

An Evening with Andrew Larsen



On Wednesday, June 2, from 6:30-8:00 PM the Penn West Conference is pleased to host a Zoom meeting with Andrew Larsen, who serves through Global Ministries with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Andrew's appointment is made possible by gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission and our special gifts. The event is free, but we ask that you register for it using the registration form below. More information about Andrew is available on p. 2. Please join us!

Registration Due by May 27, 2021

Email: office@pennwest.org with the following information

NAME: _____

CHURCH: _____

POSITION AT CHURCH: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

Will you be using your email address or phone number to join the meeting? Email or Phone

Zoom information will be sent out closer to the time of the event to all those who register. Please look for this in your email inbox. If you haven't used Zoom before, feel free to contact me at office@pennwest.org for instructions on how to use Zoom.

Here is some information about Andrew...

How do you fit into their mission?

I am a program assistant in the areas of Justice, Peace, and Human Rights with the UCCP within the West Visayas Jurisdiction. Focusing on issues around human rights violations, widespread violence of the extrajudicial killings, and supporting imprisoned activists and their families in their pursuit for justice. The pursuit of peace and justice is a global affair. Advocacy and connecting international partners is another important part where we as siblings in Christ can work in solidarity to uphold God's mission.

What led you to engage in this calling?

The body of Christ is made up of the whole global church. In today's mission it is important to accompany our brothers and sisters around the world. This accompaniment means living together in solidarity that uplifts the unique and beautiful voices of all through mutual respect and inclusiveness. It is a partnership and relationship- not a one way street or a dictation of terms. We must be open to the amazing and vast opportunities that arise being with in the whole mission of Christ. The grace of God has so much to offer when a partnership is established between the many members of Christ. A mission service comes alongside the already amazing work being done within local communities, NGO's, and churches. The talented individuals who are leading the way are the experts in their own culture and community. To be a Christian means to be in community. Our faith grows and thrives when in relation to others. One of the relationships Jesus calls us into is engaging with our neighbor, the other, the unknown stranger. Jesus did not only associate with his friends and family but instead actively pursued people of all backgrounds, social standings, belief systems, and more. Many of the parables demonstrate how seemingly at odd individuals being moved by the Holy Spirit and the power of God come together.

Is there a passage of scripture that carries special meaning in your daily work?

1 John 3:12: Today we are the children of God. What we will be tomorrow is unknown. But if you re-read this passage from 1 John tomorrow it will say again, "Today we are children of God, tomorrow is unknown". And if you re-read this verse in a month, a year or any point in the future it will always affirm that yes indeed "Today we are children of God". What a wonderful promise and gift we have been given. It upholds the sanctity of all human life. It extends God's grace in every moment- in the deepest despairs and the highest joys we are always loved by God our creator. In a global community and in communion with our brothers and sisters of Christ across the planet we must remember, every day and every point in the future, that yes WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD!

Which books have influenced your understanding of your country, work, or theology:

- *A Case for God*, by Karen Armstrong – As a historian she beautiful reminds the community of believers that our community is long, complicated and full of history. And the way we worship and understand God today is not how it has always been.
- *The Cost of Discipleship*, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer – The yoke of Jesus is both incredibly hard but also the lightest burden we will ever bear.
- *Let Your Life Speak*, by Parker Palmer – God's gift of grace and redemption opens our lives- opening to a call from God to live out our vocation for the good of our neighbor.
- *Wishful Thinking*, by Frederick Buechner – Related vocational content.
- *How to Hide an Empire*, by Daniel Immerwahr