

Kensington Presbyterian Church

Fear not

June 13, 2021

WELCOME, during these times of physical isolation 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, 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

VBS: two weeks of virtual VBS is being run by A&P. Join them virtually each morning from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., for learning, singing, crafts, games and a fun time with your friends and energetic counsellors!! Kits, including booklets, craft supplies and other goodies, will be delivered to all participants during the last week of June, so we're ready to learn and work together during our zoom time at VBS. For more information email Sharon at churchschool@standrewstpaul.com.

Sunday School: is available Sundays, noon to 1^{ish}
Join Antoinette for a chat, reflections on a Bible passage and an activity. For more information, contact Antoinette (below).

zoom.us/j/95177919687?pwd=K1hpWXJrVElxQWpOMINKdkV1UGloQT09

Residential Schools: For those looking for more information, please visit these sites (or talk to Rev. Peter):

presbyterian.ca/2021/06/05/pcc-and-residential-schools/presbyterian.ca/healing

Book Study: first Wednesdays of the month at 7:30 - ex. July 7th Brushing your teeth & God?? Join the discussion and see the connections. The Liturgy of the Ordinary helps you find God in all aspects of life... one chapter a month. If you are interested, please contact lnes.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: Weather permitting, we will try both Zoom and meeting in the park at Benny Farm. Wed. at 11:30 a.m.

us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?

pwd=dkhMck1ZRXBKTmdvK2VsaHRIOFF1UT09

or phone: 438-809-7799

Meeting ID: 782 6690 4325

Passcode: 7864826

New Hope programs • Evita Karasek, (514) 484-0425 ext: 225
Intergenerational Gardening: no experience necessary.
Wednesday afternoon. Contact Evita for more details.
Yoga for 'seniors': free drop-in yoga in Leduc Park (in front of the church). Monday and Thursday at 11 a.m. weather permitting

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

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



Approaching God

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

Call to worship²

We have come because we obey the call to gather in the presence of the God of our ancestors, the God who said to Moses,

I AM WHO I AM.

We gather in the presence of love, our light and salvation, the voice of truth:

Creator, Redeemer, Guide.

And we gather to worship the One who leads us out of slavery and guides us into freedom.

So let our noise be joyful!

Let us worship with gladness our God
whose liberating love endures forever.

☐ Hymn: The church's one foundation......pg 11 (479)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LZVz1guz2c

Prayer of Approach³
Holy One,
You once breathed life into dust,
and in the mystery of your Spirit,

you continue to breathe life into us now.

Your presence, your light, your energy

— they surround us,

and we take this sacred pause
to praise,
to revere,
to magnify your awesome name.

As your people,
we need not fear.
And you say to us repeatedly,
"Fear not",
because your love is perfect
and your love casts out fear.

But we confess that we have struggled to breathe freely because we have drawn in air that is thick with fear.

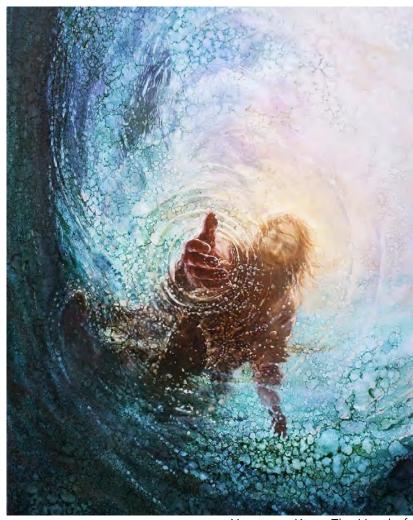
We confess that we have felt overwhelmed by churning waters because we have swallowed their bitter waves.

We confess that we have felt the terrible heat of angry fire because we have been singed by pain-filled flames.

² from Monday's General Assembly Worship by the Rev. Janet Ryu-Chan

O forgive us when we set limits on our love. Forgive us when we lean on our own finite understanding. Forgive us when we refuse the well-spring of your joy.

In this silence, we pause now to confess and entrust to you all that needs forgiveness in our lives and in the life of the church. . .



Yongsung Kim - The Hand of God

Most Holy One,
forgive us and restore us to your ways;
guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus
and fill us with the peace that passes all understanding.
And bless us,
bless us with your Sophia — the wisdom of God —
to discern the Spirit's guidance as we listen to,
and steep
in your life-giving word.
All this we pray through the Risen Christ who liberates.
Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

To all who turn from sin in sorrow, to all who turn to God in hope, this is God's Word of grace:
We are accepted, we are forgiven, we are loved.
This gift we have from God.

