



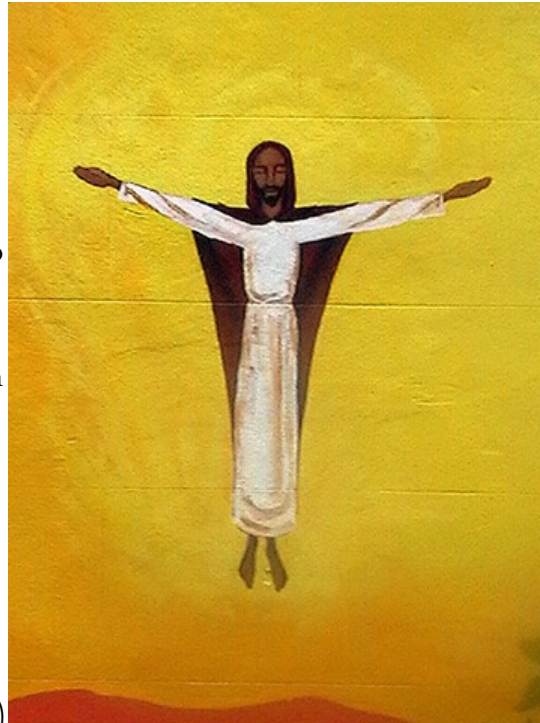
Kensington Presbyterian Church

Apocalyptic Hope

November 29, 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)



Ascension - Graffiti in Bristol

Contacts

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Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Kris Epps (music).....Kris@Kensingtonchurch.ca

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

Announcements

Communion: All who want to know Jesus more are invited to join us for the Lord's Supper next week (through Zoom). You are invited to provide your own bread and juice/wine.

Visiting: The government considers ministers to be essential workers. If you need a visit, please contact Rev. Peter.

St. Thomas' NDG - Speaker Series: The Importance of Wills & Testaments in Québec. given by a notary and a lawyer.

Nov. 30 at 6 p.m.

[https://concordia-ca.zoom.us/j/81760296833?](https://concordia-ca.zoom.us/j/81760296833?pwd=R2k5UlhNdWVIREtBZ1ZPM0hCSG5Xdz09)

[pwd=R2k5UlhNdWVIREtBZ1ZPM0hCSG5Xdz09](https://concordia-ca.zoom.us/j/81760296833?pwd=R2k5UlhNdWVIREtBZ1ZPM0hCSG5Xdz09)

Meeting ID: 817 6029 6833

Passcode: 353902

Prayer Group: will be meeting through Zoom on Wed. at 11:30 a.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?pwd=dkhMck1ZRxBKTmdvK2VsaHRIOFF1UT09)

[pwd=dkhMck1ZRxBKTmdvK2VsaHRIOFF1UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?pwd=dkhMck1ZRxBKTmdvK2VsaHRIOFF1UT09)

or phone: 438-809-7799

Meeting ID: 782 6690 4325

Passcode: 7864826

Book Club: is next reading *The Fault in our stars*. The introductory meeting is Dec 2. Please contact Antoinette for details.

Movie Time: Join Antoinette Dec. 12 for *Arthur's Christmas* over Zoom.

Re-opening the Church: Session will consider when to reopen the building after Montréal is no longer a 'red zone'. In the mean time, we are continuing to improve our facilities.

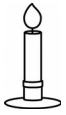
Please continue to check out the website

<https://kensingtonchurch.ca/>

or facebook <https://www.facebook.com/KensingtonChurchNDG/>



Approaching God



lighting the candle

Jésus Chris est la lumière du monde.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world.



Call to worship²

The season of Advent begins, and we celebrate the hope we find
in the good news of the Gospel.

**Through the birth
of a tiny and helpless child,
God comes to save the world.**

While we watch and wait for Jesus,
we join God's mission by bringing grace and mercy
to those who need it most.

**We engage the poor and the poor in spirit,
letting Christ's light shine through us.**

We speak words of comfort and love
to a world in need of hope and healing
as we share our stories of God's transforming Spirit.

Together, we are a sign of God's hope for the world.



Prayer of Adoration³

**God of surprising grace,
when we least expect it
you bring fresh new life;
and where we feel that all is lost,
you bring redemption.**

**Give us courage as we share
all you have done,**

**all you are doing,
and all you will accomplish
through Jesus Christ. Amen.**



Hymn: He came down that we might have **hope**.....pg 9
<https://youtu.be/3WhJ95xYjBE?t=1653> (they don't sing 'hope',
but it gives you an idea.)



Prayer of Confession

Give us your ear, our Shepherd, our Lord.

