



Kensington Presbyterian Church

Remembering the Big Picture

January 23, 2022

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)

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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.

Re-opening: While we wait for it to be safer to gather, 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.

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



Annual Report: If you are one of the people reporting, please submit it to Sandra by the end of January. Thank you.

Session Letter: regarding the accepted definition of marriage. If you have not received a copy, please contact Rev. Peter or your elder.

Metal Health: Grandview Church has made a list of several internet resources that you may find helpful. kckf.files.wordpress.com/2022/01/links-to-wellness-resources_updated-march-2021.pdf

Book Club: has been exploring *Liturgy of the Ordinary* by the Rev. Tish Harrison Warren. She helps us see God in the ordinary things of life. Even if you have not joined them before, you will be able to participate. We will be wrapping up this study on Feb 2nd. Please contact Rev. Peter if you need the Zoom details.

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.

New Hope Seniors Centre: has several programs being offered either online or over the phone. For more information call or email: newhope.programs@videotron.ca 1-800-613-1732
 Options include: Tech training (phone, computers, etc),
 Yoga, painting, trivia & storytelling.

NEXT WEEK: we are pleased that the Co-coordinator of Indigenous -Presbyterian Solidarity Montreal, Jill Foster and Daniel Lacasse will be sharing about this ministry. To experience this fully we encourage you to try joining over Zoom. If you need help, please ask Rev. Peter.



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

As many of you who are baptized into Christ have clothed
yourself in Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or
free, male or female,

For we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Jesus said: I give a new commandment, that you love another, just
as I have loved you,

For we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Let love be genuine. Love one another with mutual affection,
outdo one another in showing honour,

For we are all one in Christ Jesus.

♪ Hymn: God is love.....pg 10 (314)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFwnnIAjnAE



Love Hearts - Banksy



Prayer of Approach

Gracious and caring God,
you have created a world in
beauty and wonder
and it lives to bring you glory.
You blessed your creation and
called it good
and you made humans in
your image.

In awe, we marvel that your
creation never remains the
same;
through the work of the Holy
Spirit,
it is constantly changing and
growing.

Beyond us, galaxies explode,
stars are born as the universe
expands.

Around us, one season gives way to another,
forests and fields grow and are harvested,
new generations are born and older ones die,
surrendering their lives to you.

Jesus, changes can bring wonders and uncertainty. When we were
children the world was constantly revealing new things, but as
adults the epiphanies come slower. The changes they bring
become harder. Help us to continue to see you anew in
scripture, prayer and the world around us. Forgive us when we
resist you.

Lord, we also ask forgiveness for times when our actions or
silences have let people not feel they are valued and loved.



Your Spirit has guided us, nurtured our faith, challenged us,
and cared for us, as you urge us to become more and more the
people you created and called us to be.
May your Spirit help to recognize and respect other parts of your
body. May we learn to listen and share experiences with others
to seek justice, love mercy, and to walk humbly.

As we worship now, open us to your living Word, embodied in
Jesus Christ, as it speaks to our time and place, to all that
changes around us and within us.
Send your kind and persistent Spirit to deepen our
understanding, open our hearts, and help us embrace a more
just and loving way of living in your world as together we
follow Jesus.²
Amen.

✧ Assurance of Pardon
To all who are open to receiving her,
the Holy Spirit will come into you
washing away your sins
and bringing you back into relationship with God

👤 Lord's prayer (feel free to use another version/translation)
And now in one voice, we pray the prayer that Jesus taught...

**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**

² adapted from the draft worship service prepared by Presbyterian Church in Canada: Letter of Repentance Liturgy: A Service Responding to Homophobia and Transphobia in The Presbyterian Church in Canada

**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
Amen.**



Listening to God

♪ Hymn: As Water to the Thirsty.....pg 11 (688)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLZfB73gt8k
www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVh--AlfkH4 (high, but lovely)

👤 Prayer for Illumination
Lord of heaven and earth
pour out on us the abundant gifts of your Holy Spirit
that we may be filled with your word
and share your love.
Amen.³

✧ Intro to the readings

- In the first 11 chapters Paul writes about God's grace for both Jews and Gentiles. Now he starts getting into what that looks like. Perhaps you can think of specific examples.
- Have you ever felt like the psalmist? Can you relate?
- The passage from the prophet Micah is written like a lawsuit between God and Israel in which Israel is being charged with breaking the contract/covenant. What is God asking for? What is God looking for in people? What is God not looking for?
- The last passage is from Luke, but also in Matthew and Mark. Here it comes after the disciples have gone out and

³ adapted from Worship Sourcebook F.3.1.2

successfully shared the good news of the coming Kingdom, Jesus pointing out that it's the unexpected people God has come to. It's followed right after by the parable of the Good Samaritan.



Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,⁴ or click on the name to be taken to an online version.

[Romans 12](#): 3-17

[Psalm 73](#): 21-28

[Micah 6](#): 1-8

[Luke 10](#): 25-28 (or keep going to 37)



Sermon: Remembering the big picture

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

I rediscovered a helpful quote from the reformation. “*In essential things: unity, in non-essential things: freedom, and in all things: charity.*” It was in a document by the *Church Doctrine Committee*.⁶ They advise the General Assembly on what the church should believe. This document was setting up the framework for a discussion on sexuality.

*“In essential things: unity,
in non-essential things: freedom,
and in all things: charity.”*

It's a helpful quote because it asks us to consider what is essential about being a Christian.

An obvious first answer is believing in God, and that Jesus is

the Christ, our Saviour. It's obvious because it's in the name: Christian. It's also a good answer, though it looks different in different people. God is huge, and people relate to God in different ways. Some examples: we don't all become ministers. There are Christians who aren't Presbyterian, but are still Christian. Believing in God doesn't even require absolute certainty. I like the example of the father whose son needed healing. He tells Jesus, “I believe; help my unbelief!”⁷ Jesus also never asks people if they believe in him before healing them. Belief is important - as a willingness to accept God, not in knowing everything.

If you had to summarize the essence of Christianity for a curious friend, what would you say?

Would you warn of God's judgment and the risk of going to hell? The Bible talks about this. Some churches focus on that. How we live is important for ourselves, our communities, and even future generations. Judgment will come, but is it essential that we do the judging? Jesus says, “*Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ‘Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.’*”⁸ Perhaps the reformers were remembering this when they ended their statement with, “*and in all things: charity.*”

What would you say is the essential message of the Bible? How do we decide what is essential?

The church has spent a lot of time researching and discussing the issues related to sexuality, such as same-sex marriage. Sometimes it feels that every other issue and celebration that has come to the General Assembly in the last seven years has been side-lined to deal with this.

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

⁶ Acts and Proceedings 2018

⁷ [Mark 9:24](#)

⁸ Luke 6: 36-37, Luke 7: 1-5

Is this the essential issue of Christianity?

In the passage Mike read from Luke, Jesus is asked about inheriting eternal life. In Matthew and Mark the question is “*What is the greatest commandment.*” The answer is from two passages in their Bible, the Older Testament for us. It is considered a summary of all the rules and stories. “*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.*”

What is essential?

Love.⁹

and this rings through in other passages. The Gospel According to John doesn’t have this passage, but we are told “*For 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.*”¹⁰ This echoes the emphasis on love over judging. Paul reminds the Corinthians about the importance of love in another famous passage. It starts, “*If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.*”¹¹



Love.

It’s a nice answer, but what does it look like?

In Paul’s letter to the Romans he talks about how big God’s grace is, and that God loves both Jews and Gentiles (none Jews). At this point he’s talking about living as a church and what that looks like.

It starts with the acknowledgement that we are all different. That this is the way God created us and wants us to be. That it doesn’t matter what you can do, or not do. Everyone can contribute in some way. All of us are important. Loving God and neighbour means respecting that people are different and are valued.

It’s not just accepting anything, because there are actions that are not about love. There are actions that hurt others or creation. Paul tells them, and us, that genuine love hates evil and encourages what is good. It shows affection to each other and tries to outdo others in providing support. He talks about hope, patience, hospitality, and prayer.

Paul goes on to say, “*Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse them.*” - because it happens. Christians persecute others, even other Christians. History is full of examples of people who have been hurt by Christians. In some parts of Europe the reformation was horribly bloody, with Christians killing whole villages for having a different interpretation of how to love God and neighbour ...and for political and financial issues.

Sadly, there are people now who don’t feel loved or valued. When we realize that we have persecuted someone, or a group of people, we need to change and say we are sorry. Last summer we read out a letter of repentance and commitment to action

9 painting: I Corinthians 13 by Ivan Guaderrama

10 [John 3: 16-17](#)

11 [I Corinthians 13](#)

regarding the discovery of unmarked graves at the sites of former residential schools.¹² In 1994, the General Assembly called on the Presbyterian Church to repent of homophobia. Over 20 years later the church acknowledged that it still supported homophobia through silence, and in some cases actively. The 2017 General Assembly had the moderator write a letter of repentance to the LGBTQI community.¹³ We acknowledge and repent from being persecutors. This is part of respecting that different parts of the body are different and valued. It's part of loving God and neighbour.

Being loving is not something passive. Loving God and neighbour requires living that out. Paul goes on to describe some of the actions that love does. *"Share the happiness of those who are happy, the sorrow of those who are sad. Live in harmony with each other. Don't become snobbish but take a real interest in ordinary people. Don't become set in your own opinions. Don't pay back a bad turn by a bad turn, to anyone. Don't say "it doesn't matter what people think", but see that your public behaviour is above criticism. As far as your responsibility goes, live at peace with everyone."*¹⁴

These are things I expect everyone agrees are good, but do we do it?

Take sharing happiness and sorrow with others as an example. Do we find out what their happiness and sorrow is? Do we share our happiness and sorrow with them? Do we listen to people who need someone to share with, or do we just talk with those who are like us? This sharing of emotions can be hard for a church formed in Scotland, but it is part of loving God and neighbour.

There are other important actions in there. Such as being

careful not to think that we know better than someone else. That leads to judging, and who knows another person's heart but God. This is part of loving God and neighbour.

Being loving is one of those essential things. We don't always succeed, but we try.

What about same sex marriage? It's not a subject Jesus ever speaks about. He barely says anything at all about marriage. Jesus is concerned with telling people about the Kingdom of God and healing people so they can join in the community. Even if we include the entire Bible, there aren't many passages involving homosexuality, and none as a long-term committed relationship. Based on the amount of time spent on this topic in the Bible, it isn't an "essential thing". If we use the statement from the reformation as a guide, this would fall under something that we do not need to be united in.

We do need to remember that last line, *"and in all things: charity."* This means recognizing that you don't know everything, and assuming that others are acting out of the best of intentions. That is also part of loving God and our neighbour.

and together, we may glorify God forever
Amen.



Trust in the Lord - Ivan Guaderrama

¹² [When you're sinking - July 4](#)

¹³ presbyterian.ca/2018/02/13/moderator-issues-letter-repentance-lgbtqi-community/

¹⁴ Romans 12: 15-18 JB Phillips translation



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: Help us to help each other.....pg 9 (489)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSyYAnUmU4

💬 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).

Etching: Share about a time when you felt respected and included.
 and a time when you didn't.

Wonder: Wonder together what the world would be like if everyone left Jesus to do the judging, while everyone focused on making sure no harm came to anyone or any part of creation.

Etching: While it's not this simple, looking at where someone, or an organization, spends their money does say something about what they consider to be essential or important. Does how you spend your time and money reflect your values? Where would you like to see Kensington focusing?

Values: Practice explaining to a friend what a Christian is.

Actions: Go through Romans 12: 14-18 and decide on something practical you could do this week. Hold each other accountable.

Actions: Pray for people struggling with marriages being between any two people (before God, family and friends), and for those struggling with their gender identification.

✦ Spirit Sighting

One of the ways I saw the Spirit at work this week was at Presbytery. People with opposing views about marriage being open to any two adults before God, family and friends reached out to support the other's ability to hold a different understanding - people who hadn't in the past and who I expected to push their interpretation instead of offering a hand.

It gives me hope that we will be able to shift our focus to how to love God and neighbour while, "*in all things: charity.*"

✦ 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

God of grace and mercy,

Thank you for the welcome that you offer us all,
 for your loving embrace that accepts us as we are
 and assures us of our place at your table.

Today we pray for those who have felt rejected or ignored in our community for any reason,

including their sexual orientation or gender identity.
 With your healing Spirit, ease the pain people feel today
 or remember from past encounters.

Soothe those with thoughts of self-harm,
 and assure them of your deep love for them.

Bring comfort and encouragement to all who struggle to be who
you created them to be.
May their gifts be recognized and valued.

God of connection and commitment,
Thank you for friends and family who offer us your gift of
belonging,
who remind us of who you are,
helping us to see you in new ways
and who remind us of we are to you
helping us through the changes that happen in the world
and in ourselves as we journey through life.
May we all find ways to share our struggles and questions,
and understandings of you.
May we also find ways to humbly love each other
with the grace that you offer us.
Valuing those who are like us,
and those who are different parts of the body.
Help us to celebrate our diversity.

God of healing and peace,
Thank you for those with the gifts to bring healing,
in medicine and administration of our medical system, or
social services, or the work of the St. Andrew's Homes
Foundation.
bring healing and peace to bodies and minds,
and thank you for those teaching us how to love broader,
and to bring healing and peace within the church.
Jesus, we pray for those in need of healing:
in body, mind or soul. . .

