



Kensington Presbyterian Church

Community Living

August 30, 2020

WELCOME, during these times of physical isolation 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, or even in small groups outside.

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

Re-opening the Church: Session met, prayed & reflected this week on re-opening the building for worship. We decided that while not meeting physically is hard, we are concerned about expanding community interactions with schools reopening and the increase of cases in Europe (who's school return ahead of ours). We are continuing to monitor the situation and prepare for our return.

Visiting: In the mean time, if you would like to talk or have a physical distance visit (we can bring a chair and sit at the end of the sidewalk or outside your window), please contact your elder or your elder.

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

Contacts

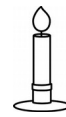
Church Office: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Kris Epps (music).....Kris@Kensingtonchurch.ca

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



Approaching God

Prelude: Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, I. Allegro.....Bach
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz_KFLHjquc



lighting the candle

Jésus Chris est la lumière du monde.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world.



Call to worship²

Let us worship the eternal God,
the source of love and life, who creates us.

**Let us worship Jesus Christ,
the risen one, who lives among us.**

Let us worship the Spirit,
the holy fire, who renews us.

**To the one true God be praise
in all times and places,
through the grace of Jesus Christ.**



Prayer of adoration³

Loving God, we have gathered to meet you.

**We have come to listen to you,
to seek you, to worship you.**

You are the beginning of all things,
the life of all things; you knew us before we were born.

In you we become; in you we live.

Loving God, you are here and everywhere,
around us and within us; you know our inmost thoughts.

In you we hope; in you we live.

You are the source of serenity,
giving peace that is beyond our understanding.

² Worship Sourcebook 1.2.26

³ Worship Sourcebook 1.4.16

In you we are still; in you we live.

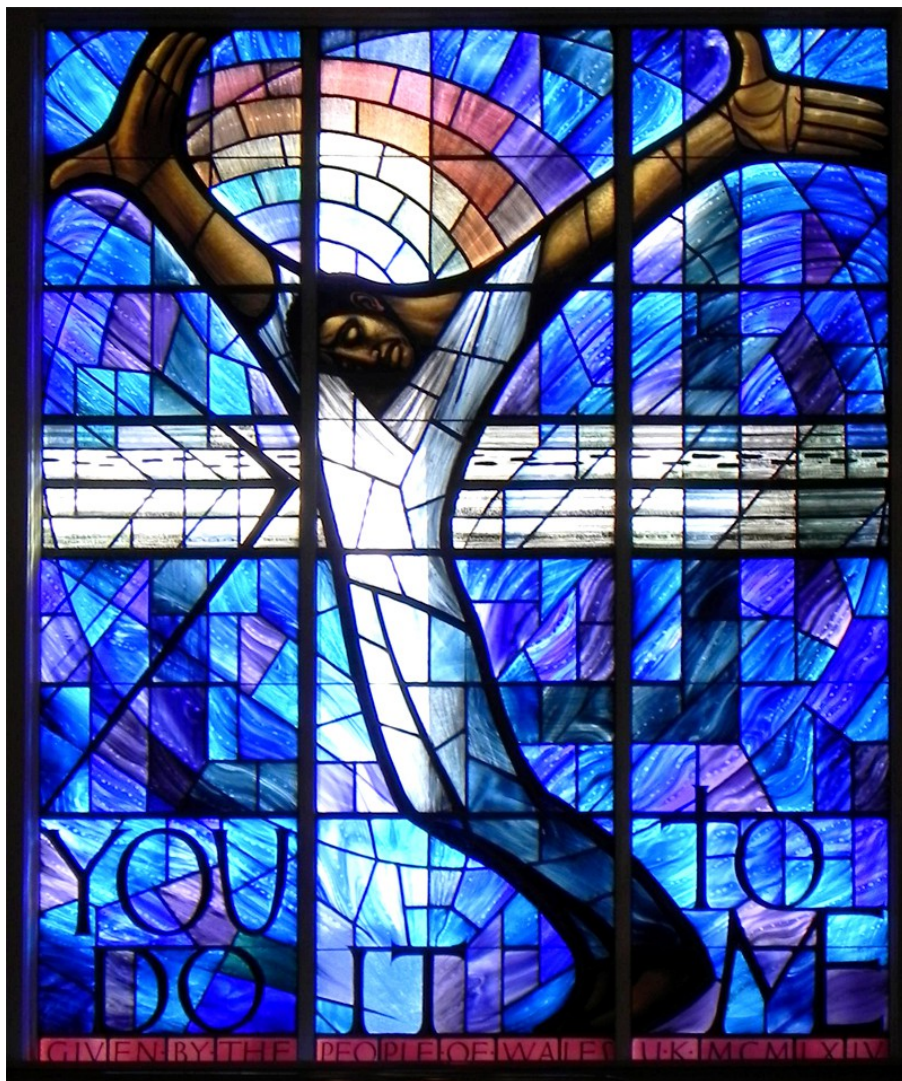
Loving God, we live in you;

we worship you.