Restore us, O God;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

We confess that there are many ways that we have let you down.
Times when we have focused on the negatives,
without looking for your light.

Times when we have followed our desires,
and not your guiding.

Times when we have hurt instead of loved
each other & creation.

Restore us, O God;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Jesus, you are always aware,
help us to accept your Spirit,
with the forgiveness and direction she brings.

Restore us, O God;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Amen.



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

Let us join with Christians throughout the world in praying...

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

² provided by Presbyterian World Service & Development

³ provided by Presbyterian World Service & Development

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: Come thou long expected Jesus.....pg 9
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dmO8UPIWoo>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkZFhzNbp8k>
 (interesting setting)



Listening to God



Prayer

O God, our beginning and end,
 by whose command time runs its course:
 bless our impatience,
 perfect our faith,
 and, while we wait the fulfillment of your promises,
 grant us hope in your Word.
 Amen.⁴

Intro to the readings

- The theme for the first Sunday in Advent is Hope. What

⁴ adapted from Worship Sourcebook D.3.1.6

hope do you find in these passages offered by the lectionary?



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

[Psalm 80](#): 1-7, 17-19

[1 Corinthians 1](#): 3-9

[Mark 13](#): 24-37

Sermon: Apocalyptic Hope

Dear Lord, please bless these words
 and the meditations of our hearts.⁵ Amen.



Things were not going well in the world. A few years before
 there had been a huge fire in Rome, and Nero had the Christians
 blamed. This led to round-ups with beatings and death. Back in
 Jerusalem some of the temple guard had had enough of the
 Romans. They burned down the records of public debt and killed
 the Roman garrison - after their surrender. Rome sent the army
 in to put down these terrorists/freedom fighters. This would lead

⁵ Psalm 19:14

to the destruction of much of the city, including the Temple. All this on top of the usual plagues with high mortality, oppression of the masses, crop issues, etc. etc.

This was the world as Mark wrote this Gospel, and the world of those originally hearing it.

Things were not going well in the world.

They were probably singing psalms like the one we heard today. *“Stir up your might and save us! Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.”*

They would have been looking for hope.

How about you?

We aren't living in the middle of an open conflict with an army, but we are under attack. Worse than an army at the gate, we've got an unseen enemy stalking us. Somebody may be an agent without even knowing it. More people are getting inflected all the time. This microscopic virus is affecting jobs, relationships, mental health. And then there's all the other issues life brings.

Do you find yourself looking for hope?

One of the places Mark's original audience found hope was in apocalyptic literature.

Generally speaking, when we think of the Apocalypse we think of mass destruction. God, or a big asteroid, coming directly on the scene and either destroying all the dominant bad guys, or simply everything.

and destruction of annoying things can be satisfying. My kids will sometimes throw something across the room when they are frustrated. Perhaps you can relate?

I've had a number of cars, and I've learned some things. Did you know you can donate cars to the Fire Department for them to practice on? Have you ever had a car that you wished would depart this earth in a fiery, yet helpful, blaze?

But destruction can also be sad - something the recent apocalyptic TV show “*Good Omens*” brings to the front. In the story the angel that guarded the Garden of Eden and the tempter that got Eve to pluck the apple have both been hanging around the Earth ever since. Over time they have grown rather fond of it and they try to avert the Apocalypse - against the will of their bosses in Heaven and Hell. God's will is a bit more of a mystery.

The angel and demon enjoy good food, books, cars, and each other's company. They don't want it to end. I imagine if you were told there was only one week left you might also feel a little down and start thinking of all the good things you still want to do.

Mark's audience is looking for hope, and he includes the apocalypse. Is talking about the sun being darkened a way to give hope?

Yes, if we pay attention and don't get carried away with our Hollywood stereotypes.

Sure, Mark mentions falling stars, but there's no big asteroids hitting the earth. This could be more like the Leonid meteor shower that just happened - heavenly fireworks.

Yes, *“the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light”* - but that doesn't mean that they are destroyed. Another passage that says this is in Isaiah 60:19,

*The sun shall no longer be
your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon
give light to you by night;*

*but the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory.*

Isaiah's clue as to what's happening - the sun and the moon won't light our way because we'll be seeing by the light of God. This also shows up in the ultimate apocalyptic book, Revelation (22:5) where the city doesn't need the sun because God is the everlasting light. Looking at it another way, have you ever gone to the bathroom at night barely seeing things. Then you turn on the light and can't see anything. It's not that the other lights disappeared, they are just pale in comparison.

