

Ways to Give During Lent

The Mission Committee is offering two ways for members of the congregation to give this Lent. For over 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided Presbyterians a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world. Our church has a long tradition of supporting this special offering of the Presbyterian Church (USA). In a world of hunger, disaster, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. We encourage all members of the congregation to give as generously as you can.

While a portion of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering goes to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's efforts in Ukraine, many of you have asked how you can do more. Directed donations to PDA are being used for emergency humanitarian aid such as food, shelter, medicine, diapers and hygiene items for the more than 3 million displaced Ukrainians, both within Ukraine and in the neighboring countries where they have sought shelter. PDA is working with our sibling churches and ecumenical partner agencies throughout the region to provide a local response to the growing refugee crisis. If you would like to support this vital work, please consider a donation above and beyond what you would ordinarily give to One Great Hour of Sharing. Checks should be made payable to Amherst Presbyterian Church with "Ukraine Assistance" on the memo line.

We also invite everyone to join in the following Prayer for Ukraine:

God of mercy, justice and peace:

Our spirits are heavy with sorrow, our souls shocked

At the sudden and breathtaking violence,

the invasion of Ukraine by their neighbor, Russia.

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We pray for lives caught in the grip of war,
who hear the bombs in the night,
the ominous movement of troops on the road into town
the whistle of incoming shells,
for a cry from a desperate neighbor or a shout of warning.
For those who huddle in subways and basements
or flee for the borders, clutching their children's hands
We pray for families separated from fathers, brothers and sons
who must remain to fight and protect their homeland.

We pray for neighbors in Eastern and Central Europe
As their hearts and doors open to these refugees
That strained resources will become an abundance of hope
That fears and struggles with racism will yield to a generosity of profound welcome
That communities of faith within Ukraine will be protected from harm
and sustained in their efforts to feed and shelter their neighbors.
That peacemakers and protesters in Russia will be heard and their lives preserved.

May we undergird our prayers with tangible resources to help.
May we reach deeply, give generously, and welcome extravagantly.
May we lift our voices in a strong and unified advocacy.
May we all, even as we breathe in lament, breathe out mercy, hope and peace.
And in this Lenten season, when we walk the way toward death and resurrection, re-
pent our complicity in cultures of violence and renew our efforts toward justice and
peace.

--The Rev. Dr. Laurie Kraus, Director, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance