

Kensington Presbyterian Church

Pathway leading to...

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)



Wheat field with Crows - van Goah

Announcements

Clicking on or tapping blue text will take you to a web-site Visits: If you would like to talk or have a prayer please contact Rev. Peter anytime. We can have a visit in a manner that you are comfortable with.

Building Use: With concerns about the rapid spreading of the Omicron variant of COVID, we will be closing the building for a while after Christmas. We will monitor the situation and hope to invite you back to the building soon. In the mean time, please join us over Zoom, YouTube and through this full text version.

Children's activities: if you know of anyone who might be interested, please contact Antoinette.

The Chosen: Thursdays Jan 13 to Feb 24 7pm video, 8pm study You are invited to join us over Zoom as we watch and discuss the series The Chosen along-side the Biblical stories of Jesus. This video series is a fascinating drama based on what we know of Jesus' followers and the times they lived in. We will consider what is artistic licence and what is revelatory. The discussion will be lead by Rev. Peter.

Contacts

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



Approaching God

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

Call to worship (Matthew 11:28-29) Here this invitation from Jesus,

> "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."



Nativity - Eggenberger

■ Hymn: Child in the manger, infant of Mary.....pg 11 www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUyFYKcN6VA&t=34s

Prayer of Approach

Jesus, our Emmanuel,

We come, now, because we know you are with us.

We come, now, to know you are with us.

We come with a mixture of joy and weeping. Glad for the blessings we feel, and weighed down by the news.

We come at your invitation, and honestly share our burdens with you.

Part of being honest is to admit that we are not without fault. There are times when we don't take a break, but try to stay isolated from the problems in our world. Some of these problems our lifestyle actively supports, and some of the problems we just turn away from. Please forgive us. . .

Jesus, may your Spirit give us strength, wisdom and hope to continue along the pathway to bring your love, hope and healing to the world.

Amen.

-Assurance of Pardon (Matthew 1: 21) Read the good news She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name lesus, because he will save his people from their sins.

Listening to God

☐ Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel.....pg 12 (122)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xtpJ4Q Q-4

🖍 Prayer for Illumination

Immanuel, as we wait for your return,
may your Spirit help us see your glory
feel your love and receive your peace
through the reading and preaching of your Word. Amen.²

Intro to the readings

The first passage is from Jeremiah. At this point in the story the Babylonians have destroyed the homes and temple, and

taken many of the Israelites into exile. The message Jeremiah is asked to deliver switches from warning & consequences to hope. We will read this prophecy responsively.

 The next passage is part of the Christmas story, but is avoided on Christmas Eve.



Refugees La Sagrada Familia Kelly Latimore



Reading: Please look up the passages in your own

Bible,³ or click on the name to be taken to an online version.

<u>Jeremiah 31</u>: 1-14 <u>Matthew 2</u>: 13-23 Psalm 57



Sermon: Pathway leading to...

Dear Lord, please bless these words and the meditations of our hearts.⁴ Amen.

Bonne et heureuse année.

While others have tried to teach me this phrase before, my neighbour needed to go through it again. Like a good student, I asked questions. "What does *heureuse* mean?" He explained that it is like happy, but not happy where you're laughing. It's not jolly. It's more like contentment or being pleased, but better than that. Heureuse.

Bonne et heureuse année.

While it's the traditional thing to say today, it's also a great wish for this year. May this year be good to you. May this year bring you more than just survival; may you feel peace and happiness in our soul.

...because for most people last year was rough.

I'm sure you can all think of situations. This past week (now last year) I was talking to people who are trying to be positive while being pulled down by the uncertainty of upcoming medical

² adapted from Worship Sourcebook D.3.1.7

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

Psalm 19:14

issues, not being able to come to church, and not seeing family over Christmas. There are those who are feeling isolated and don't feel they can get out of the pattern.

It's hard, and it's not all about us. The Pope, in his Christmas address, reminds us that there are issues going on in countries, horrible issues that are impacting millions of people. Conflict is still going on in Syria, with over 11 million people having to leave their homes. Greater Montreal, which includes Laval and the South Shore, has a population of just over 4 million - so the displaced people in Syria are almost 4 times the population of Greater Montreal. It's also about half the population of Syria - imagine half a population being displaced?



Refugees Holy Family - Kelly Latimore

4/14

The Pope also mentioned Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Iraq, Yemen, and others. I would add northern Cameroon where a scarcity of water has led to conflict and a hundred thousand people fleeing

their homes.

These are big things, but they all impact plain ordinary people. People who just want to have a safe home with friends and family.

It's perhaps something we can relate to a bit as we're being told, again, to be afraid to go out. Except these people are having to go out - to run from their homes - to try for a chance at survival.

One of the Wisdom Books in the Bible, Ecclesiastes (1:9), says, "there is nothing new under the sun."

Having a tough year, or many years, isn't new.

Horrible situations aren't new.

How do we respond?

One suggestion offered by Archbishop Tutu is to acknowledge the situation. In referring to the corruption and conflict within the South African government he said, "we understand human nature and shouldn't be surprised, but we are allowed to be very, very, very sad."

But it doesn't matter what the source of the horrible situation is. It could be like King Herod's jealousy or greed;

corrupt human 'nature';

or the brokenness in nature

leading to droughts & floods, cancer & COVID.

We can respond by being disappointed in people's choices, and be very sad.

Based on the way he lived his life, there are other things Archbishop Tutu would suggest: reading the Bible, prayer, listening, and speaking out.

Looking in the Bible we have many passages like today's stories of people forced to leave their homes. This is usually because of the brokenness of people, and sometimes the brokenness of nature. At the end of Genesis they even take refuge in Egypt, like Jesus' family so many years later.

And there's the Exile. Much of the words God gives to Jeremiah before the Exile are warnings to change their ways or face the consequences. Now that's happened. The words we heard today come from a section where God sends words of comfort and encouragement.

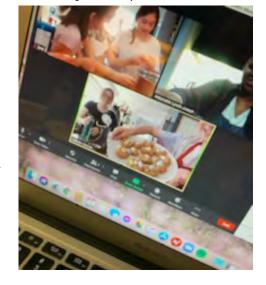
What's nice about these words is that they aren't all happy happy. Yes, God tells them there will be times of singing, dancing and tambourines. They will be going back. But there will also be weeping.

Does that fit with your experience of the past year? Times of joy and times of weeping?

I suspect that part of the weeping was that while the Exile brought unbelievable grief, they also found blessings. We're told "[They] found grace in the wilderness." I expect they made some

strong friendships while going through exile together. It would have changed the patterns and social roles perhaps giving people new opportunities. They found God in the wilderness.

I know that has happened here over the past year. I've heard about people over the last year finding joy in all sorts of hobbies: sewing,



writing a book, gardening. It's even wonderful that people have found ways to do these things with friends and family through computers. I've heard of people doing crafts together, baking in their own kitchens, even playing board games across the internet. I've heard of people finding ways to help others. It's true that many connections have suffered, but new ones were also made. The sort of things that might be missed when we return.

I expect the exiles also wept for those who had died in exile and would not see the end. Something else we can relate too.

and there would be weeping at seeing that going back doesn't mean the 'good ol' days.' Life never goes back.

but the journey forward is not all weeping. God promises there will be singing, dancing & tambourines. God will "comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow." There will be shouts with gladness. God promises to lead them back.

And what is going to trigger this return?

Is it when the people are perfect? When they are fit, smart and very spiritual? Do we need to get the world ready like for special guests at Christmas?

No.

One sign of this is who is included in the return. God will "gather them from the farthest parts of the earth." People who are blind and lame will be included. These are people who, in Jeremiah's time, would have had difficulty being useful in society. God looks after them. Another example of other vulnerable people included are those who are pregnant. There's nothing about people being left behind: strong or vulnerable, faithful or empty, hopeful or hopeless.

There's also nothing about God waiting until we get our house neat and tidy before coming in. God comes anyway, to lead us along the pathway to a better future.

As Madeleine L'engle put it,

He did not wait till the world was ready...

He came to a world which did not mesh, to heal its tangles, shield its scorn. In the mystery of the Word made Flesh the Maker of the stars was born.⁷

God has come and is inviting us along the pathway home. Jesus is walking with us and comforting us - because we need it. There are many times when it is hard, even tragic. Especially when someone leaves the path, or takes out the fear or jealousy on others. Nature can also make it hard.

We will experience weeping and joy.

With God, we will grow in love, hope and healing.

Bonne et heureuse année.

In the name of God the Father, God the Son & God the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



A NW YY

Responding to God

FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies. This week they are a little more personal than usual. Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).

Memories: Even if you are talking with somebody you live with, share some joys and hard things about this past Christmas season, and the past year.