Thanks be to God.4

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

Jesus left us a prayer to guide us into a healthier relations with God and each other. Let us join with Christians around the world, saying...

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

Worship Sourcebook 2.4.39

and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

Amen.



☐ Hymn: Amazing Grace......pg 10 (670)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqtzXCYJocE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BA7pdABvpnc (multi national)

rayer for Illumination

Lord God,

you have declared that your kingdom is among us.

Open our eyes to see it,

our ears to hear it,

our hearts to hold it,

our hands to serve it.

This we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.⁵

Intro to the readings

Today's passage are amongst the most famous in the Bible. It may help to imagine yourself in the stories.

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

Exodus 3: 1-15 Luke 1: 26-38 Sermon: Fear Not, I am with you

Dear Lord, please bless these words

and the meditations of our hearts. Amen.

Last week I was a commissioner to the General Assembly. This is the annual national meeting of representatives of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is our highest court and we receive reports about the work that goes on in the denomination, we hear about various studies and issues, we hear from guests, and we make decisions with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We also started each day of meetings with worship. It is important to be grounded in God. To take time to praise God, to pray to our Lord and give thanks, to listen to God's word in scripture at the sermons. This year the sermons were offered by Richard Topping. Some of you may remember him when he was the minister at A&P. For the last decade or so he's been teaching and leading at the Vancouver School of Theology. Today's word is drawn from ideas in his sermons, and the reports & discussions.

Each year the worship services have a theme. This year it was 'Fear not, I am with you' from when Isaiah was speaking to the Israelites. They had been marched by a conquering army to work in a foreign land. Being forced into a new life, was this the end ...or would there more to life?

While I wasn't involved in the planning General Assembly, I imagine there were thinking two things. For over a year we have been told to be afraid because of the pandemic. We should definitely be cautious and follow the guidelines, but is the pandemic the be all and end all of our life? Is there something greater?

4/13

⁵ Worship Sourcebook 3.1.24

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

The other thing that was bringing fear to this General Assembly was that topic of affirming LGBTQ+ people. It is an issue that has dominated the national church for the last 6 years. It is one that people have spoken strongly about with a variety of opinions. It is one which has already caused people to leave the church - either because it hadn't happened or that it might. This looked like the year it would be decided.



1st Presbyterian Church, Regina

Two of the stories we heard in worship were the ones we heard today - about Moses and Mary. In both cases they were going about their normal life. Moses was looking after some sheep in the back 40, and Mary was doing... nothing worth mentioning. Probably housework, their was a lot more of it before our modern innovations.

There situation is quite different from the Israelites being taken by an invading army. Moses and Mary were not afraid;

everything was fine. At least, until God shows up.

God attracts their attention. Moses' curiosity draws him in when he sees a bush that's in flames but not being burnt. He doesn't run from this strange sight, but makes room in his schedule and leaves the known path. He has an experience full of wonder (wonderful?) that puts the fear of God in him.

What would you have done?

God approaches Mary more directly by sending an angel. Perhaps Mary was too busy to look up? The angel comes, and then Mary is perplexed and needs to hear the words, "Do not be afraid."

What would you have done?

Approached? or run? Called 911?

Would you continue with your day and everything that needs doing, or stop to smell the flames?

There are times when the presence of God brings peace. Such as when the Israelites are journeying through the wilderness and learn to trust that God's pillar of smoke/light will guide them, and that God will feed them and give them water. Or when they were taken into exile by the Babylonians and God (through Isaiah) reminded them to, "Fear not, I am with you." Or times such as when Jesus feeds the 5000 to give them strength to continue on the journey.

But that's when you're walking the way God's calling you, because it's not about our comfort - it's about God's plan. Moses and Mary weren't walking yet. They were just ordinary people going about their life - when bang, God says, "Hi," and now their afraid.

And it's understandable. The Lord almighty, creator of Heaven and Earth, is quite demanding. God asks people to give their all -

much more than a fitness trainer.

God tells Moses to leave this life and go talk to Pharaoh. It's likely that Pharaoh would be considered family, but there was bad blood. Moses argues that he's not a good speaker. God basically says, "Fear not, I am with you."

God tells Mary that she's going to have a baby. Mary points out that she hasn't done anything to get pregnant. It's also putting her future in danger... from a lynch mob. God basically says, "Fear not, I am with you."