Loving God, you live in us;

we worship you.

Amen.



Christ Crucified - J Petts, from Art in the Christian Tradition

 Prayer of confession⁴

Merciful God,

we confess that we have sinned against you

in thought, word, and deed,

by what we have done,

and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you

with our whole heart and mind and strength.

We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.

In your mercy forgive what we have been,

help us change what we are,

and direct what we shall be,

so that we may delight in your will

and walk in your ways,

to the glory of your holy name.

Through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Assurance of Pardon


In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus,

we are assured that there is no sin so terrible

that God cannot forgive,

no hurt so terrible that God cannot heal.

God accepts, God forgives, and God sets free.

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

As we turn towards God, we pray the prayer Jesus 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.

♪ Hymn: Jesus calls us here.....pg 9
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ModYoPReYYw>



Listening to God



Prayer⁵

Dear God,
help us turn our hearts to you
and hear what you will speak,
for you speak peace to your people
through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

Intro to the readings

- A small detail: Peter is going to ask Jesus if he is to forgive 7 times. Seven is a number that represents perfection (7 days of creation)... so Peter is asking less about forgiving 7 times and more about forgiving perfectly.
- Have you seen Jesus' instructions carried out well?

⁵ based on Psalm 85:8



Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,⁶ or click on the name to be taken to an online version (NRSV).

[Psalm 119: 33-40](#)

[Matthew 18: 15-22](#)

Sermon: Community Living

Dear Lord, please bless these words
and the meditations of our hearts.⁷ Amen.

I remember when one of the congregations I went to adopted a new logo. It was a nice drawing of the building with families flocking to the doors, children holding balloons with some joyous water colours.

It was very pleasant, and I didn't like it. One of my objections was that it was too detailed for a logo. My bigger objection was that it looked like a rural church when it was actually located downtown.

I don't think Matthew would have liked it either, although for different reasons. A big theme in this gospel account is Jesus bringing God's blessing and help to the who need it. Remember the start of Jesus' first teaching time? "*Blessed are the poor in spirit... Blessed are those who mourn... Blessed are the meek... Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness...*"⁸ These people aren't visible in this vision of the congregation.

And while Matthew may understand that it's a hopeful picture showing the joy in gathering at the church, he might feel it's dishonest. Today's passage is part of Jesus' fourth teaching time in this Gospel, and this section is about living in community - and it's honest about how we don't always live well together.

⁶ 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

⁷ Psalm 19:14

⁸ [Matthew 5](#)

Like many sections of Matthew, it's a mix of comforting and challenging words. Just before our passage starts is the parable in which the shepherd leaves the 99 sheep to go and look for the lost one - and celebrates the successful search. It's comforting to know that when we wander from the path, we won't be left behind... and then there's today's passage about how if a member of the church refuses to listen when their sin is pointed out, they can get kicked out.



The church word for that is excommunication, and it was new for Christians. In the Older Testament it never happened. You couldn't stop being a Jew. That said, they did have lots of laws that now fall under civil and criminal jurisdiction... and they would remove people from society by locking them up. Being a Christian was a choice - a choice that impacted your life in all ways. Reading through Paul's letters to the early churches, we come across all sorts of references to early fights and bad behaviour... sins among Christians. Paul also writes about the church being a body with many different members, all of which are essential.⁹ I find this adds depth to the idea of telling somebody to leave the church. For Paul excommunicating someone would be like telling your hand to leave your body because it causes you to sin... or taking out your eye because it causes you to sin.

Which is actually what Jesus says earlier in this teaching time. *"...if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is*

*better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire."*¹⁰ Matthew doesn't pull any punches.

Life's a little different now. Most churches in North America are finding it hard to get people to stay, they don't need to drive them out for making mistakes. We also live in a world where values change to suite the individual's needs.

For those congregations who are growing, one tendency is that they have found a way to meet a need. In some cases it's providing a peaceful place in a hectic life to meet God; or to share God's joy & compassion through music, or other basic needs such as food and shelter. In some cases congregations attract people because they anchor life with a clear cut definition of right and wrong.

