

# Looking into yourself

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)



Shine - M Moyers

### Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559 ......info@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor)......Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca
514-773-4620
Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Zoé Dupont-Foisy (music director).....zoedupontfoisy@hotmail.com



#### Announcements

Clicking on or tapping blue text will take you to a web-site

**Re-opening:** We are once again welcoming people to worship in person (with singing), as well as through Zoom, YouTube and a printable PDF. If you have questions, please contact us.

**Prayer Group:** Thursdays 9 am at Benny Farm 3500 Benny Ave. Common Room beside central courtyard)

Visits: If you need a visit or prayer, please contact your elder or Rev. Peter.

The Choir: has started again. 

We practice Sunday morning.

**Black Cloth:** We would like to borrow some large black cloth to use Easter weekend - perhaps a table cloth. Can you help?

Mission & Outreach Committee: Do you have ideas about what might help or interest (y)our neighbours? Let us know. Kathryn is collecting ideas (and people): kathryn.baldwin@mail.mcgill.ca.

**Annual Meeting:** will be held <u>today</u> after church. Everyone is welcome to join us, either in person or through Zoom.

#### Ukraine:

This Presbyterian website contains a prayer and links to other information. <a href="mailto:presbyterian.ca/2022/03/04/praying-for-ukraine">presbyterian.ca/2022/03/04/praying-for-ukraine</a>

If you would like to support relief efforts, you can connect with the Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) <a href="mailto:presbyterian.ca/pwsd/2022/02/28/ukraine-crisis">presbyterian.ca/pwsd/2022/02/28/ukraine-crisis</a> or the Red Cross <a href="https://www.redcross.ca">www.redcross.ca</a>

I 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<sup>2</sup>

During Lent, God hears the desires of our hearts and chooses what is best for us.
God draws us into a deeper relationship,

offering us compassion, mercy and insight.

God hears and responds to our plans

when they honour God's purposes for creation.

While we don't always recognize it, sometimes our dreams can be distorted, harmful and not consistent with God's principles.

We praise God for when God says "yes" and for when God says "no."

Let us pray.

All-knowing God, you see and understand all things. You walk with us on the journey to Christian maturity, and we know that you provide us guidance and wisdom. Help us to follow your ways.

Make us patient when you correct us, forgive us when we resist your newness, and encourage us when we seek new ways of being.

Let our lives conform to the pattern of the life of Christ, in whose name we pray.

Amen.

\*Assurance of Pardon<sup>3</sup>

Hear these words from Joel & Paul
Return to the Lord your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

In Christ, we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!



The Lord is my light - M Moyers



To help us repent together, let us join in The Lord's Prayer.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

2/13

<sup>2</sup> from the Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D)

<sup>3</sup> based on Joel 2:13; 2 Corinthians 9:15, NRSV (Worship Sourcebook J.2.4.4)

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

Amen.



Listening to God

☐ Hymn: As Water to the Thirsty.....pg 12 (688)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwTraFUSFZI

Frayer for Illumination

Send your Spirit among us, O God, as we meditate on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Prepare our minds to hear your Word.

Move our hearts to accept what we hear.

Purify our will to obey in joy and faith.

This we pray through Christ, our Savior.

Amen.4

Reading: Please look up the passages in your own

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

<u>Isaiah 55</u>: 1-9 Psalm 63: 1-8

1 Corinthians 10: 1-13

<u>Luke 13</u>: 1-9

or for the more academically inclined, The New Oxford Study Bible NRSV

🗼 Sermon:

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

Speaking in front of another person can be difficult for some. Speaking in front of another person in a different language than you're used to can be even more of a challenge. When I was a child, one of the greatest lessons I was taught was to think before you speak. Even as an adult, I admit that I struggle with that lesson from time to time. A quick judgment or assumption can turn the conversation from what was an attempt at humour into an insulting gesture. I'm sure I'm not the only one to have experienced a moment like this, where our words which were meant to mean one thing was interpreted as another.

One of the privileges of the Presbyterian College is the opportunity to travel abroad for one week in our final *In Ministry* Year to engage with an intercultural experience trip. While the pandemic thwarted our travel plans, we made do in our college classroom. We learned several different things, many of which were things already in the back of our minds. They were simply not discussed until that week. What constitutes hospitality, what different forms of migration looked like, and so many other points of discussion that were not on the itinerary. One in particular that resonated with me was the use of language in pastoral care.

Throughout the week, students would share points about their own cultures and how they perceived the world around them. Some discussions centred on personal experiences which drew some reactions while others were humourous anecdotes on situations they found themselves in. We engaged in exercises that centred around our narrative, things that would highlight who we are and how we interact with other people. We learned that the

<sup>4</sup> Worship Sourcebook J.3.1.1

<sup>5</sup> If you'd like a new Bible with helpful notes, I recommend the 'Life with God Bible' NRSV from Renovaré. ISBN 0061834963

references and terms we use in our speech have certain limitations to certain people groups. If I referenced a television show or a movie that none of you has heard of, the reference would make sense to me, while the rest of you would look at me with bewildered looks on your faces.