Wonder: Wonder together why God doesn't just swoop in and make everything right. You may also want to share some of the psalms, which are full of joy and questioning.

Actions: Pray together for some of the issues in the world, and for each other, as we try to journey with God (and God tries to help us).

* Spirit Sighting

With today's Gospel passage about Jesus' family becoming refuges I am reminded of the work of Action Réfugiés. Through this group, the Presbyterian Church has been active in helping refuges settle in the Montréal area. This includes visiting those in the holding centre (ie. detained in jail-like conditions), supporting those further along the process, and helping them all receive their rights. You can find out more here: www.actionr.org

You might consider reading or listening to the Pope's message. It can be found online here:

www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/urbi/documents/papa-francesco_20211225_urbi-et-orbi-natale.html

⁷ https://www.theartofsimple.net/christmas-poem-madeleine-lengle/

I would also recommend reading more about Archbishop Tutu and how God worked through him to challenge & comfort. You might start here:

www.bbc.com/news/topics/c8z017mmn42t/desmond-tutu

If you are interest, but unable to access these websites, please let Rev. Peter know and he'll help you out.

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.



Communion

Communion Hymn: Here, O my Lord, I see thee......pg 13 (543) www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj0XLq-fq81

Invitation to the table

Again, this is a strange time to share Communion.

We are not gathered at one table, or even at one time, but we are gathered with one Lord.

It is the will of Jesus that those who want to experience him should meet Jesus here.

C'est la volonté de Dieu que tous ceux qui veulent connaître Jésus devraient partager ce repas.

So, come, you who have much faith, and you who would like to have more.

you who have come often and you who have not come for a long time,

you who have tried to follow and have done so imperfectly.8

As we come together to share the Lord's Supper,

we also come together with a statement of faith that we share Jesus offering bread & cup - BM Cerezo with Christians of many types,

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

around the world and through the centuries.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

very adapted from Iona Wee Worship Book 4th ed

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Great prayer of thanksgiving & the Lord's Prayer The Lord be with you.

and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

With the help of your Spirit, we see you before us & behind us, above us and below us and even within us.

You are there in the trees outside our windows, in the voices of the Bible and in the voices of people around us.

Thank you for people like Jeremiah & Desmond Tutu who remind us all how to listen, how to live, and how to love.

Therefore we join our voices with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to lift our hearts in joyful praise.

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

We lift our Hosanna's to the highest that you came down to earth; living as an ordinary person, yet also divine.

Showing the love that the world is becoming, and the tragedies that are in it now. You don't wait for things to be ready, you come into the mess of life, even when it means being rejected and crucified.

It is a mystery that you stick with us.

It is a mystery that you will die for us.

It is a mystery that nothing can stop you, not even death.

So together, we proclaim the mystery of the faith.

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Christ, while we wait for your return, we draw hope from Jeremiah, and even the horrible parts of the Christmas story. Because you are leading us to a better world.

Jesus, we pray for those who are struggling.

- for those who have had to leave their homes in Syria, Cameroon, and so many other places.
- for those suffering in Afghanistan, especially the woman and girls
- for those who are weighed down by the news, and the uncertainty and fear from COVID.
- for all those who are sick, from COVID or in other ways May your Spirit bring comfort and grace that they may know your love, hope and healing.

and may your Holy Spirit move in this remembrance of your table, making us into your community and filling us with your hope so that we can bring it to the world.

Let us come together to say the prayer you left as a guide for our hopes and prayers...

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

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.



we are all One in Jesus Christ - Soichi Watanabe



Words of Institution

On the night before he met with death, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to God he broke the bread and shared it, saying

"This is my body; it is broken for you." "Ceci est mon corps, qui est rompu pour vous"

[take and eat]

In the same way, he took the cup of wine after dinner and said, "This is the new relationship with God, sealed in my blood Take this, all of you, in remembrance of me."

"Cette coupe est la nouvelle alliance en mon saunt; faites ceci en mémoire de moi"

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

[take and drink]

rayer after Communion

Jésus, il n'y a rien qui puisse te séparer de nous. We thank you for uniting us with you and each other through your table and eucharist.

Vous êtes ici maintenant avec espoir et amour. Help us to feel this, and to live it for all the world.

In Jesus name Amen.