Elizabeth Greets Mary - Hasse

and not just for now. God tells Moses to refer to him as "I am who I will be." This is a bit confusing, but God is linked to the future. God promises not only to be with us now, but to be our future.

So when we're in the wilderness, or forced to change the way we lived, or simply meet God in our ordinary life... it's okay to be afraid - but also take comfort.

You are not alone.

God called Moses to challenge the world... and provided Aaron to speak for him, Miriam to sing hope and dreams, and Jethro to provide leadership advice - and a host of others to help. God called Mary to bring change to the world... and provided Joseph to help support her, and wise men to prepare her, and a Spirit of humility that didn't let this be about her. The song she sings is about God's blessing to those who need it - and a challenge to those who don't.

When leaving the normal, Moses wasn't alone. Mary wasn't alone. You aren't alone... or rather I should say we aren't alone, because it's not about you. It's about us and the different ways that we can join God saving the world.

To God be all the glory Amen.



☐ Hymn: Blest are they.....pg 12 (624)

www.voutube.com/watch?v=1BnY4 h9i-A



General Assembly was different than normal as it was all over the computer, but still great.

Personally, I missed the chance to catch up with people I hadn't seen in ages, and meet new friends.

Even without those conversations over meals and walking to meetings there were still stories of how the Holy Spirit has been working.



Presbyterians are often accused of taking lots of time to do

anything. One of the reasons is that it's only General Assembly that can make decisions for the national church. It was nice to see that we responded quickly and without doubt to the horror of recent findings at the former Kamloops Residential School, and the murder of Muslims in London.

There were several subjects related to our relationship with the indigenous peoples. Some background was given, including our apology. Research was also reported on the systematic issues in the Presbyterian church going back to our first missionaries - including a well done video. One way this is progressing is that the National Indigenous Ministry Council is becoming a standing committee. The Justice Ministries report also included a study and recommendations to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQ+. Most of these suggestions are for us to accept and study the report, make connections with indigenous peoples, and encourage the government to implement the recommendations.

Another part of their report was on Racism, Xenophobia and Hate in Canada. Again, the report provides background to the issue, encourages further study and suggests actions. One action was suggested and accepted by the General Assembly - without even going to a committee. We prayed for our Muslim neighbours and the Moderator will send a letter to the mosque and family expressing our horror, sorrow and support for them. Congregations are encouraged to do the same and we will be reaching out to our Muslim neighbours. We also had the privilege of hearing from Imam Muneeb Nasir, who was invited due to his interfaith work.

The topic of racism was not limited to that against Muslims. There was also the awareness of all those who are visible minorities and how that is shown in so many parts of our society.

Unfortunately this was not only reflected in the report about our society, but in petitions from the Korean presbyteries. They feel that as minorities they are being ignored by the larger church. A special committee was set up to listen and make recommendations.

The biggest issue that is part of their feeling ignored is what occupied most of General Assembly's time - topics related to the affirmation of LGBTQI+ people. The focus of this was two motions that had passed at the previous assembly and been sent to the Presbyteries for their votes (which came back with the majority supporting the changes). The first motion was to allow for two definitions of marriage (between two people, or between a man and a woman). The second was to allow people who are living as LGBTQ+ to be ordained, and that those who disagree may abstain.

We heard a report on how people felt about these motions - which concluded that there was much disagreement on why this was a good or bad thing to do. There was also much fear and pain expressed by people who sent in comments. We also saw a very powerful video on the impact of our traditional policies. This committee presented several recommendations which were all adopted. They included various actions based on our repentance. The Moderator will also be sending an apology to the Rev. Darryl Macdonald and the congregation that initially called him.

After many comments, the Holy Spirit led us to affirm all people.

This led to many suggests for various types of separations arising out of reasons such as: fear of persecution for traditional beliefs, a lack of trust that they will be allowed to maintain their traditional views, and theological reasons. These ideas will be examined and prayed for over the next year. The rules were

^{8 &}lt;a href="https://presbyterian.ca/justice/doctrine-of-discovery/">https://presbyterian.ca/justice/doctrine-of-discovery/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muSNSOCHwnU

changed to enforce the freedom to affirm or maintain the traditional definitions.

While this occupied much of General Assembly's time, the Holy Spirit was working on other important issues.

