed to God to help me achieve my dreams, and I thank Him for this wonderful opportunity. My plea to the hospital and donors is that they should continue supporting other vulnerable children. Thank you very much," he shares.

This Lenten season, faithfully respond to Christ's call to support those in need. PWS&D is working to provide children in Malawi with the tools they need to build a brighter future.

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Second Sunday in Lent

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convenor)

One: On this second Sunday of Lent, we hear Jesus teaching about the suffering and rejection that he would endure on his way to the cross.

All: **Like Peter, we resist this teaching.
We prefer an easier way without struggle and suffering.**

One: But Jesus does not hold back. He tells us that to become his followers we need to deny ourselves and take up our cross.

All: **May God help us as we learn more of what it means
to be friends and followers of Jesus.**



From Crop Harvest to Small Business



In Pakistan, Mohammad Saleh owns three acres of land in his village, where he grows guar beans. Despite sporadic rains, he had a relatively successful harvest—some of the beans were sold in the market for cash. The rest was used for food at home.

Farming is part-time in the desert area of Umerkot because farmers are challenged by unpredictable rains, droughts and floods, and can't grow enough to sustain themselves. Many work as unskilled labourers to make ends meet while waiting for their crops to ripen.

Unfortunately, the crops were not enough to last the year and Saleh worried about providing for his family when the guar ran out.

Saleh and his family received food aid through PWS&D's partner Community World Service Asia, which enabled them to access food in difficult times. Since then, he managed to save some money and set up a small store in his home, which his wife could manage while he continued to work in construction, providing the family with a sustainable income.

This Lenten season, faithfully respond to Christ's call. PWS&D is working closely with local partners to provide communities with the resources and training they need to build better futures.

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Third Sunday in Lent

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convener)

One: On this third Sunday of Lent, we see Jesus,
overturning the tables of the money changers
as he drove them out of the temple.

All: **We are surprised by his actions.**

One: Yet there is much in our lives and the world
that needs to be overturned and driven out.

All: **In the name of Jesus, we work to overcome
oppression, poverty, and injustice in our local
communities and with partners around the world.**



Caring for Creation



The climate crisis is one of the most pressing issues of our time, and its effects are being felt worldwide. Unfortunately, the most severe climate events are often felt by those who are the least responsible for the emissions causing them.

Extreme weather events like droughts and floods, are consequences of climate change. These events also affect health, with the increased risk of waterborne diseases like malaria and dengue fever.

PWS&D's partners work to combat the effects of climate change. Partners promote sustainable techniques for the future and help vulnerable populations build resilience to deal with crises.

In addition, PWS&D recognizes that climate change work also includes our own personal and collective actions and choices. Through our combined efforts and advocacy, we can help create a more just and sustainable world where everyone can live in dignity and with respect for the natural world around us.

This Lenten season, faithfully respond to Christ's call to care for creation. PWS&D is committed to creating a more sustainable world.

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Fourth Sunday in Lent

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convenor)

One: On this fourth Sunday of Lent, we overhear a nighttime conversation between Jesus and a Pharisee named Nicodemus.

All: **Jesus says we must be born anew and born of the Spirit. With Nicodemus we ask, “How can these things be?”**

One: But maybe it’s not all about understanding these mysteries. Maybe it’s about hearing, believing and sharing the good news with our words and our actions.

All: **“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”**



Transforming Lives Through Education



"Speaking on behalf of most mothers at the school, we are grateful," Marta, a mother of four, expresses deep gratitude. Marta's two children attend Francisco Coll School, which is supported by PWS&D and located near a landfill in Guatemala City. Additionally, her eldest son, 14-year-old Anderson, benefits from a scholarship, facilitating his continued education after graduation.

Marta's relentless efforts to make ends meet involve hard work—preparing and selling food. She recognizes the invaluable opportunity Francisco Coll provides for her children.

"Francisco Coll is a blessing. It is an opportunity. It is a great support for us—people of low income—because otherwise we wouldn't be able to send our kids to school," she shares.

Francisco Coll not only enables marginalized children, but also extends its impact to parents. As Marta notes, "Parenting classes are very good because as a parent, as a mother, there are things we don't know, and we learn so much."

This Lenten season, faithfully respond to help students discover their potential, break cycles of poverty and build brighter futures.

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Fifth Sunday in Lent

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convener)

One: On this fifth Sunday of Lent, we discover a troubled Jesus in prayer as he contemplates his death on the cross.

All: **We are grateful for the prayers of Jesus and for the times in the gospels when Jesus prayed.**

One: In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus threw himself on the ground and prayed, "Remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want."

All: **And so we pray, as Jesus taught us,
"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven."**



From Leprosy Recovery to Empowering Others



Gulam Hasmad, a 29-year-old man from Banke district in Nepal, was diagnosed with leprosy after experiencing symptoms such as blisters and swelling. Due to a delay in diagnosis, he developed complications, including a hand deformity and eye issues.

Gulam was able to undergo corrective surgeries at Green Pastures Hospital, supported by PWS&D. Gulam and his family were grateful that the procedures meant he regained the use of his hand and eye.

Afterward, Gulam started a self-help group for people affected by leprosy, including those recently diagnosed. He now actively raises awareness about leprosy and what can be done about it. Additionally, Gulam helped his mother and brother seek medical help, leading to their own leprosy diagnoses. Today, Gulam continues to be a positive impact on his community.

This Lenten season, faithfully respond to Christ's call to provide healthy futures for all. PWS&D is working to provide access to medical care and treatment for those who need it most.

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Palm/Passion Sunday

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convener)

One: On this Palm Sunday, we see Jesus entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey, showing us the way of peace.

All: **With palm branches in hand, we cry out “Hosanna,”
save us now, save us from our warring madness.**

One: “We affirm that God is at work when people are ashamed of the inhumanity of war and work for peace with justice.

All: **“We pray for peace to him who is
the Prince of Peace.”** *(Living Faith 8.5.3)*



Achieving a Healthier Future for Women



In rural areas, young girls are often the victims of unwanted early pregnancies, which may force them to stop their schooling and cut off future livelihood opportunities. In the Chinyang'ombe community in Malawi, five remarkable women, known as Community-Based Distribution Agents, have taken on the responsibility of promoting access to family planning methods to address this issue.

Going door-to-door, they provide these vital services directly to the community. Although married women primarily use their services, young girls find solace in accessing family planning methods through youth clubs.

Though they've faced some challenges, the five women acknowledge the positive impact on women in the community, as more individuals have access to family planning methods, resulting in healthier families.

By enabling women to space out when they have children, their work, with PWS&D's support, promotes reproductive health and fosters the well-being of women, children and the community.

This Lenten season, faithfully respond to Christ's call to help improve access to vital healthcare services.

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Maundy Thursday/ Good Friday

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convener)

One: Jesus took the towel, poured water into a basin and washed the feet of his disciples.
Then Jesus said to them, "If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

All: **Thank you, Lord Jesus, for showing us how to love and serve one another.**

One: "But God proves his love for us that while we still were sinners Christ died for us."
(Romans 5:8)

All: **Thank you, Lord Jesus, for suffering and dying on the cross for us and our salvation.**



John Transforms His Farming



In Ghana, PWS&D supports the Garu Community-Based Rehabilitation program, where people with disabilities learn important life and vocational skills through agriculture.

John Avoka, a 41-year-old resident of the Kugzua community, learned enhanced agricultural techniques and accessed high-quality seeds for vegetable production.

With great enthusiasm, he expresses, “Thanks to the program’s training and provision of seeds, I am now capable of producing sufficient food to sustain myself and my family. Previously, the challenges posed by climate change made it difficult to achieve adequate food production.”

The program has helped John develop the skills, knowledge and resources necessary for effective farming. With access to quality seeds, he has cultivated vegetable and fruit crops, ensuring a steady food supply in spite of adverse climate conditions.

This Lenten season, faithfully respond to Christ’s call to help provide marginalized men and women with the skills and confidence they need to provide a better life for themselves.

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Easter

Written by the Rev. John Bannerman (PWS&D Committee Co-Convener)

One: Christ is risen!

All: He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

One: The stone had been rolled back and
the tomb was empty.
The angel told the faithful women,
“He has been raised. He is not here.”

All: And so we have hope — a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
“May the God of hope go with us every day.”



Christ is Risen!

As we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are reminded of the power of God's love and mercy. Every day, we witness the transformative effect of responding to the needs of the poor, hungry and displaced.

Inspired by God's promise of abundant life, our church is committed to serving those in need with compassion, justice and love. Your faithful support, through Presbyterian World Service & Development, is making a positive impact in marginalized communities worldwide.

Together, we are restoring human dignity, alleviating suffering and fostering community cooperation. We are providing critical food assistance, medical care, sanitation services, and other emergency relief to those affected by crisis and disaster. We are also empowering communities through education, sustainable agriculture practices, and skills training, while supporting the rights and needs of refugees.

Faithful to our calling, we respond together.

This Easter, please support PWS&D.



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