



Kensington Presbyterian Church

God at home

March 22, 2020

Welcome & announcements

For now we are putting out these worship services that you can do at home. This doesn't mean you have to do them alone. You can invite those who live with you, or connect with others through the phone or computer.

This will include footnotes, but may not be as thorough as an academic paper.

Some ideas we will be looking into include a way to do this through a computer video conference call. We are also looking into offering a prayer group the same way. Yet another idea is to have worship in the park near the church... when the ice is gone and the weather is a little warmer. Please continue to check out the website or facebook for news of these ideas.

If you have any prayer requests, ideas, or just want to talk, please reach out to your elder or Peter. Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca

Approaching God



lighting the candle

Jésus Chris est la lumière du monde.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

Call to worship (Psalm 118:24)

This is the day the LORD has made;

let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Prayer

Dear Lord,

Your Spirit calls to us, and we come to You.

Taking this time to pay attention,
listening and looking for You.

Just as Jesus came to people in their homes,
so you come into our home,
sharing your grace and love with us.

You are amazing.

Sometimes we forget that
as we go about our everyday lives.

Forgetting the wonder of flowers coming to life
out of dead looking soil.

Sometimes we forget you are even here.

We get lost in ourselves and our worries.
and we start living just for ourselves,
which hurts ourselves, other people, and the environment.

. . . [think of ways that you have been selfish or forgotten God this week]

May we listen to your Spirit as you invite us to live into your way.
Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Hear these comforting words:

If you honestly try to change your ways
and believe in God's redeeming mercy,
your sins are forgiven.

Trust in God's promises
and begin anew your life
with God and all people
in the name of Jesus Christ.



Lord's prayer (feel free to use another version/translation)

As we acknowledge who we are and our relationships, we turn to God
with the prayer Jesus left to guide us:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

♪ hymn: Joyful, joyful, we adore you.....see last page

Listening to God

Readings & Reflections

As you read through you can click on the link to read the
passage, or look it up in your own Bible.¹

Normally I start my worship planning and sermon with scripture.
Usually from the [Lectionary](#) (a 3 year series of readings from
throughout the Bible). At the moment I am feeling more pulled
towards themes.

With us all spending so much more time at home than normal, I
was reminded of a lovely book of poetry/prayers that I'll get to later.
In it the poet shares how they see, or try to see, God in all the

¹ If you'd like a new Bible with helpful notes, I recommend the 'Life with God Bible' NRSV from Renovaré.
ISBN 0061834963 or for the more academically inclined, The New Oxford Study Bible NRSV

various aspects of home life.

How do you do at that? ...

and what about the Bible? What does it have to say about seeing
God at home?

My first thoughts of people encountering God while doing
everyday things were all big events. Remember Moses? He was just
watching over the sheep as they wandered around looking for food.
Ready to jump into action if they got into trouble, or perhaps dozing
a little on his feet after hours/days/years of this. Then there's the
burning bush, and God invites Moses to radically change his life...
and that of all Israelites ([Exodus 3](#)).

And then there's Paul. He's just going from Jerusalem to
Damascus. Lots of people did it. Except in this case the risen Christ
shines into his life so brightly that the whole direction of Paul's life
changes - and he's blinded for a few days to give him a chance to
reflect on things ([Acts 9:1-19](#)).

And of course there's Mary. We're not sure what she was doing,
but an angel came and invited her to give birth to the Messiah ([Luke
1: 26-38](#))

These are all really big examples that have changed the course of
history. This might happen to you, but not to most of us.

Does the Bible give us any more regular examples?

I thought of several examples of hospitality, such as when
Abraham and Sarah unknowingly invite God in for a refreshing
drink on a hot day ([Genesis 18: 1-15](#))... but that's not such as good
examples as we're not supposed to be inviting people over.

How about the stories that Jesus tells?

There's the [Good Samaritan](#) (Luke 10: 25-37), in which somebody is just going about his business when he sees somebody hurt. He stops and helps, even though he shouldn't. He doesn't meet God in the story, but he does show what it's like to be in God's kingdom. (Incidentally, I heard a very similar story this week when one of the Kensington community accidentally fell and hurt themselves.)