I remember being at a lecture with a famous preacher and writer: Barbara Brown Taylor. Someone asked what she thought of mega churches. Her answer was that there was obviously something going and perhaps we should pay attention. She didn't speculate at what, or criticize them. It's dangerous to generalize, but I wonder if their attraction is that clear definition of right and wrong. We can criticize them for seeing the world as black & white, but as we find in today's passage, it's important to talk about right and wrong. It's important to acknowledge sin - and point it out.

I came across a quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer this week. He's one of the ministers who was willing to stand up to Hitler, and died because of it. He wrote that the good news of Jesus is nothing without calling sin sin - without saying a sinner is guilty.

Sin exists. It is bad. It's destructive to individuals and communities.

What is sin? It's when we do something that harms our relationship with God or creation. To borrow from Jesus' words

9 1 Corinthians 12: 12-26

10 Matthew 5: 9

in a few chapters, Sin is when we don't "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." ... And... love your neighbour as yourself."¹¹

This can come out in how we treat the environment, and what we chose to support with our shopping, and how we respond to the needs of others. It can come out in how we spend our time and how we pray to God.

But I'm not going to wallow in our sins. We all sin. The question is, what do we do about it.

What do you tend to do if you notice someone behaving in a way that isn't good? Do you turn away? Do you complain to someone else? Do you take them aside for a quiet word?

That's the advice Jesus gives here - talk to them quietly on the side. It's a technique recommended to teachers. We separate the student from the class by 'inviting' them into the hall. We stand in the doorway so that we are seen, but they don't have an audience. It means two things. They don't have an audience to play to, and they can save face.

If that doesn't work, Jesus advises us to bring some others to witness the conversation... and if they refuse to listen, then the church is told and the sinner can be kicked out.

This is harsh... and odd. Back in chapter 5 we are told to love our enemy¹². Jesus tells several parables about how the good and the evil will not be separated until the final judgment. We are also told not to judge others. Jesus even suggests we worry about the log in our own eye before trying to get the speck out of another's.¹³ Yet here we are encouraged to point out that speck, and it seems we are even to judge and separate.

It's odd.

¹¹ Matthew 22: 37-40

¹² Matthew 5: 44

¹³ Matthew 7:1-59

Perhaps the last two verses Anne read helps. Peter asks if perfect forgiveness is expected from him... and Jesus says, "oh yes - keep forgiving. Aim for perfection."

But in the start of our reading the person refuses to acknowledge their sin. They don't ask for forgiveness. They don't repent.

Which is something else Bonhoeffer wrote was important to talk about - repenting.

We all sin. Earlier in this chapter Jesus focuses on the need for us to deal with our own sins. Something we sometimes realize, and sometimes don't. This is where a friendly reminder can be helpful - one that is given by somebody who realizes that they are also a sinner. And hopefully pride and other barriers don't get in the way of wanting forgiveness... and receiving it.

and in doing this, we can all see the Kingdom of God.

In the name of God in Community, Holy in One,
Amen.



Harron, Maurice. Hands Across the Divide, from Art in the Christian Tradition

♪ musical moment: Lyric Pieces, Op. 68: #5 Cradle Song.....Grieg
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bF2rbb8hVGU>



Responding to God

FaithTalk

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

Wonder: How would you describe "sin"?

Values: How 'black and white' do you feel the world to be?

Memories: Can you remember a time when Jesus' advice was done well?

Share a good example of somebody (yourself?) pointing out somebody's sin to them.

Actions: Pick something that you have done that hurt your relationship with God, a person, or creation. Ask for forgiveness and try to change so that it doesn't happen again. You could even ask somebody (and God) to tell you if you step back.

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.

You can now donate through **interac e-transfer**. Our name is [Kensington Presbyterian Church](#) and the e-mail address is info@kensingtonchurch.ca.

Mailing a cheque or signing up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) are also good options.

♪ **Anthem:** Ubi Caritas..... Gjeilo
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxu7XuEI9g>

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

- healing: relationships
 - & community
 - healing of the body
- Jesus, you are the way of life, ...

Healing Spirit,

receive our prayer.

Living God, who we can only start to describe as the Parent who gave birth to all we know, and the loving Son who serves, and the Spirit who flows in all things... Holy and One; you know so much about healthy relationships, and are trying to bring healing to all the broken ones.

Jesus, our great physician, we thank you for the wonder of our bodies and minds. For all the things there amazing complexity can do when they are healthy.

Please bring healing and peace to those whose bodies or minds are out of sorts - whose bodies are not working in their proper relationships. . .

