



Kensington Presbyterian Church

Creation's Praise

April 19, 2020

Welcome & announcements

For now we are putting out these worship services that you can do at home.¹ 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.

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

Announcements

Owen Lancaster MacLeod was born Easter morning. Theologically great timing ☺ Cathrine & Owen are doing well.

Each of these **events** will happen through Zoom. Email Rev Peter for the log-in details: Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca

- **Prayer Time:** Wednesday morning prayer at 9 a.m.
- **Zoom Café:** Thursday at 3 p.m.
Join Rev. Peter for coffee (not included):
- **Worship:** Sunday at 10:30 a.m. [and the text version]

If you are interested, but these times don't work, please contact Rev. Peter:

Offering: We now have a '[Donate Now](#)' button on our website.

Please continue to check out the website <https://kensingtonchurch.ca/> or facebook <https://www.facebook.com/KensingtonChurchNDG/> for news of these ideas.

¹ note: that the footnotes are not as thorough as an academic paper.

Approaching God



lighting the candle

Jésus Chris est la lumière du monde.
Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

Prelude: A Quiet Place

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_swWLNcXXY

Call to worship²

This is the day that the Lord has made;

let us rejoice and be glad in it.

God made the bright, warm sunshine and the freezing-cold snow.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

God made the little tiny flowers and the great big pine trees.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

God made the peaceful ponds and the crashing waves.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

God made the cornfields and the rocky mountains.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

God made the creeping caterpillars and kicking kangaroos.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

God made you, and God made me.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Come, let us praise God for making all things good!



² From the Worship Sourcesbook A.1.2.4

Prayer

Amazing God,
by your Word you created a wonderful universe,
and through your Spirit you breathed in life.
We offer you our praise
adding our voices to that of all creation.
Celebrating the love and the detail
that sends quarks and universes spinning.
That encourages birds to sing glorious notes in the spring,
and flowers to lift their beauty to the bees.

Lord, you created us in your image,
and invite us to create as well - and we have created amazing
things that help people and the world.
Thank you

Spring time is a good time to consider your creation,
and to remember that you have given us the responsibility
of looking after it.
Please forgive us for the ways we encourage industry
to produce more and more stuff that we don't need.
Stuff that hurts our relationship with the environment
from the stripping the resources to covering it in plastic;
and how our desires hurt our relationships with each other,
from the fighting over rare minerals for our phones,
to jealousy and lust for new 'needs'.
Please forgive us for these, and other ways we hurt the world
and those around us. . .

This time of isolation is a good time to consider... and reconsider.
Please make us open to your Spirit,
so that we might turn to ways that show your love
that help all of us become the amazing creations you dream of.
In Jesus name
Amen.

Assurance of Pardon³

God the Creator brings you new life,
forgives and redeems you.
Take hold of this forgiveness,
and live your life in the Spirit of Jesus.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer (feel free to use another version/translation)
**As a part of turning to your way, we ask to be shaped by the prayer you
gave 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.

3 From the Worship Sourcesbook 2.4.35

This is the day

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made. We will re-joice, we will re-joice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made; we will re-joice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

Listening to God

Jesus and Peter - off the record⁴

Peter: Jesus?

Jesus: Yes, Peter?

Peter: Do we have to believe everything that's written in the Bible?

Jesus: You mean there's something you don't understand?

Peter: (*Surprised*)

How did you know?

Jesus: Intuition, Peter.

Intuition first ... then mind-reading.

Peter: Mind-reading?

Jesus: The passage you are having difficulty with ...
(*faking mind-reading*)
comes from ... Psalm ... 65.

Peter: How did you know?

Jesus: Ssshh ...
Psalm 65 ...
verse ... 13.

Peter: Jesus!

Jesus: Ssshh ...
'The valleys are so full of corn,
they laugh and sing.'

Peter: How did you know?

Jesus: (*Oblivious*)
... closely followed by Psalm 148 ... verse ... 7:
'Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and ocean depths.'

Peter: But Jesus ...
how did you know?

(*No response*)
Go on ... tell us; are you psychic?

Jesus: No, Peter ... I'm perceptive.
Last week we sang both these psalms in the synagogue.
You were standing two along from me ... remember?
And at these lines you blew a raspberry,
something like ... (*Makes appropriate noise*)

Peter: You heard me?

Jesus: Everybody heard you.
There were only six of us at that service.

Peter: Well, no wonder, Jesus.
You can't say these things.

Jesus: What things?