There are numerous other stories that give glimpses of God. There's the [woman](#) (Luke 15: 8-10) who loses the coin and searches everywhere for it. There's the lamp that you place on the [lamp](#) (Matthew 5: 15) stand and not under the basket. There's the [fish with the coin](#) (Matthew 17: 24-27) in it's mouth. There's the disciples [plucking grain](#) (Matthew 12: 1-8) on the Sabbath.

All these stories give us a glimpse of life with God, but they are still a little bigger than the ordinary.

I quite like the prophet Jeremiah. Like all the prophets, he has some (well, lots of) hard words for the people. He also uses some nice tangible ways to do it. In one case he visits a potter and makes the point that if what the potter is making isn't working out, the potter simply smashes it down [and reshapes it](#) (Jeremiah 18: 1-11) - and no, I don't think that is happening now.

Another comparison that Jeremiah used that I can relate to in my everyday life is this.

“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.
They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,

and it does not cease to bear fruit.”

Especially in these anxious times it is good to remember where our nourishment comes from - and go to the water.

But how can we remember that at home?

Well, how about reconsidering those things you have to do anyways as part of your everyday life. Gunilla Norris did this, over 30 years, and produced a book of prayers² that she has as she does the household chores. Activities is perhaps a better word, as she transforms them from chores into ways of drawing closer to God. She doesn't say/think/pray/feel the same things every time, but some things she eventually write down.

Some of the the ways/topics/places she does include:

- Waking up: and waking to God
- Walking: and the support and trust in the floor, as well as the prayer that we might be a support for others
- Washing her face: and praying that God's living water washes away her masks
- Making the bed: and how we are making, or not, our future
- Choosing clothes, Getting dressed, looking in the mirror (seeing as God sees), crossing thresholds, stairs, breakfast, opening windows, creating lists, sweeping, laundry, bills, ...

The list goes on. Here are a few complete prayers from ordinary activities.



2 Gunilla Norris, *Being Home: A book of meditations*. Bell Tower, New York 1991
ISBN 0-517-58159-0

Cooking

Peeling, chopping, cutting, mincing, slicing,
measuring, pouring, stirring, poaching,
bubbling, frying, turning, simmering, serving.
These are words I cook with.
They are all motion, all process.

I know as I create this meal
there is another cooking going on.
It, too, is all motion, all process -
an inner transformation.
Help me to give myself away as easily
as this carrot, this new potato.
I want my layers to peel away like the onion's.
I want to be as empty and clean
as the universe in a sweet green pepper
with its white star seeds.

I want. I want. In the heat of Your will
help me to give up wanting!
I am so full of urgency, expectation, image,
I make myself spiritually hungry. You are here,
therefore, there is everything to receive.



Doing the Dishes

My life will always have dirty dishes.
If this sink can become
a place of contemplation,
let me learn constancy here.

I gave through the window above the sink.
There I see the constancy of dawn,
the constancy of dusk,
the constancy of the seasons,
of the sun and moon,
and the rotation of the planets.

You love is discerned by repetition.
Turn and return me to Your love.
Let me fitful human constancy
be strengthened in the willing,
wheeling wonder of Your stars.



Folding Clothes

Out of the dryer the clothes come
smelling of soap and fabric softener.
The underpants cling to the nightshirt.
The towels crackle.
Everything is mixed up with everything else.

I want to turn this heap
of electrical excitement
into some kind of order.
I want it to become
a means of prayer, a litany.

The hand towels come first.
Each day a new one goes on the hook.
Let the folding of these towels
be an invocation. I think of the hands
that have been dried on them.
Tentative, strong, confused, determined hands.
Grant that our hands will find ways
to do Your will. Keep us in Your love.

Now the sheets.
My friends slept in them last night.
Let the folding of these sheets
be an intercession. Fold my friends
into Your tenderness. Keep us in Your love.

Then the personal clothes.
One sock is rolled together with its mate.
One sweater sleeve goes over the other,
An image of repose.

Let the folding of these garments
be a confession. Help me to surrender,
to give up all those false excitements,
clinging attachments, static insisistencies.
Help me instead to be folded into You.
Help me to be clothed by You, to dwell in You,
to make my life an obedience.
Keep us in Your love.

Let the completed task be offered...
such a small thing... yet let it be offered
as thanksgiving. Your amazing mystery is here
even now receiving this smallness.
Keep us in Your love.