I wonder what Mark would have written for us? In the city our days and nights are easily lit without the sun and the moon... when there's no power failure. Perhaps he'd have to add something like this, 'The Sun and moon won't be needed - not even electricity - because when the source of all power comes we won't need any other.'

Not only does Mark not have destruction, but this apocalyptic vision is about a new season - new life. The Fig tree is budding. For those around the Mediterranean this is one of the first signs of spring. While we're just heading into winter but I'm sure you can remember what it's like to see those first buds and realize summer is coming. I like winter, but those buds gives me hope.

Now for us in Montreal, he might have used Road construction as an image - think the Turcot Interchange.



There's going to come a time when your paths will be dashed and the high roads will be brought low; when bridges will be demolished. You will lose your sense of direction and there will be fights in the car about how to journey. The birth of this new way happen in unexpected ways - and it will be painful. And you need to be watchful. Don't drive on autopilot. The route is always changing. Should you find that the lane you want is closed, don't stop, keep moving and looking for a way. You never know when the route will be clear or the project finished - but it will be. There will be clear routes with signs. It will be safer.

When, oh when will it be done?

With the Turcot, next spring.

With Jesus coming again? No-one knows, so carry on working - and pay attention!

Does that help you see the hope in Mark's Apocalyptic writing?

and in finding that hope, is it more than just some academic reflection on those first listeners.

Do you find hope?

If you find it hard to find in an apocalyptic future, how about in the past? Paul's letter to the church in Corinth gives us an important reminder that the road-work analogy may not. Jesus has come before and it was good. You (both the church in ancient Corinth and you here and now) have been enriched by Christ and his Spirit. Jesus will strengthen you. God is faithful.



At the risk of putting too many endings on this sermon, I'd like to read you the lyrics of a very new hymn.

*There's trouble all around; it's hard for us to bear!
O God of love, there's so much sadness everywhere.
We hear the daily toll of people who have died;
we see what comes when hate and fear are amplified.*

*We thank you, God, for faith that says that it's o.k.
to cry out as the Psalmist cried out, when we pray.
We thank you that in times when everything goes wrong,
we're once again reminded that your love is strong.*

*We thank you, God, for hope that daily sees us through –
and for the gift of Jesus Christ who makes us new.
We thank you, too, for hope that truth and science bring.
The time will come when, once again, we'll laugh and sing.*

*We thank you, God, for love, for kindness and for smiles,
for friends and loved ones reaching out across the miles,
and for your Spirit's gifts that help us through these days.
God, may we know these blessings and give thanks and praise.*

There are things not going well in the world, but God is active in it. It's likely to get worse as God's Kingdom is being born... but it will also be so full of love afterwards. In the meantime, "Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved."

*In the name of God the Creator, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*



Responding to God

♪ musical reflection: Glow.....Eric Whitacre
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MwDDK3jodw>

FaithTalk

These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies. Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).

Etching: What gives you hope?

Values: What do you want to do before the end of the world?

Values: Read through the lyrics of the last hymn. Which to you appreciate?

Wonder: Why is change painful? Why could God not just 'magic' everything better?

Actions: Adopt a daily advent practice. If you would like a print version, please contact Rev. Peter.

- Biola University has entries with scripture, reflection, art, music, poetry and prayer... every day (it can be kinda long) ccca.biola.edu/advent/
- Pittsburgh Seminary has one you can do online or print off. www.pts.edu/devotional_1
- a short printable one from Luther Seminary www.luthersem.edu/godpause/advent-devotional/
- An online one aimed at youth, but good for all. d365.org

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.

Prayers of the people

We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting because we know who you are:
the Creator of the world,
the God who took on human form,
the son of Mary, an ordinary and extraordinary girl,
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting because we have faith in you.
We know that we can trust you.
We remember that you are good to us,
and we thank you for all the good things
that you give to us every day. . .
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting here,
here on the Island of Montreal and the South Shore,
waiting for you to come into our houses, our streets, our shops
and offices, to fill them with your light and peace. . .
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting for you to come and change things:
to bring health to our sick ones . . .
to make our asylum seekers welcome. . .
to comfort those who have lost loved ones. . .
and to turn us around
so that we can be your hands and feet
your ears and eyes,
in this world that needs you so much.
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.
Amen.⁶

♪ Hymn: This is a new hymn to an old tune with words appropriate to today's scriptures, and our present times.
There's trouble all around.....pg 10
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cf47ROm7w44>

Benediction

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.
Amen.*



Prayer We pray for the COVID-19 projects that Presbyterian World Service & Development supports through the ACT Alliance. We pray that these projects offer relief and hope.