⁴ The Sun Dances from *Jesus & Peter* by John Bell & Graham Maule, Wild Goose Publ, 1999.

Peter: About valleys laughing
and sea monsters praising God.
It discredits the integrity of the Bible.

Jesus: Peter, in your eyes,
it might discredit the integrity of the Bible.
But in God's eyes,
it expresses the integrity of creation.

Peter: What do you mean?

Jesus: What do I mean?
Answer me this: what does the thunder do?

Peter: I don't hear any.

Jesus: Then use your memory. What does the thunder do?

Peter: Roar.

Jesus: What does the wind do?

Peter: Whistle.

Jesus: What does the tide do?

Peter: Comes in and goes out.

Jesus: Proper terms ... ?

Peter: Ebbs and flows?

Jesus: What does the sun do on the waves?

Peter: Dance?

Jesus: What do birds do in the morning?

Peter: Sing.

Jesus: What do flowers do when fully grown?

Peter: Bloom.

Jesus: Who is it all for?

Peter: Pass.

Jesus: No.
No passing.

Who is it all for?
Who is the roaring and the whistling
and the dancing and the singing
- your words, Peter -
who is it all for?

Peter: Us?

Jesus: And what about before 'us' were here, Peter?
Who was it all for then?

Peter: That's a hypothetical question, Jesus!

Jesus: It's nothing of the sort.
You don't need me to tell you that there was life on earth before
humans walked on two feet.
And there was worship on earth before humans ever sang a
hymn.

Peter: How come?

Jesus: You're just like the rest of them, Peter.
You think that religion is only for men and women.
You forget that God made the whole world for his glory.
And that every creature, in its own way, is meant to worship
him.
That's why the bird sings,
and the tide ebbs and flows,
and the rocks resound,
and the fields get dressed up in bright colours
and the valleys laugh and sing.

Peter: Don't talk romantic, Jesus.

Jesus: I'm not talking romantic.
I'm talking real.
And you and your like-minded friends had better learn
to respect the worship which earth offers,
because if - for any reason -

one species of bird no longer sings,
one lake of water no longer sparkles,
one forest of trees no longer claps its hands ...
God will want to know why.
Ecology is doxology, Peter.
To care for the earth means to preserve its praise.

Peter: Heavy stuff, Jesus.

Jesus: God's not a lightweight, Peter.

Reading: As you read through you can click on the link to read the passage, or look it up in your own Bible.⁵

[Psalm 148](#)

[Isaiah 42: 5-10a](#)

Sermonette

Dear Lord, please bless the words typed here
and the meditations of our hearts. Amen.

Spring is struggling a bit to arrive, but even with the occasional bit of snow, I think it's here. I see it in the green grass, blooming crocuses, and the [singing of the birds](#). Personally, it warms my heart seeing the world fill with colour and life after winter.



The coming of spring also causes me to pause and think about creation... and our looking after it. Perhaps the founders of [Earth Day](#) felt the same way - which is why it's this Wednesday.

Spring, and today's readings, remind me that the world is not all about us. We are wonderful, but there is so much else that is wonderful too.

I love how Psalm 148 has all of creation praising God: stars &

rivers, trees & animals, monsters & us. It's what we're all made for.⁶

Do you find the time to notice creation's praise of God? Did you ever think of it that way before?

In [Matthew 6:28](#) Jesus invites us to consider the lilies of the field. God created them. Look at how amazing they are. We've been watching the old magic school bus series with the boys. While God isn't mentioned in it, it's a testimony to how amazing creation is.

The Bible tells us in the very first chapter that God has given us the responsibility to look after creation - and part of that is noticing it & appreciating it.

This is a bit harder now that we're supposed to stay home as much as possible. I pray that you have a nice view from a window or a porch to stand on. Although, honestly, creation is everywhere - we just need to notice it.

Isaiah reminds me of a additional aspect. God created, and we are to open the eyes of those that don't see it; to bring out the prisoners who sit in darkness.

How to do that? Inviting somebody to join you on a walk isn't allowed at the moment. What else can you think of?

You could call somebody and share with them experiences where you have felt creation's beauty or power praising God. Perhaps it's even something they can go see. (Last week I got a good tip on some flowers coming into bloom on Kensington just up from the church.)