The report from the Doctrine Committee includes a Bible Study based on their recent statement on what Mission is now. The also included their paper on Physician Assisted Suicide, and responded to a question on Cannabis use.

The Justice Ministries looked at various issues on top of the ones already mentioned, including the treats to the environment, domestic violence, and poverty reduction. Their report doesn't just include details about the problem, but also Biblical responses and strategies for improvement.

Something I didn't expect under the Pension & Benefits Committee was recommendations to fight gender pay inequality. Statistics will now be collected and used to challenge unjust situations. This shows God valuing people equally.

The International Affairs Committee shared concerns about the lack of biodiversity, human migration (including the migrant workers at the base of Canada's food industry), and the effects of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory. Again, in these reports the Holy Spirit is drawing our attention to issues, and providing suggestions of what we can do.

One of the issues they raised also links with the winner of the 'cutting edge for mission award': The Canadian Centre to end Human Trafficking. It is shocking how much is happening in Canada.

Thankfully, the reports are not all about tragedies and injustice. There are reports of the work we do through Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&P) and Canada Ministries in supporting all sorts of good projects. We

heard about some PWS&D projects a couple of weeks ago. Some other projects that excited me include: new church concepts such as a coffee house ministry, and a collective for artists. There are various ministries with indigenous peoples and inner city centres. And then there were all the grants support the Spirit's work in congregations as they reach out to the youth or artists or vulnerable people in their communities.

General Assembly was different this year. It would have been nice to hear more stories, but we still saw the Holy Spirit powerfully at work in the church.

Thanks be to God.

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: Imagine you were Moses or Mary. How would you have responded?

Memories: God can bring comfort, but try and share a time when God's invitation to you brought fear.

Values: If God tries to attract our attention in more subtitle ways than a burning bush or an angel, how do you try to notice?

Actions: Check out the General Assembly website for videos from our guests, brief committee reports, much longer text reports, and even the minutes. If you can't find something, it's probably in the Life & Mission Agency report. presbyterian.ca/gao/ga2021

Actions: Reach out to our Muslim & Indigenous neighbours through people you know, their mosque or friendship centre. Tell them you are sorry, that as someone who believes in God you are praying for them, and that you would like to hear more about their experiences.

→ Offering

Financially, we have set up a donation option on **our** website. Just click the '<u>Donate Now</u>' 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 people¹⁰

We are siblings in Christ and celebrate our call to be Christ's Church together, bound to him who is the only King and Head.

We come from North and South, East and West to pray for unity in a fragmented world.

Dear God,

We thank you for the Bible, which teaches us about your plan for life.

We thank you for the courage and bravery of those who shared their stories at General Assembly. Help us to bless each other with peace of mind, heart and soul, with gentle vulnerability, raw storytelling, and thoughtful expressions - through the guidance of your Holy Spirit.

We thank you for our faith, and pray that you continue to grow our faith.

We ask for your help with the divisions in your church. Help us to listen, repent, and become part of sharing God's love. We pray for your creation that the threats to its diversity. Help us

to listen, repent, and become part of sharing God's love.

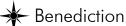
We pray for those who suffer from racism, prejudice and fear: including the indigenous peoples, people with dark skin, Muslims, minorities, and those who identify as LGBTQ+. Help us to listen, repent, and become part of sharing God's love.

We pray those who are sick.

May your Spirit bring them health. . . are we pray for those who are suffering loss, whether due to meaning in their life, or the loss of a loved relationship. . .

We come to you, know that you are with us now, and will be forever.

Amen.



May God our maker bless us and wrap us round in love and tenderness.

May Jesus our brother bless us and ask us the questions that lead us to do justice.

May the Holy Spirit bless us and fill our lives with her courage and wisdom.

May we live bravely in the love of the Trinity all our days and nights.¹¹

¹⁰ based on a prayer written by the Young Adult Representatives

Sunday, June 13 -

MISSION MOMENT

Meeting the Needs of Families in Beirut

The massive explosion that struck the city of Beirut in August 2020 left many people injured and many homes damaged.

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) responded to the devastating effects by meeting the needs of vulnerable people in Lebanon. Families received essential supplies, such as food and hygiene items, to sustain them as they started to rebuild. Additionally, PWS&D assisted in restoring homes and schools and provided water and sanitation kits to families, as well as school kits to children.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, June 13 We pray for people elected to serve in government and that those with power will have wisdom and that those who are wise will have power.

