



Presbyterian Church *Commanded love!*

May 9, 2021

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).



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

Announcements

India COVID Crisis: One way to respond is through the Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D). You can find out more here:

presbyterian.ca/pwsd/2021/05/04/india-covid-crisis/
or call 1-800-619-7301

Keeping an Open Heart in Troubled Times: Wed, May 12th 1-3 pm

The Rev. Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger leads a workshop will help you keep your heart open with compassion despite the suffering in and around us. Register online:

vst.edu/event/keeping-an-open-heart-in-troubled-times

Book Study: first Wednesdays of the month at 7:30

The Liturgy of the Ordinary helps you find God in all aspects of life... one chapter a month. You are still welcome to join the group. If you are interested, please contact Ines.Rombeek@gmail.com.

This is also a good activity to invite a friend who is open to the idea of God or curious about what it means to be a Christian.

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

If you would like to pray at a different time, please contact Peter.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?pwd=dkhMck1ZRxBKTmdvK2VsaHRlOFFlUT09)
[pwd=dkhMck1ZRxBKTmdvK2VsaHRlOFFlUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?pwd=dkhMck1ZRxBKTmdvK2VsaHRlOFFlUT09)

or phone: 438-809-7799

Meeting ID: 782 6690 4325

Passcode: 7864826

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

Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca

Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca

Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca



Approaching God



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



Call to worship (Psalm 98)

Sing to the LORD a new song,
 for the Lord has done wonders.

**God's right hand and holy arm
 have brought salvation.**

The LORD has made known the victory over chaos,
and has revealed bounty to the nations.

The Lord has remembered steadfast love and faithfulness
 to the house of Israel.

**All the ends of the earth have seen
 the salvation of our God.**

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

Sing praises to the LORD,
with the guitar and the sound of melody.

With trumpets and the sound of dancing feet
make a joyful noise before the Sovereign LORD.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
 the whole world and those who live in it.

**Let the rivers clap hands;
 let the hills sing together joyfully
 at the presence of the LORD,
 who is coming to judge the earth.**

**The Lord will judge the world with justice,
 and peoples righteously.**

Let us worship our LORD.

♪ Hymn: Love divine.....pg 9 (371)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=BF8jG9U3r5w



Prayer of Approach

Our Father,

Our Mother,

We come to you because you love us.

Seeing your love for the world

in how you are always leading us to a better way.

Seeing your love for us

in how you are always there to turn to.

In the shadow of your love

we are both comforted

and uncomfortable.

**We know that you want us to love as you do,
 but we don't.**

We hold back

because loving may take us on a new journey.

We hold back because we're exhausted

because we try to do it without you.

and sometimes we actively don't love,

**disobeying your commandments to respect and care for
 others and the world.**

Please forgive us. . .

As your Spirit helps us know your love,

may we also know your forgiveness.

May our lives shine with your love,

helping light up the world.

In Jesus name

Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Here the Good News

“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish but may have eternal life.
Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world
to condemn the world,
but in order that the world might be saved through him.”²

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace

Amen.

♪ Hymn: Sing a new song.....pg 10 (422)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=VfM88nE2Jzc



Listening to God

🧎 Prayer for Illumination

God of life,
your Spirit raised Jesus from dead.
Your Spirit inspired the prophets and writers of Scripture.
Your Spirit draws us to Christ
and helps us to acknowledge him as Lord.

We ask that you will send your Spirit now
to give us deeper insight, encouragement, faith, and hope
through the proclamation of the Easter gospel.

Amen.³

✨ Intro to the readings

- Today we had our psalm passage as the ‘Call to worship’. It’s interesting that sometimes we forget the call to celebrate with a new song. What new song shall Kensington sing now? What

new song does your life sing?

- The Gospel passage continues Jesus’ farewell speech the disciples as he continues to offer them hope and a vision through the trials ahead.
- The passage from Acts is in the middle of a long one. It starts at the beginning of Chapter 10 and continues through 11. In this section Peter’s sermon is cut sort by something happening. Is it the right way to do things? Who should be included?



Tim Steward, *Open Heaven*, 2005

Open Heaven - Stewart

² John 3: 16-17

³ Worship Sourcebook N.3.1.1



Reading: Please look up the passages in your own

Bible,⁴ or click on the name to be taken to an online version (NRSV).

[John 15](#): 8-17

[Acts 10](#): 44-48



Sermon: Command: love!