As you continue in this time of physical distancing (not social),
spending so much time at home - remember that God is with you,
and take the time to look.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - three in
one. Amen.

moment for meditation

Responding to God

FaithTalk

These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many
somebodies.

Actions: Chose some daily or routine activities that you will deliberately
pray with God during. After a while share your experience.

Wonder: What would it be like to see signs of God in everything?
Glimpses of the coming Kingdom or places where more needs
to be done?

Offering:

What could you offer others this week?

How could you share God's presence?

How could you support the work of God in the world?

Prayers of the people

Note: if you would like specific prayers included here (like we do with the prayer book), please send an email to:
prayer@Kensingtonchurch.ca

We praise you, God our creator, for your handiwork;
for the reminder that spring brings
of how life cycles through various stages - and survives harsh
conditions like winter.

We thank you for:

- the miracle of life and the wonder of living . . .
- particular blessings coming to us in this day . . .
- the resources of the earth . . .
- gifts of creative vision and skillful craft . . .
- the treasure stored in every human life. . . .

We pray for others, God our Savior,
claiming your love in Jesus Christ for the whole world
and committing ourselves to care for those around us.

We pray for

- those who work for the benefit of others . . .
 - especially for those working in health care, and those researching ways to resist COVID, and those deciding how we should live and interact . . .
- those who cannot work today . . .
 - and for those who fear they may not have a place to work when this is over . . .
- people who are poor & the refugees. . .
- for your church

God our creator,

yours is the morning, and yours is the evening.

Let Christ, the sun of righteousness,

shine forever in our hearts

and draw us to the light of your radiant glory.

We ask this for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

Amen.³

sending & benediction:

Last sentence of Matthew:

“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

May God the Father bless you,

God the Son heal you,

God the Holy Spirit give you strength.

May God the holy and undivided Trinity

guard your body and soul,

leading you to a life forever with our Lord.⁴



³ adapted from Worship Sourcebook (2004) 4.4.2

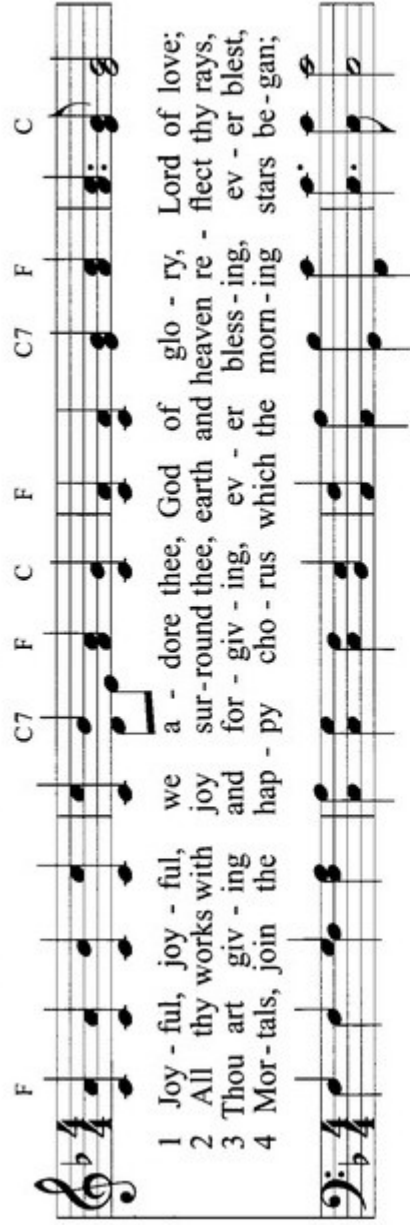
⁴ adapted from Worship Sourcebook (2004) 9.2.17

