

The Anglican Church of Canada



L'Église anglicane du Canada

Office of the Primate

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On February 24th we mark a full year since the invasion of Ukraine by Russia began a protracted war. Bombing of cities, destruction of infrastructure, and daily loss of life continue with no end in sight. We have seen the resilience and courage of the Ukrainian people as they have resisted the unprovoked aggression of the Russian president. We have watched as the rest of the world discerns what actions of support will help and seek the delicate balance that will not escalate this conflict into a worldwide conflagration with a nuclear power.

In the face of this war, there is deep grief and anger that the desire for domination causes such profound pain and destruction for others. There will be no winners. When this war does end, the trauma and devastation will take generations to heal – in Ukraine, in Russia, in Europe and around the world. There will be families without sons and daughters, husbands, and wives– and among those who chose to volunteer from around the world. Human traffickers will have preyed on vulnerable people fleeing the war and profited. Bitterness and resentments will live in the memories of those wounded and traumatized. Grief will echo and re-echo.

Many Ukrainian refugees have fled their homes – mostly women and children. Canada has a large diaspora of Ukrainian immigrants who arrived during the 20th century. Some found a home in the Anglican Church of Canada, where there were no Ukrainian Orthodox congregations at that time. Now, the recent refugees have found a welcome here with churches and community groups reaching out to offer safety while they wait to see if a return will be possible. The principle of ‘love your neighbour as yourself’ is being lived out daily in acts of kindness and generosity.

This anniversary is not one for celebration. It is for lament and grief. It is for prayer – that God’s justice would prevail soon. It is a day to lament our human inability to live in peace with respect for the dignity of all. It is a day of profound sorrow.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

+Linda Nicholls

Archbishop and Primate, Anglican Church of Canada

Living the Marks of Mission

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*God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.*

*Prayer for Ukraine, Archbishop Justin Welby & Archbishop Stephen Cottrell,
Archbishops of Canterbury and York, The Church of England*