Responding to COVID-19 Globally

As COVID-19 continues to affect people and communities around the world, Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) is responding to some of those most impacted. After initially supporting lifesaving and urgent care projects, PWS&D is now helping provide long-term COVID-19 relief through Canadian Foodgrains Bank and ACT Alliance. Given the enormous risk of food insecurity, food aid is being provided. PWS&D is also helping ensure families have access to clean water and sanitation, and that COVID-19 prevention messages are being shared. Additionally, psychosocial support is being offered to help cope with the effects of the pandemic.



DAILY PRAYERS

Monday, November 30 We pray for congregational treasurers as they work diligently in the responsibilities entrusted to them.

DECEMBER 2020

Tuesday, December 1 (World AIDS Day) We pray for individuals and families around the world affected by HIV and AIDS, and we give thanks for community programs supported by Presbyterian World Service & Development in Malawi working to achieve a world without HIV and AIDS.

Wednesday, December 2 We pray for congregations that face financial constraints due to the pandemic, that they may have the resources needed to continue their ministries.

Thursday, December 3 (International Day for Persons with Disabilities) We pray for a better world that is equitable, sustainable and inclusive, where people with disabilities are respected and their rights are fully realized.

Friday, December 4 We pray for the members of Leading with Care committees in congregations and presbyteries that help to foster climates of safety for all people in the church.

Saturday, December 5 We pray for the ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Western Han-Ca.

We Are Role Models

There is no question how important sexual reproductive health awareness is to help create healthy communities.

In Malawi, topics such as sexually transmitted diseases and other reproductive health questions are often considered taboo.

Thokozani, Peter and Mafuno are peer educators who are challenging the stigma surrounding reproductive health by teaching youth about family planning, preventing teenage pregnancy, HIV testing and accessing contraceptives.

Thokozani, Peter and Mafuno have begun see the impact of their work.

"The participants want to start engaging in better and healthier behaviour," Peter reports. "They are now getting tested and treated for sexually transmitted diseases."

The three educators also realize their roles are much bigger than just teaching, "we are role models to these people," Mafuno shares proudly.

This Advent season help us support community volunteers as they educate and empower young people on important health issues.

WeRespond.ca



 **Presbyterian
World Service
& Development**

The development and relief agency
of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

HE CAME DOWN

He came down that we may have love;
 came down that we may have love; he came down that we may
 have love; hal-le-lu-jah for ev-er-more.

Chords: G, D7, G, G7, C, Cm6, G/D, D7, G Cantor

- 1 He came down that we may have love;
 he came down that we may have love;
 he came down that we may have love,
 hallelujah for evermore.
 CANTOR: (Why did he come?)
 (repeat verse)
- 2 He came down that we may have peace;
 he came down that we may have peace;
 he came down that we may have peace,
 hallelujah for evermore.
- 3 He came down that we may have joy;
 he came down that we may have joy;
 he came down that we may have joy;
 hallelujah for evermore.

This song is sung at a moderate speed and, at the end of the first singing of each verse, the cantor calls, 'Why did he come?' to encourage the company to repeat what they have sung.

Traditional, from Cameroon

110

Come, thou long-expected Jesus

1. Come, thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy
 from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our

2. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er; born a child and
 born to reign in us for - ev - er; now thy gra - cious

peo - ple free;
 rest in thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion,
 yet a king;
 king - dom bring. By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it

hope of all the earth thou art, dear de - sire of
 rule in all our hearts a - lone; by thine all - suf -

eve - ry na - tion, joy of eve - ry long - ing heart.
 fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

There's Trouble All Around

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2020

Leoni (Traditional Hebrew melody)

1. There's trou - ble all a - round; it's hard for us to bear!
2. We thank you, God, for faith that says that it's o. k.
3. We thank you, God, for hope that dai - ly sees us through—
4. We thank you, God, for love, for kind - ness and for smiles,

O God of love, there's so much sad - ness ev - ery - where.
to cry out as the Psalm - ist cried out, when we pray.
and for the gift of Je - sus Christ who makes us new.
for friends and loved ones reach - ing out a - cross the miles,

We hear the dai - ly toll of peo - ple who have died;
We thank you that in times when ev - ery - thing goes wrong,
We thank you, too, for hope that truth and sci - ence bring.
and for your Spi - rit's gifts that help us through these days.

we see what comes when hate and fear are am - pli - fied.
we're once a - gain re - mind - ed that your love is strong.
The time will come when, once a - gain, we'll laugh and sing.
God, may we know these bless - ings and give thanks and praise.

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