God at home

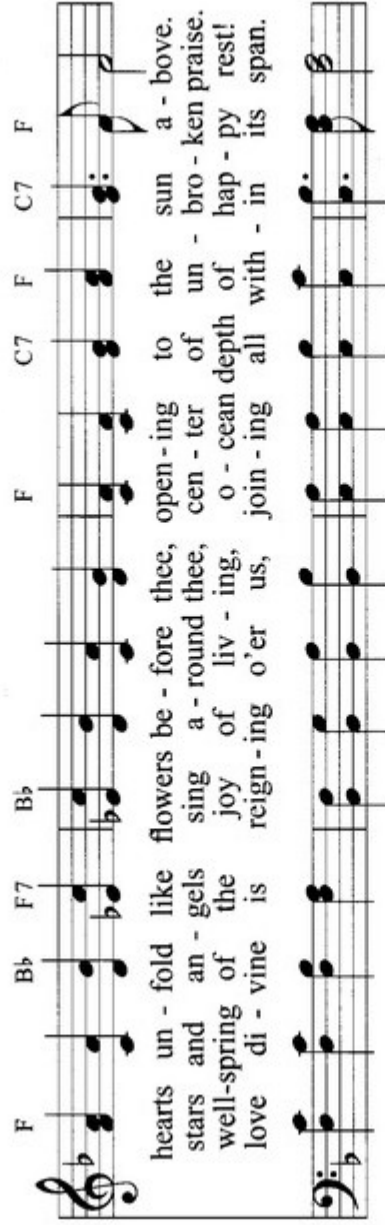
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Attentive	Dusting	Jesus	Prayer	Stairs
Bed	Floor	Laundry	Present	Standing
Bills	Flowers	Lights	Reading	Sweeping
Blessing	Folding	Listening	Reflecting	Table
Breakfast	Garbage	Lists	Repotting	Threshold
Choosing	God	Look	Rest	Trash
Clothes	Grace	Mending	Seeing	Waking
Cooking	Ground	Mirror	Sharing	Walking
Cupboard	Holy	Paperwork	Shovelling	Wash
Dishes	Home	Planning	Sorting	Window
Dressed	Ironing	Polishing	Spirit	Worship

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee



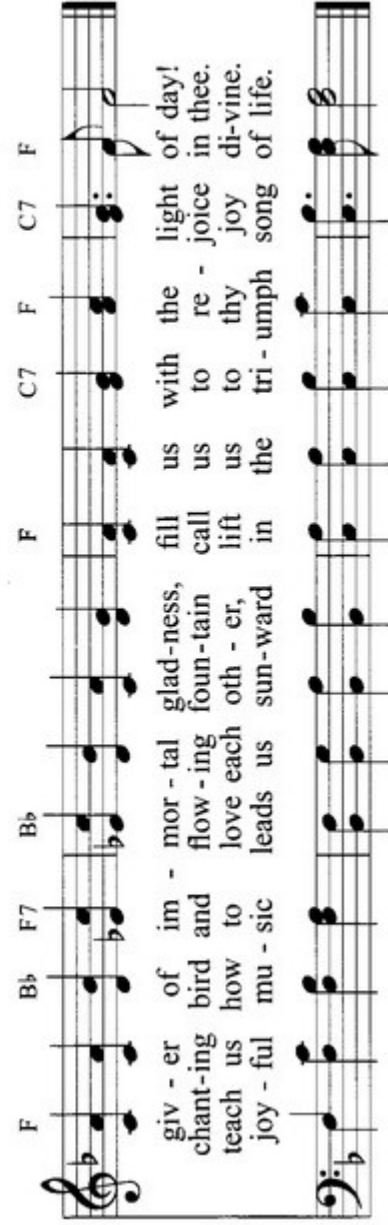
1 Joy-ful, joy-ful, we a-dore thee, God of glo-ry, Lord of love;
2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heaven re-flect thy rays;
3 Thou art giv-ing and for-giv-ing, ev-er bless-ing, ev-er blest;
4 Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho-rus which the morn-ing stars be-gan;



hearts un-fold like flowers be-fore thee, open-ing to the sun a-bove.
stars and an-gels sing a-round thee, cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise.
well-spring of the joy of liv-ing, o-cean depth of hap-py rest!
love di-vine is reign-ing o'er us, join-ing all with-in its span.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness, drive the dark of doubt a-way;
Field and for-est, vale and moun-tain, flow-ery mead-ow, flash-ing sea;
Thou our Fa-ther, Christ our Broth-er—all who live in love are thine;
Ev-er sing-ing, march we on-ward, vic-tors in the midst of strife;



giv-er of im-mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day!
chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain call us to re-joice in thee.
teach us how to love each oth-er, lift us to thy joy di-vine.
joy-ful mu-sic leads us sun-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

WORDS: Henry van Dyke (1852-1933)
MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

HYMN TO JOY
8.7.8.7.D.