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

Love.

How would you describe it?

I suppose to start - it's a feeling, or a collection of feelings. There's the warmth you feel from being in love, or receiving love. There's desire to spend time with your love. There can be confusion early on, but it grows into assurance as you learn to trust your love. The notion of love as a feeling is all around us; in the songs we hear, the TV we watch, the books we read,

So, what are we supposed to do with Jesus saying, "*This is my commandment, that you love one another*"? Can you be commanded to feel a certain way?

Imagine two squabbling siblings. They are yelling. Perhaps each trying to pull a doll away from the other by the hair - or perhaps pulling each other's hair out. Imagine telling them to, "Stop! You must love each other." This might remind them that they should love, but does telling them make them feel it?

Probably not, but it might get them to stop and try acting like it anyway.

⁴ 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

⁵ Psalm 19:14

And this might be where the command from God to love comes in. But I think there's a miscommunication, or mistranslation, going on.

An example of what I'm thinking of comes from the Apostle's Creed. When I first learned it we said that Jesus "*descended to hell*." Now "*he descended to the dead*." What's with the change? Hell conjures up pictures of fire and brimstone with devils torturing the souls of evil people. This relates to the to a concept/place called *Ghenna*, but the Apostle's Creed is referring to *Sheol*. This is a different vision. It's just the place where the dead go, bad and good. There's no judgment. Recent translators feel that saying 'hell' is misleading.⁶

I suspect we have a similar issue with 'commandments'. We think of a command as a rule that must be followed to the letter. What if we've got the understanding slightly wrong. What if when Jesus says, "*If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love*" it's not a threat about following a list of rules or fail to earn God's love. What if it's a description of what it's like to live (abide) in God's love?

There's lots of rules in the Bible. The most famous collection is the 10 Commandments. What if we look at them as descriptions of living in love? Going through them in reverse order:

- don't get obsessed with wanting what somebody else has, because that's going to build a wall for love
- don't commit adultery, because that will hurt people. It's not what love looks like.
- don't lie,

⁶ for a longer answer, see the notes from the translators: www.englishtexts.org/the-apostles-creed

because that betrays people. It's not what love looks like.

- don't steal,
again, betrayal & hurt.... not love
- don't murder... more hurt and betrayal - not love.
- honour your mother and father,
because that is what love looks like.
- take the Sabbath for yourself and others,
because times of work & rest are what love looks like.
- Use the name of God appropriately,
because respect is what love looks like.
- don't make images of God,
because limiting God to an image is not what love is.
- don't have anything more important than God,
because that's just a pale reflection of love.

Does that help? They're not a list of ten rules to an end, but a description of what love looks like; a model for how to live love.



The Ten Commandments - Jen Norton

When Jesus is asked what the greatest commandment is, the answer comes from the Older Testament⁷. Jews call this the *Shema* and many have a version on the door of their house. The reply with Jesus is, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.*”⁸

Again, connecting the commandments to love.

This suggests that love isn't about a feeling. Yes, there are feelings with love, but that's not what it is. It's about beautiful relationships.

I'm reminded of *Fiddler on the Roof*. While I haven't seen the movie, we listened to the record a lot while I was growing up. There's a song in which the father in the story asks his wife, “Do you love me?” She reflects that they've been working and living together for 25 years - and now he asks. He reflects back that the first time they met was their wedding night. They were both shy and scared. He'd been told by his parents that they would learn to love each other, and now he's asking. They decide that yes, they do love each other. That their love grew out of their actions together.

So how do we love? How do we keep Christ's commandment that we love God and one another?

The Bible has many ideas on how to love God. We can see that in the 10 Commandments, and in how Jesus lived - and loved. We covered several ideas on how to love God last week.⁹

The same is true for loving others.

Now this can get into the question of who are these others that we are to love. In response Jesus told the story about

⁷ Deuteronomy 6:4 and Leviticus 19:18

⁸ Luke 10: 25-28, Mark 12: 28-31, Matthew 22: 35-40

⁹ kensingtonchurch.ca/covid-opportunities/ - see May 2

someone being helped out by the least likely person imaginable. Basically, we are to love the expected people, and the unexpected. People we agree with, and those we don't.

Which isn't to say we agree and support everything someone says or does. As a teacher and as a parent I've told kids that I care about them, but that what they did was not appropriate. Which is like the commandments telling us what is appropriate, loving, behaviour.