God of love,

Thank you.
Thank you for your love for us
that never falters no matter what we do or don't do.
Thank you that when we are stupid or ignorant,
you continue to hold our hand.
Help us to reach out to those who are different than us,
to hold their hands when they are weeping or celebrating,
and to realize what we have in common.
Your grace and love.

*In Jesus name,
Amen.*

♪ Hymn: I am the church.....pg 12 (475)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=50kEqdXz3ao

✦ Benediction (Micah 6:8 & 2 Corinthians 13:14)
*God has shown you what is good.
So as you go from here
act justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with your God.*

*and know that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.
Amen.*



"Here I am, Lord," rang out at the 88th Commencement Service of the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Lebanon, a seminary supported by Presbyterians

Sharing. NEST graduates, Jamil, Khalil, Shant and Asadour, will serve churches in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon—three of the most troubled countries in the Middle East that are rife with violence, oppression, occupation, and severe economic, social and political crises. The hymn was their bold response to God's calling. NEST President, Dr. George Sabra, declared, "If our seminary is able to continue graduating students with such commitment, then we must go on with our mission no matter what befalls us and our countries."



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, January 23 We pray for graduates of the Near East School of Theology in Lebanon, who are responding to God's call and serving churches in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon.

Monday, January 24 We pray for ministers and elders. May God keep them safe and give them energy and wisdom to lead their faith communities.

Tuesday, January 25 (Conversion of Paul the Apostle) We pray for those who violently persecute the church in attempt to destroy it. May they, like the Apostle Paul, have a change of heart.

Wednesday, January 26 We give thanks for mothers, like Eunice, and grandmothers, like Lois, whose faith inspired mentors such as Paul to Titus (2 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:15).

Thursday, January 27 We pray for the members and work of the Atlantic Mission Society.

Friday, January 28 We pray for the wisdom to see the reality of racism and bigotry in the institutions of our country so that we may work to challenge and uproot these concepts in ourselves, our churches and our society.

Saturday, January 29 We pray for congregations as they gather for their annual general meetings.

Rev. Peter Kombeek
for Kensington Presbyterian Church

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Help us to help each other, Lord

DUNFERMLINE 8 6 8 6 CM

Chords: Eb /G Fm6 Eb Ab/C Bbsus4-3 Eb

1. Help us to help each oth - er, Lord, each
 2. Up in - to thee, our liv - ing Head, let
 3. Drawn by the mag - net of thy love let
 4. This is the bond of per - fect - ness, thy

Chords: Cm Bb/D Eb6 F Bb /D Eb Bbm6

oth - er's cross to share; let each our
 us in all things grow, and by thy
 all our hearts a - gree, and ev - er
 spot - less char - i - ty. Oh let us

Chords: Ab Bb6 Ab/C Eb Bb Eb Ab6 Cm Bbsus4-3 Eb

friend - ly aid af - ford and feel each oth - er's care.
 sac - ri - fice be led the fruits of love to show.
 to each oth - er move, and ev - er near - er thee.
 still, we pray, pos - sess the mind that was in thee.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788), alt Music: Scottish Psalter 1615

Words: public domain Music: public domain

God is love: come heaven, adoring

ABBOT'S LEIGH 87 87 87 87

D /F# F#m/A Bm /A G /B C/D D Bm (/D Bm) Em 6

1. God is love: come heaven, a - dor - ing; God is love: come
 2. God is love, whose arms en - fold - ing all the world in
 3. God is love, and though with blind-ness sin af - flicts all

D/F# Em/G/Gmaj7 Asus4-3 -G D/F# F#m/A Bm /A G /B C/D D Bm (/D)

earth, re - joice. Come cre - a - tion, voice - es soar - ing, sing ex -
 one, em - brace. with un - fail - ing grasp are hold - ing eve - ry
 hu - man life, God's e - ter - nal lov - ing - kind - ness guides us

Fm 6 D/F# Em/G/Gmaj7 A C /B D7/A Fm (/G) C6 (Am7) D7

ult - ing with one voice. God who laid the earth's foun -
 child of eve - ry race, and when hu - man hearts are
 through: all earth - ly strife. Sin and death and hell shall

Gsus 4-3 A (/G D6/F#) A7/E (D6 A9/C#) Bm/D F#7 Bm D/F# F#m/A Bm /D

da - tion, God who spread the heavens a - bove, God who breathes through
 break - ing un - der sor - row's i - ron rod, all the sor - row,
 nev - er o'er us fin - al tri - umph gain; God is love: so

C/F D/F# Bm/A Em/G B7/D# Em A7/E D/F# G D/A A7 D

all cre - a - tion— God is love, e - ter - nal love.
 all the ach - ing wrings with pain the heart of God.
 love for - ev - er o'er the u - ni - verse must reign.