Sometimes our use of language can have an emotional charge behind its usage. For example, if I were to complain about an individual who is being rude to me, I could utilize several paths to express my frustration. I could use clear and direct language to let the other person know how I'm feeling. I could use language that challenges a confrontation. I could even use some more colourful language, terms that I best not repeat in this setting lest I be prepared to receive a barrage of complaints from the congregation. Nevertheless, the paths that take on more confrontational language would naturally take a more emotional tone conveying a specific response.

As Christians, our use of language is vital to who we are. We use specific terms in our traditions to convey specific thoughts and actions which glorify the goodness of God. Yet we are also prone to using other kinds of language that provokes a less than wholesome response, even if it wasn't intended. God has given us the ability to critically think about our words and actions, how each of us can think before we speak or act. This is crucial to our human nature. For without it, we are not unlike the beasts of the earth, pulled by pure instinct. We cannot allow thoughtlessness to drive our reactions and thoughts. For God has given us that which allows us to see what our actions do. But, we are far from the ideal character of God's image, of one that is thoughtful and considerate in every thought and action that we consider and do.

When we speak to one another, sometimes what we intended to say doesn't get communicated quite right. What we may try to say out of what we think is love may actually come from a place of harm and selfishness. The Scriptures contain several moments of sarcasm and witty remarks, but the way it is written, some may not pick up on the tone of the words. Here is an example: "And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!"." Where do you suppose that comes from? For some who may not be fully versed in scripture, that may seem like a genuine moment where a crowd is calling out to the King of the Jewish people. Without its context, it seems like a normal salute. But where it actually comes from is Mark 15:18, where the Roman soldiers are mocking Jesus on the cross. Without context and understanding, its difficult to tell exactly what is being said. The same goes for our words and actions against one another.

Our words and actions may seem like good intended acts, yet to the other person, they may not. Sometimes we even convince ourselves that our actions are good when in fact they harm. Say you walk into a big box store and shoplift a piece of merchandise. You could try to justify your action by saying that it's a form of protest against a mega-corporation that makes billions of dollars of profit. They aren't going to miss that stick of gum, right? Or perhaps you see someone who you see is unhappy in their relationship and you try to get a little too close to them. What's the problem? Their unhappy with the way that their spouse is treating them, right?

Do we recognize when we sin? Sometimes we don't see it within ourselves and we have to turn to others to see the errors of our ways. So that stick of gum or that seemingly unhappy person might seem like a justifiable act, but when we really look within ourselves, we should know that is wrong. God has given us the very basic standards of what he expects of us. The ten commandments are outlined for us. Jesus even simplified it to two rules: love God and your neighbour. God could have chosen

Mark 15:18 (NIV)

not to reveal what he desires for us. It is good that we have a creator who so deeply cares for his creation.

God has given us every tool to live a good life. Our reading from 1 Corinthians tells us, "They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did". We are all baptized into God's loving hand. We eat the same bread and the same wine that all Christians are called to partake in each time we gather together at the Lord's Table.

We drink from the spiritual rock that is Christ. That is, we have Christ's example of perfect living to strive towards, inspired by his mercy and kindness. He is our source of goodness and righteousness. Yet, God was not pleased with his people. Their bodies were scattered, torn apart by the sin that grips upon us like a burning chain to a wall of darkness. We too are like those who are scattered. We know that the sin within us tempts us towards evil things just as it happened to our ancestors all those thousands of years ago.

1 Corinthians tells us to not be idolaters. "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry". Do we not sometimes act as idolaters in our lives, sorely tempted to take the shortcut and to indulge ourselves in things that we should not. To turn to that which delivers empty promises that only draw us further away from Christ? Do we sometimes trust the almighty dollar more than Christ? Do we place our belief in the power of ourselves, our politicians, or some other earthly force? Sometimes

it's hard to resist what we can sense in front of us.

1 Corinthians also tells us not to commit sexual immorality.<sup>9</sup> Does the flesh not present its own temptations, when beauty standards shove sexual practices right in our faces? When music artists throw every single sexual innuendo they can into their music, when advertising campaigns exploit standards of beauty to drive people of all ages to meaningless acts of immorality, it becomes impossible to avoid as people turn to superficial means to deceive and coerce so that they gain their earthly desires.

Most critically of all, 1 Corinthians tells us not to test Christ. <sup>10</sup> Jesus himself was tempted by this very thing. Matthew 4:5-7, "Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. If you are the Son of God, he said, throw yourself down. For it is written: He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. Jesus answered him, It is also written: Do not put the Lord your God to the test". <sup>11</sup> There are many of us who put Christ to the test. When our hearts are pulled away from God, doubt sets in. That doubt has a desire to be conquered by the expectations that we develop, to be answered by what is in front of us rather than the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is very clear on how we must live our lives as Christians. We inevitably succumb to sin and miss the expectations that God has for us. Whether it's through our actions or our thoughts, our perceptions are important to be aware of, for there are moments when we are blind to sin. There are also times when we don't focus on the right things. We sometimes tend to compare ourselves to others. The people that we see before us, the interactions we have regularly, each of these people brings a certain image that we perceive. When we see someone in a well-

<sup>7</sup> I Corinthians 10:2-6 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> I Corinthians 10:7 (NIV)

<sup>9</sup> I Corinthians I0:8 (NIV)

<sup>10 |</sup> Corinthians 10:9

II Matthew 4:5-7 (NIV)

dressed suit we think success. When we see someone in dirty hand-me-downs, we think failure. Sometimes those thoughts aren't conscious.