* Benediction (Romans 15:13)

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Sunday, January 2

MISSION MOMENT

In Somalia, Shiindha was worried when her three-yearold son, Abdihakim, became sick and hadn't improved after two months. The treatment he received at a nearby clinic helped to provide short-term relief for his pain but did not help to improve his overall health.



One day, a visiting community worker screened Abdihakim for malnutrition and identified that he was moderately malnourished. Abdihakim was admitted to a nutrition program right away and underwent bi-weekly treatment. After a month and a half, Abdihakim made a full recovery and was able to return home to his family. This therapeutic nutrition project is supported by Presbyterian World Service & Development in collaboration with Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

DAILY PRAYERS

Saturday, January 1 (New Year's Day) We begin the year in gratitude to God and for God's presence with us, and we pray for a more just and loving world where we witness God's righteousness, mercy and grace.

Sunday, January 2 We give thanks for the programs that respond to hunger around the world that are supported by the church through Presbyterian World Service & Development.

Monday, January 3 We pray for God's guidance for students studying at the church's theological colleges.

Tuesday, January 4 We give thanks for the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives staff.

Wednesday, January 5 We pray for Hummingbird Ministries in Vancouver, British Columbia, and give thanks for the Director, the Rev. Mary Fontaine, who is called by her community to pray, advocate and intervene in times of deep sorrow, isolation and loss.

Thursday, January 6 (Epiphany) Source of Wisdom and Creator of the heavens who led the Magi to worship the Christ child, guide us so that we may find our calling and journey's end in Jesus Christ.

Friday, January 7 We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Kootenay in British Columbia.

Saturday, January 8 We pray for the committees of the General Assembly as they discern what God is calling the church to say, learn and do.

Child in the Manger

Leanabh an aigh, Gaelic song by Mary Macdonald of Mull, 19th century; tr. Lachlan McBean, 1888





Words: Latin, 13th century; translation, John Mason Neale (1818-1866); French, H. Écuyer Music: Gregorian plainsong; arrangement, Healey Willan (1880-1968)

Words: public domain Music: arrangement, copyright @ Michael Willan, executor of the estate of Healey Willan



- 1. Oh! viens bientôt, Emmanuel, nous délivrer du joug cruel, et du péché briser la loi; ton peuple entier s'attend à toi. Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel. voici venir Emmanuel!
- 2. Oh! viens bientôt, que ta clarté dissipe nos obscurités. Errants et tristes dans la nuit, nous appelons le jour qui luit. Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel. voici venir Emmanuel!
- 3. Oh! viens bientôt, descends vers nous, Saint Fils du ciel, aimant et doux. Aux coeurs troublés apporte donc la paix divine du pardon. loveux, levez les yeux au ciel, voici venir Emmanuel!
- 4. Oh. viens bientôt, puissant Sauveur, nous réveiller de nos langueurs! Il n'est que toi, celeste Pain, qui puisse apaiser notre faim. loveux, levez les yeux au ciel, voici venir Emmanuel!

disperse the gloomy clouds of night,

and death's dark shadows put to flight. Rejoice!...

bid envy, strife and discord cease.

and be thyself our source of peace.

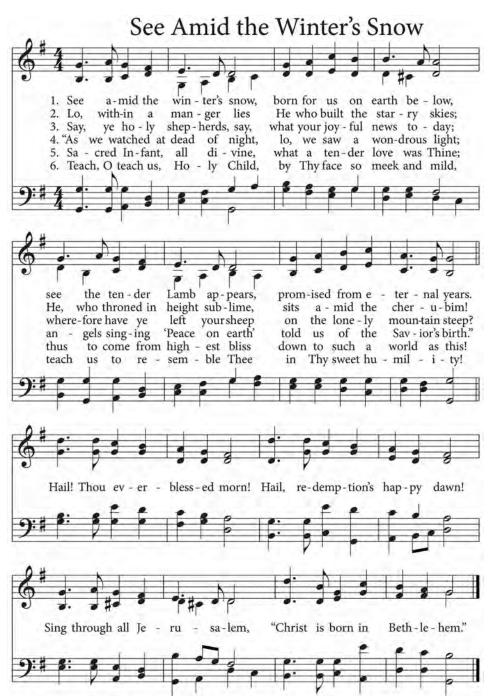
Rejoice!...





Horatius Bonar, 1855

MORECAMBE 10.10.10.10. Frederick C. Atkinson, 1870 January 2, 2022





WORDS: Edward Caswall, 1858 MUSIC: John Goss, 1870

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