Alternate tune: Hyfrydol

Words: Timothy Rees C.R. (1874-1939), alt Music: Cyril Vincent Taylor (1907-1991)

Words: this version copyright © The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1997 Music: copyright © 1942, renewal 1970 by Hope Publishing Co.



Mother's Love - Roxana Gonzales

Sing them over again to me

G C/D D7 G

1. Sing them o-ver a-gain to me, won-der-ful words of life;
 2. Christ, the bless-ed one, gives to all, won-der-ful words of life;
 3. Sweet-ly ech-o the gos-pel call, won-der-ful words of life;

G G/D D7 G

let me more of their beau-ty see, won-der-ful words of life;
 sin-ner, list to the lov-ing call, won-der-ful words of life;
 of-fer par-don and peace to all, won-der-ful words of life;

G C/G G C/G G

words of life and beau-ty, teach me faith and du-ty.
 all so free-ly giv-en, woo-ing us to heav-en.
 Je-sus, on-ly Sav-iour, sanc-ti-fy for-ev-er.

Words: Philip Bliss (1838-1876) Music: Philip Bliss (1838-1876)

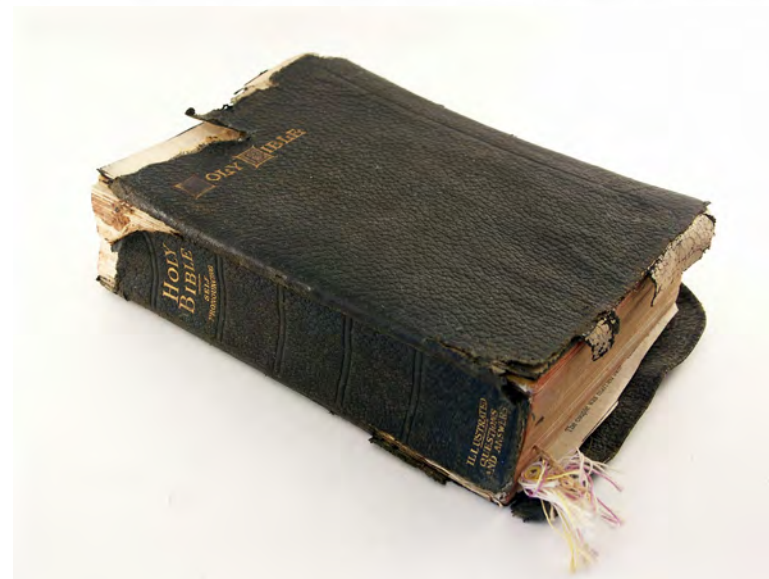
Words: public domain Music: public domain

Refrain D/F# G D 7 G

Beau-ti-ful words, won-der-ful words, won-der-ful words of life,

D/F# G D7 G

beau-ti-ful words, won-der-ful words, won-der-ful words of life.



The Church

475

I am the church! You are the church!

PORT JERVIS 7 7 8 6 with refrain

Refrain
G

Em7

I am the church! You are the church! We are the church to -

C/D D7 G Em

geth - er! All who fol - low Je - sus,

Am D Bm Em C/G G Fine

all a-round the world! Yes, we're the church to - geth - er!

Words: Richard Avery (1934-), and Donald Marsh (1923-) Music: Richard Avery (1934-), Donald Marsh (1923-)

Words: copyright © 1972 by Hope Publishing Co. Music: copyright © 1972 by Hope Publishing Co.

Verses G C C6

1. The church is not a build - ing; the church is not a stee - ple;
2. We're man - y kinds of peo - ple, with man - y kinds of fac - es,
3. Some-times the church is march - ing; some-times it's brave - ly burn - ing;
4. And when the peo - ple gath - er, there's sing - ing and there's pray - ing;
5. At Pen - te - cost some peo - ple re - ceived the Ho - ly Spir - it

D G C6 D D/C

the church is not a rest - ing place; the church is a peo - ple.
all col - ours and all a - ges, too, from all times and plac - es.
some-times it's rid - ing, some-times hid - ing; al - ways it's learn - ing.
there's laugh - ing and there's cry - ing some-times, all of it say - ing;
and told the Good News through the world to all who would hear it.