Monday, June 14 We pray for those who work to provide food that strengthens our bodies so that we can love and serve God and one another.

Tuesday, June 15 We pray for vulnerable families affected by COVID-19 in Afghanistan who are receiving food assistance from Presbyterian World Service & Development.

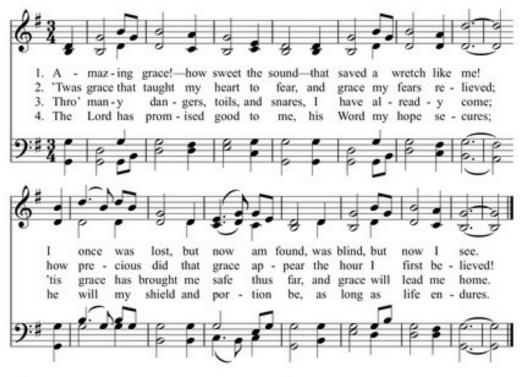
Wednesday, June 16 We pray for the Moderator of the 2021 General Assembly as a new term of pastoral ministry and leadership begins.

Thursday, June 17 We pray for wisdom and discernment as the Rev. Patrick Thegu Mutahi begins his three-year term as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) in Kenya.

Friday, June 18 We pray for musicians, singers and artists who add beauty and texture to our worship of God.

Saturday, June 19 We give thanks and pray for teachers who have had to adapt to teaching under new and difficult circumstances.

Amazing Grace!



 And when this flesh and heart shall fail, and mortal life shall cease,
 I shall possess within the veil a life of joy and peace.

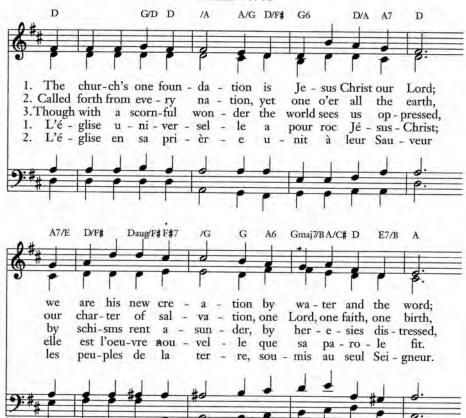
St. 1-5, John Newton, 1779 St. 6, A Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1790 When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we've first begun.

> AMAZING GRACE C.M. Traditional American melody Adapted and harm. Edwin O. Excell, 1900

479

The church's one foundation

AURELIA 7676D

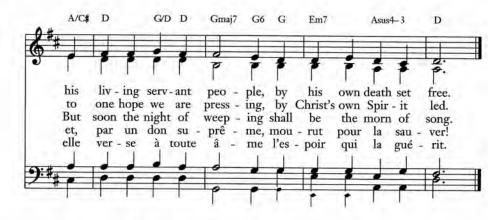


- 4. 'Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of our war, we wait the consummation of peace forevermore; till with the vision glorious our longing eyes are blest, and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.
- 5. We now on earth have union with God the Three-in-One, and share, through faith, communion with those whose rest is won,— O happy ones and holy!

 Lord, give us grace that we, like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.

Words: Samuel John Stone (1839–1900) alt; French translation, Fernand Barth (1923–) Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810–1876) Words: public domain Music: public domain





- Honnie et méconnue, menant de durs combats, elle attend la venue de la paix ici-bas. Contemplant par avance la fin de son tourment, la grande délivrance, le repos permanent.
- 4. Aujourd'hui, sur la terre, elle est unie à Dieu, et, par un saint mystère, aux élus du saint lieu. Rends–nous, comme eux, fidèles, et reçois–nous, Seigneur, dans la vie éternelle, dans l'éternel bonheur!

624

Blest are they



Words: Matthew 5:3-12; paraphrase, David R. Haas (1957-) Music: David R. Haas (1957-); arrangement, Norma de Waal Malefyt

Words: paraphrase, copyright © G.I.A. Publications Inc., 1985. All rights reserved. Music: copyright © G.I.A. Publications Inc., 1985, 1991.





Words: based on Francis of Assisi's "Canticle of the Sun" (1182–1226), translation, William H. Draper (1855–1933), alt Music: Auserlesene Katholische Geistliche Kirchengesänge, Cologne 1623; harmony, Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958); descant, Christopher Gower (1939–)

Words: this version, copyright © The Presbyterian Church in Canada 1996 Music: harmony, copyright © Oxford University Press; descant, copyright © Oxford University Press