Healing Spirit,

receive our prayer.

Lord of lords, you created us to live in communities - forming nations, cities, churches, having neighbours, and families. We thank you for this... but it can also be tough.

We pray for the healing of relationships between countries, such as Israel and Palestine, and South & North Korea. We pray for the relationships between different groups of peoples: that all people will be valued as important parts of our body. We pray

that when we notice something that is hurting relationship
that we will find a way to point this out, and that it will
change. May your Spirit help us to be your voice of healing. . .
Healing Spirit,
receive our prayer.

O Creator, we thank you for the beauty of the world and how that
relationship nourishes us, but we can also hurt each other.
We pray for those who are in the path of storms, such as Japan,
and for the environment that suffers from us. . .
Healing Spirit,
receive our prayer.

In Jesus name
Amen.

♪ Hymn: Lord, speak to me¹⁴pg 8
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjsTjPn1GOI>

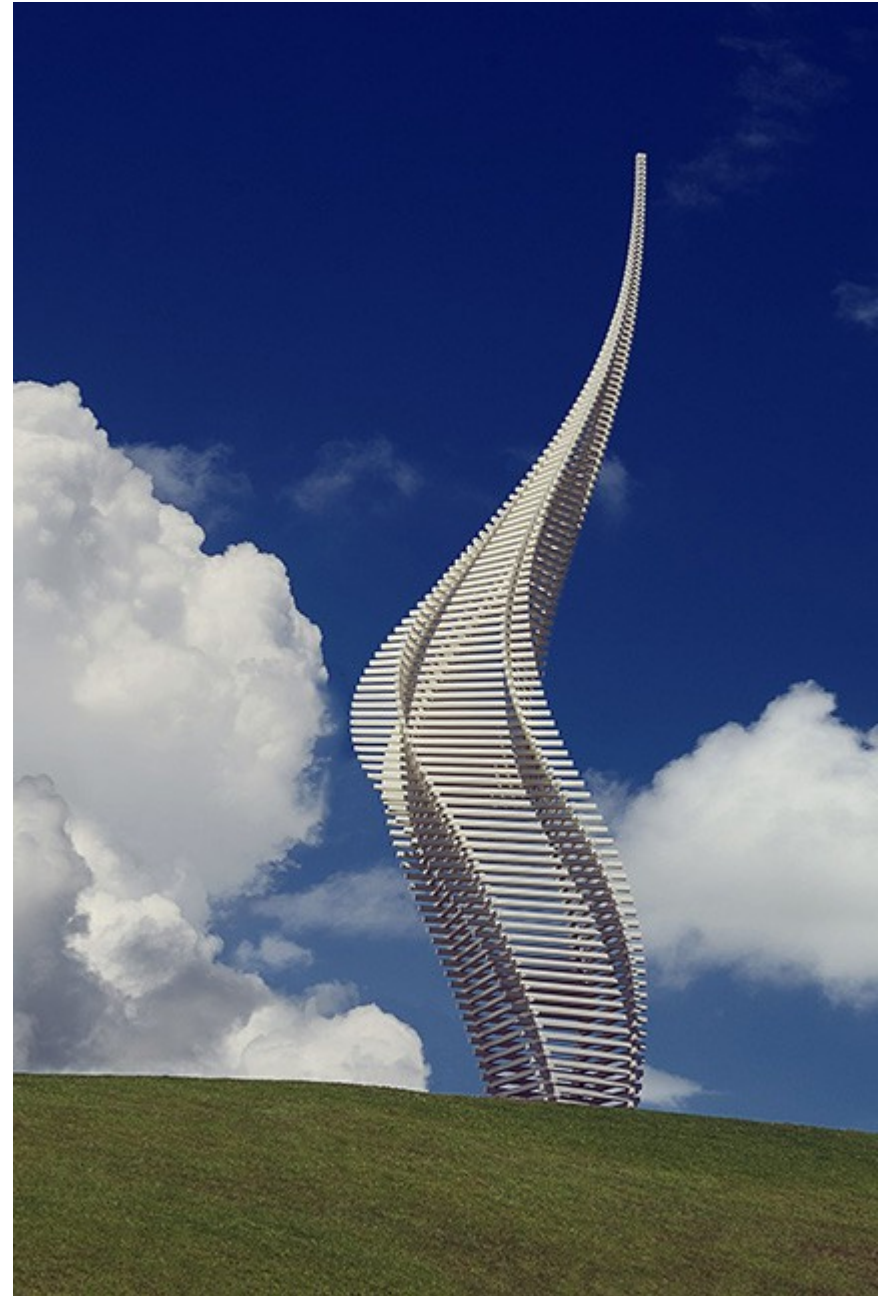
Sending & Benediction

*May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you as you go from this holy time.*

postlude: Bridge Over Troubled Water.....Simon & Garfunkel
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G-YQA_bsOU



¹⁴ Here's a wee lecture about the hymn
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FT-DotPCK4>



Jacob's Ladder - G Judah

World Literacy Day (September 8)

In Afghanistan, cultural norms dictate that men often play a more central role in public life, while women and girls have more significant roles in the home. Because of this, many girls do not have equal access to education.



Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D), with the support of local partners, has been working to provide girls with access to high quality education. Through summer camps, girls are informed about human rights, gender, sex, and leadership and democracy. Sadaf and Nargi participated in this summer camp, where they were inspired and excited about the great things they could achieve in the future. For the two girls, access to fair and equal education is vital for their goals and dreams; it is also essential to allow their communities to flourish.

PWS&D supports equal education

DAILY PRAYERS

Monday, September 7 We pray for members of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee as they meet this month to further our relationships with others.

Tuesday, September 8 (World Literacy Day) We give thanks for a Presbyterian World Service & Development program that is ensuring girls in Afghanistan have access to quality education.

Wednesday, September 9 We pray for all of the students attending our theological colleges who are beginning or resuming their studies in September. May they be enriched and challenged through their studies.

Thursday, September 10 We pray for an end to forced child labour and that the efforts of those who promote Fair Trade products across many industries can be supported and strengthened.

Friday, September 11 We pray for the Rev. Fr. Martin Kalimbe, Executive Director of Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), as he provides leadership.

Saturday, September 12 We pray for the network of coaches serving in congregational renewal and church planting support programs.

767

Lord, speak to me

WINS COTT 8 8 8 8 LM

Chords: F, C7, Dm, Bb6, C, C7/E, F, C7/E, F, Bb6, F/A, C7/G, F, C, Am, Bb, Cm6, Gm/D sus2-1, D/F#

1. Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in liv - ing
 2. Oh lead me, Lord, that I may lead the wan - dering
 3. Oh teach me, Lord, that I may teach the pre - cious
 4. Oh fill me with your full - ness, Lord, un - til my
 5. Oh use me, Lord, use e - ven me just as you

ech - oes of your tone; as you have sought, so
 and the wa - vering feet; oh feed me, Lord, that
 truths that you im - part, and wing my words, that
 heart shall o - ver - flow in kin - dling thought and
 will, and when, and where, un - til at last your

let me seek your err - ing chil - dren lost and lone.
 I may feed your hun - gery ones with man - na sweet.
 they may reach the hid - den depths of man - y a heart.
 glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.
 face I see, your rest, your joy, your glo - ry share.

Words: Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879) Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

Jesus calls us here to meet him

JESUS CALLS US 8 7 8 7 D

Union F Cm7 F/A Bb6 Am7

1. Je - sus calls us here to meet him as, through
 2. Je - sus calls us to con - fess him Word of
 3. Je - sus calls us to each oth - er: found in
 4. Je - sus calls us to his ta - ble root - ed

Dm Gm7 Csus4 - 3 F Gm7

word and song and prayer, we af - firm God's
 Life and Lord of all, shar - er of our
 him are no di - vides. Race and class and
 firm in time and space, where the church in

F/C Bb6 Am7 Dm Gm7 Csus4 - 3

prom - ised pres - ence where his peo - ple live and care.
 flesh and frail - ness sav - ing all who fail or fall.
 sex and lan - guage: such are bar - riers he de - rides.
 earth and heav - en finds a com - mon meet - ing place.

F Cm F Dm Bb6

Praise the God who keeps his* prom - ise; praise the
 Tell his ho - ly hu - man sto - ry; tell his
 Join the hands of friend and strang - er; join the
 Share the bread and wine, his bod - y; share the

Am7 Gm7 Csus4 - 3 F Gm7

Son who calls us friends; praise the Spir - it
 tales that all may hear; tell the world that
 hands of age and youth; join the faith - ful
 love of which we sing; share the feast for

F/A Bb6 Am7 Dm Gm7 F

who, a - mong us, to our hopes and fears at - tends.
 Christ in glo - ry came to earth to meet us here.
 and the doubt - er in their com - mon search for truth.
 saints and sin - ners host - ed by our Lord and King.

* the

Words: Iona Community (Scotland) Music: Gaelic melody; adaptation, Iona Community (Scotland)

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