Which leads us to loving like the Commandments suggest - or taking the short cut and loving as Jesus loves.

Which is pretty tough. Jesus was prepared to give up a regular life and family to show love. He was prepared to die to show love. If that seems hard to follow, remember also that God knows you better than your parents, or teachers, or other lovers - better than you know yourself. God chose you before you chose God because God loves you.

So love God
and love others.

Love as God commands. Love is about actions. Love is about relationships. Love others for who they are (children of God), and love yourself for what makes you valuable (a child of God).

As we heard in the gospel reading, "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete."

In the name of God: Creator, Son & Spirit - Holy and One.
Amen.



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: This is my commandment.....pg 11 (694)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=G76qx0caWsM

FaithTalk

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

Wonder: How would you describe love?

Memories: Share some moments when you have witnessed love.

Etching: Share an example of when you experienced love from someone, and when you experienced love from God.

Values: If love is the greatest thing, how do we live it? How could we help our society to live it?

Actions: ...

Spirit Sighting

This week a member of the congregation was out walking with a friend, a non-church goer. Suddenly her friend crossed the road over to a young woman crouched at some bike racks. On joining them she realized that the young woman was crying and her friend had noticed and acted - going over to a stranger to see if she could help. The young woman was able to share how a stranger had just treated her badly, but felt better at having other strangers show her love.

This strikes me as a great example of the passages from John and Acts - showing love for others, and God's Spirit at work in and through 'others'. Where are you seeing love?



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

Our prayer today will have pauses for you to insert prayers that the Holy Spirit is stirring in your heart and mind. Praying these gratitudes and concerns is an act of love.

Each section will end with:

God of love,

hear our prayer.

Dear God,

The only way we come close to describing you is through the Trinity - the way love flows freely between Jesus and the Spirit and King, who is more like a parent.

May your love flow through us,
renewing us, deepening the life of each Christian
and drawing us into your unending life:

God of love,

hear our prayer.

We pray for the leaders of the Session & for Peter here at Kensington.

We pray for our political leaders
that they may discern ways to overcome divisions and mistrust
and may reflect your love in every aspect of common life:

God of love,

hear our prayer.

We pray for our families,
our households,
and our communities,
that they may be places that share your love for all creation and
all people:

God of love,

hear our prayer.

There are many places in the world that need your love & healing
We pray for the sick,
the suffering,
and all who in need.

We pray that you you may be know in these situations:

Ministry of Hope and Care

Fernando's dream of becoming a police officer seemed out of reach when he and his brother were children living on the streets of Miske, a rural village in Romania. Twelve years later, he attends university and is closer to fulfilling his dream thanks to Samuel House, where Fernando and his brother found a welcoming home. Samuel House is a Christian social ministry of the Reformed Church in Romania, Királyhágómellék District, providing nutritious food, education and after-school care to children from disadvantaged families. Presbyterians Sharing has been supporting this important ministry of hope and care since 2014.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, May 9 (Christian Family Sunday) We pray for the health and well-being of families, and that the relationships within them are marked by peace, love, trust and care.

Monday, May 10 We pray for the members of the Ministry Committee of the Presbytery of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia. May they feel a strong sense of God's presence.

Tuesday, May 11 We pray for rural and remote congregations, and for those who serve them.

Wednesday, May 12 We pray for the students graduating from Knox College today, who are looking forward to ministries in congregational leadership, spiritual care and psychotherapy, and theological teaching.

Thursday, May 13 (Ascension Day) We give thanks to God for Christ who was "manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16 CSB).

Friday, May 14 We pray for the Rev. Maurice Davantin, Director of Formation Biblique et Théologique à Maurice, an ecumenical Theological Education by Extension program in Mauritius.

Saturday, May 15 We pray for people around the world who are striving to rise above poverty with educational opportunities and livelihood support through Presbyterian World Service & Development programs.

God of love,
hear our prayer.

Gracious God, your love is more amazing than the best mother or father, please accept our prayers this day.
By the inner workings of your Spirit, deepen our relationship with you,
and make us more and more signs of your enduring love.
This we pray through Christ, who lives and works
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.¹⁰

♪ Hymn: The clay stained hands of love.....pg 11 (296)
youtu.be/w36w2keM2iY?t=2611

✦ Benediction
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with all of you.