We are not only part of God's creativity, but we are also made in God's image (also in [Genesis 1](#)). You could share God's creativity through some of your own by making a card to send or drop off for someone - or maybe you express yourself better through cooking, or

⁵ 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

⁶ and reminds me of the start of both the Westminster Catechism and the 'new' Presbyterian one, the first question of which is: *What is God's purpose for our lives?* We have been made for joy: joy in knowing, loving and serving God, joy in knowing, loving and serving one another, joy in the wonder of all God's works. <https://presbyterian.ca/2014/05/14/a-catechism-for-today/>

singing and/or dancing from the sidewalk, or sidewalk chalk art? Regardless of how you try to open someone to the wonder of creation, don't forget to give credit to the creator. "Isn't it wonderful what God has done?" Looking at the flowers and "Praise God." Listening to the birds, and "Thank God."⁷

Part of my reflection at Springtime includes how we hurt the environment. As you've heard over the years, there are many many ways beyond the debris left on the sidewalks in Spring. Different topics dominate in different years. Sadly, I don't think many of them go out of date.

There's issues of sustainable agriculture and fishing. More recently, the issue of microplastics. All that plastic packaging around all the things we buy, and in the clothes we wear, is breaking down and collecting in our soil and water... and in what we eat and drink.

One of the side-effects of all the shut downs is that pollution has decreased (even with all the delivery trucks). This has been a goal of many for quite a while, although not at the expense of so many jobs. I wonder if we can learn something to create a new normal?

An issue people are starting to become more aware of again is mining. There's the old issue of it's impact on the environment, and the more recent label of 'conflict minerals'⁸. These are minerals that are highly sought after for things like cell phones & computers. They are often mined in areas controlled by armed groups involved with forced labour, corruption and other human rights abuses.

Looking after those people and the environment in their area will likely mean saying "no" to the armed groups - and being willing to live without as much new technology. Can we change society so that the economy isn't so dependant on continually selling new things?

⁷ One thing I looked at this week reminded me of all the astounding and amazing insects there are in the world - even though they tend to 'creep me out'

⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/conflict-minerals-regulation/regulation-explained/>

Can developments in technology and other areas still happen without the income from all the selling? or are we willing to pay more and buy less often? Would share holders be willing to make less money? How much do they need?

We are working on this as a society. There are recycling programs in many cities, although I wonder how effective it is. I also remember that Recycling is the last of the 3 Rs. Before it is **Reduce & Reuse**. This is a good challenge, and perhaps one that we can focus on while in isolation. Do you really need ____ (insert object you are thinking about)? Is there something else you could do instead?

Which leads to another **R** that is being added: **Repurpose**. Can you solve your problem with something else that you already have? or something you can get second hand?

We are getting better. We are getting more aware - thank God.

Getting back to flowers and birds, I'm going to trim the grape vine growing in the hedge this week so that it will grow better - helping both it and the community experience God's provisions more.

As you breath in the smell of spring, take this time to appreciate the wonders in creation, consider how we can help all creation praise God, and share the joy with somebody.

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

♪ moment for meditation: C major Prelude - Chopin
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EewC9_i2yQ

Responding to God

Activities

Here are some fun ideas to explore creation

- Go on a scavenger hunt - idea on last page
- Write a psalm of praise like the call to worship or psalm 148
- Create some *Thank You* cards that show things that God has created that you are thankful for. Include the Bible verse “God looked at everything he had made, and it was very good.” Genesis 1:31. You could also add a description of something you like about creation. Send or drop off your card to somebody.
- check out the varieties of insects or flowers that God has created... and then make some (either like some you’ve seen, or brand new). Pipe Cleaner with bits of fabric and paper could be fun
 - <https://www.dkfindout.com/us/animals-and-nature/insects/types-insects/>
 - <https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/animals-and-nature/plants/>
- Have everybody take a balloon and draw the earth on it. After inflating add the label, “Handle with Care!”. Then place them on a blanket and bounce them up and down... trying not to let them fall.

FaithTalk

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

Etching: Where have you seen creation praising God? Where have you seen beauty or what has caused you to experience joy?

Wonder: Speculate what your community would be like if we shared the idea of creation’s joy more often. What if we gave God the credit for it?

Wonder: “I wonder what God appreciates about _____.”

Start with easy small things... then you can work subjects that give you trouble. (and remember, there are some things God does not appreciate.)

Actions: Try to improve our care of an aspect of creation. Pick either an idea from the sermon, or something else. Tell a friend so they can ask you how it went.

Offering

Financially, we have set up a donation option on our website. Just click the ‘[Donate Now](#)’ button, and then the pretty button. It gives you various options that are easy to follow.