¹⁰ adapted from *Worship Sourcebook* 4.4.24

Love divine, all loves excelling

HYFRYDOL 8787D

F C F Bb/D C7/E F C Dm C F/A C7/G F /A

1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, joy of heaven, to
 2. Breathe, oh breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to eve - ry
 3. Come, al - migh - ty to de - liv - er, let us all thy
 4. Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less

Bb6 Dm C F F /A C F Bb/D C7/E F C Dm C

earth come down; fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing,
 troub - led breast! Let us all in thee in - her - it,
 grace re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn and nev - er,
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion

F/A Gm6 F /A Bb6 Dm C F Am Dm7 Dm

all thy faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art
 let us find the prom - ised rest; take a - way our
 nev - er more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be
 per - fect - ly re - stored in thee, changed from glo - ry

Gm C7 Dm C7/E F /E Dm Bb6 Am Gmsus4-3 Bbmaj7 C7sus4-3

all com - pas - sion, pure, un - bound - ed love thou art;
 love of sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be;
 al - ways bless - ing, serve thee as thy hosts a - bove,
 in - to glo - ry till in heaven we take our place,

F Am Gm C7 F /A C Bb C

vis - it us with thy sal - va - tion;
 end - of faith as its be - gin - ning,
 pray and praise thee, with - out ceas - ing,
 till we cast our crowns be - fore thee,

F/A Bb /D F/C C7 F

en - ter eve - ry trem - bling heart.
 set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 lost in won - der, love and praise.

422

Sing a new song unto the Lord

Unison

Refrain

G D D#dim Em Am7

Sing a new song un - to the Lord; let your song be

D /C G/B D7/A G G/B D

sung from moun - tain's height. Sing a new song

D#dim Em Am7 G6/B D 7 G Fine

un - to the Lord, sing-ing hal - le - lu - jah!

Words: Psalm 98; paraphrase, Daniel L. Schutte Music: Daniel L. Schutte (1947-), arrangement
Sr. Theophane Hytrek, OSF (1915-1992)

Words: paraphrase, copyright © Daniel L. Schutte, 1972, 1974, 1979. Administered by New Dawn Music. All rights reserved. Used with permission.
Music: copyright © Daniel L. Schutte, 1972, 1974, 1979. Administered by New Dawn Music. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

G D7/A Am/G D/F# Em /D C6 G6/B

1. For God's peo - ple dance for joy. Oh come be - fore the
2. Rise, O chil - dren, from your sleep; your Sav - iour now has
3. Glad my soul for I have seen the glo - ry of the

D7/A G D7/F# G D7/A Am/G /E D

Lord, play for the Lord on glad tam - bou - rines, and
come. He has turned your sor - row to joy, and
Lord. The trum - pet sounds; the dead shall be raised. I

C Am7 Dsus4- 2- 3 D.C. al Fine

let your trum - pet sound.
filled your soul with song.
know my Sav - iour lives.

God the Holy Trinity

296

The clay-stained hands of love

LITTLE MARLBOROUGH 6 6 8 6 SM

Unison

Chords: Gm Cm6/G Gm7 Cm/G 6 Gm Cm 9 F7 Bbmaj9

1. The clay-stained hands of love cre - a - ted hu - man form.
2. The heal - ing hands of love gave speech and sight and strength.
3. The wound-ed hands of love showed life had con- quered death.
4. The hid - den hands of love are build - ing up the church.
5. We sing our praise, O Love, for your life - giv - ing hands.

Chords: Bb Ebmaj7 Cm7 Dm7 Ebmaj7 Cm9 Dm7 Gmsus4-3

Praise love that made us from the earth, the love with clay-stained hands.
Praise love that came to touch and heal, the love with heal - ing hands.
Praise love that came in ser - vant form, the love with wound - ed hands.
Praise love that works with liv - ing stone, the love with hid - den hands.
O Mak-er, Sav - iour, Spir - it, God, we sing our praise to you.

Words: Richard D. Leach from Songs for the People of God 1980 Music: Jack Noble White from Songs of the People of God 1980

Words: copyright © Selah Publishing Co. Inc. 1994 Music: copyright © Selah Publishing Co., 1994



694

This is my commandment

May be sung as a round.

Chords: F C7 F Fine F C7 D.C.

① F This is my com-mand-ment, that you love one an-oth-er that your
② joy may be full. full, that your joy may be
③ full, that your joy may be full.

Words: John 15:11-12 Music: anonymous Words: public domain Music: public domain