Anthem: Where Could I Go But To The Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpXuQ4kWYzA>



Prayers of the people

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

In the live service we are going to have a pictorial prayer. At home you can collect pictures or memories of ways that creation might be praising God. This could include flowers, animals, etc, but it can also include things that people create that are helpful and beautiful, and other people.

I'll be including pictures by VanGogh and of the masks and ventilators being used in hospitals right now.

You might want to check out the artists at EarthDay.org

Praise and thank God for these things - joining your praise with theirs.

Then give God your concerns, worries, anxieties and even fears. Know that God hears them, cares about them, and God will be present in them.

I'll be including concerns for our leaders, for the church, for those who are sick from COVID, their families, and those looking after them, or those who are suffering in other ways... and, of course, for creation.



Rev. Peter Rombeek for Kensington Presbyterian Church
kensingtonchurch.ca

FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH

1. For the beau - ty of the earth, For the beau - ty
2. For the beau - ty of each hour Of the day and
3. For the joy of ear and eye, For the heart and
4. For the joy of hu - man love, Broth - er, sis - ter,
5. For each per - fect gift di - vine To our world so

1. of the skies, For the love which from our birth
2. of the night, Hill and vale, and tree and flow'r,
3. mind's de - light, For the mys - tic har - mo - ny
4. par - ent, child, Friends on earth and friends a - bove;
5. free - ly giv'n, Joys be - stowed by love's de - sign,

1. O - ver and a - round us lies: } Lord of all to
2. Sun and moon, and stars of light:
3. Link - ing sense to sound and sight:
4. For all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
5. Flow'rs of earth and fruits of heav'n }

1-6. you we raise This our hymn of grate - ful praise.

Benediction:

May the power of the cross,
the joy of the resurrection,
and the presence of our risen Lord
be with you, now and always.⁹

Postlude: The Heavens are Telling - Haydn

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwqqfbnUDY>



Prayer Partnership

These are invitations compiled by the Presbyterian Church in Canada for our prayers. They were created months ago, and so serve as a reminder that there is more than COVID19 in our world. (That said, I did adapt some.) Should you add these prayers to your own, you will be joining with others throughout the church.

Sunday, April 19 We pray for those in our circle of friendship and love who need healing, guidance or strength.

Monday, April 20 We thank God for the Cyclical PCC coaches. Guide and encourage them as they work with people discerning calls to new ministry - and new types of ministry.

Tuesday, April 21 We give thanks for Presbyterian World Service & Development partners who are helping marginalized farmers protect and revitalize the soil and cultivate plentiful harvests.

Wednesday, April 22 (Earth Day 50th anniversary) We give thanks for this earth that God has made. Today we pray for the will to make the hard changes required to fulfill our responsibilities as wise and faithful stewards of creation.

Thursday, April 23 We pray for the continued efforts of individuals and communities in responding to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action, which were released in 2015.

Friday, April 24 We pray for guidance for the members of the Women's Missionary Society Council Executive as they meet.

Saturday, April 25 We pray for the Vancouver School of Theology's search for a new Academic Dean.

Sunday, April 26 We pray for those suffering from various physical and mental issues that are being sidelined in this times.

⁹ Angela Ashwin. *The Book of a Thousand Prayers*, 1996

Scavenger Hunt

- ☐ Find a street name beginning with 'C'
- How many bus stops can you find? ____
- ☐ A bumper sticker about the environment.
What does it say? _____
- How many electric cars can you find? ____
- ☐ Place(s) to charge an electric car
- ☐ Train Tracks
- ☐ A payphone
- ☐ A park bench
- ☐ A hill to run down
- ☐ A red door
- ☐ A porch or balcony with people on it
- ☐ A clock outdoors
- ☐ A motorcycle or scooter with two people on it.
- ☐ A bike with more than one person
- ☐ A bike with more or less than two wheels
- ☐ Someone walking a dog.
- ☐ An animal not a dog, car or bird: _____
- ☐ A bird with red
- ☐ A different bird with black
- Flowers of different colours
 - ☐ Red ☐ Orange ☐ Yellow ☐ Pink ☐ Purple ☐ White

Scavenger Hunt-City Search

Can you find all 20?

			
pigeon	bicycle	no parking sign	bus
			
taxi	person wearing sunglasses	stroller	tree
			
flowers	police car	construction	fire hydrant
			
fire truck	dog	person wearing a hat	blue car
			
group of 3 people	mail box	ambulance	stop sign

www.thebirdfeednyc.com