They are instinctual reactions that only come up just for a moment. Other times when we see people suffering or criminals facing trial, a part of us is secretly thankful that it isn't ourselves that undergo suffering or us facing that trial. Thank goodness it isn't me in that courtroom. Thank goodness it isn't my business being foreclosed. Thank goodness it isn't my home being bombarded by artillery fire. Poor them.

But are we not ourselves suffering? Are we not ourselves criminals facing trial? It is important, now more than ever, to take a good look at ourselves. When we pray the prayer of approach, sometimes known as the prayer of adoration and confession, do we pay attention to the confession part, or do we sometimes gloss over it? Sometimes we do indeed take personal responsibility for the failures in our lives, but there is not one single person here or currently living on this great green earth or anyone who has lived on this beautiful piece of creation or anyone who will ever live on this planet that will perfectly recognize and take responsibility for every single wrong action, wrong thought, wrong instinct, and wrong reaction that would satisfy the expectations that the Lord God has given us. His standards are so impossibly high that, on their own or even with the help of other people, none would have the capacity to reach that height, especially with the grip of sin weighing us down into the depths of the grave, pulling us deeper and deeper into darkness. No one, except Christ.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not

believed in the name of God's one and only Son". <sup>12</sup> John 3:16-18. It is only Christ that lived the sinless life that was required for our salvation. We are called to take part in that salvation, freely given to us.

But Christ also calls us to look within ourselves, to recognize that we are sinful beings, that we suffer from being separated from God. Our sin must be recognized and dealt with. Only through Christ can we be cleansed from that which binds us in the shadows. Jesus calls upon us to repent, to turn to him, or we too will all perish. He uses the parable of the fig tree. For three years, the fig tree failed to produce any fruit and the caretaker wanted to uproot it and use the soil for a tree that would actually bear fruit. But the other man says, leave it for one more year. If it bears fruit, it stays. If not, tear it down. But they do not simply leave the tree to its own growth. The soil is dug around the tree and fertilized.<sup>13</sup>

We are those fig trees refusing to bear fruit. Yes, we have the potential for good and we may make a genuine effort to do good in our lives, but our sin ultimately becomes our downfall as we give in to the temptations of violence and hatred, surrounding ourselves with fear and doubt, rather than trusting in Jesus. We are called to let the Holy Spirit work in our lives. We must repent, recognize the sins that we have committed, and strive to improve ourselves. We improve every aspect of our lives with technology, better building materials, and better ideas. Why can we not improve ourselves, our morality and dignity, through repentance?

We must turn to Jesus as the perfect example of love and compassion. We must understand ourselves and our actions towards others. Do not let fear and hatred rule our lives. Let us

<sup>12</sup> John 3:16-18 (NIV)

<sup>13</sup> Luke 13:6-9 (NIV)

turn to the love that Jesus calls us to strive towards. Let us recognize our sins and confess, truly confess, to the one true God who has the power to forgive and has given us the power of forgiveness in return. We are not perfect in our actions, but only through the work of the Holy Spirit can we hope to unite with Christ's salvation.



Craig Hannah

God fertilizes our souls with his Holy Spirit. He has dug around the growth of sin and allows for Christ to take part in our lives. But we must strive to grow in Christ. We cannot let God's work in our lives stand still. We must love one another openly and freely. We must use the gifts of reasoning and thought to conduct ourselves appropriately. Most importantly, we must place our trust in God alone. For it is only through God that we are saved from the evils of the world. Without God, we have no hope. He is our hope and salvation, and we are called to forever

worship his holy name through prayer, action, and listening to the word of God. When we repent, when we turn to God, we shall not perish. Indeed, God is good and he has given us his goodness to spread to all the nations. Let us take up the spirit of love and proclaim it to the nations who so desperately need to hear and feel God's loving presence.

To him be all the glory. Amen.



☐ Hymn: Ubi Caritas.....pg 13 (501)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9e QO1ATho

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: We are told in the Bible that our salvation is based on faith... so what about actions? What is the problem with the fig tree in Mark 13? What's the connection between faith and actions?

Memories: Who do you think of as a 'spiritual rock'? Describe them.

Values: Looking at your life, what is something you would like to keep doing & something that you would like to change (repent from)?

Actions: What do you do to help refocus on God's way? With whom do you hold yourself accountable?

\* Spirit Sighting

Today is the annual meeting, and it is wonderful the way the Holy Spirit has been working through all the people of Kensington over the last year. There is much to celebrate... and look forward to. I'm also excited by the concerns people have identified and are working to help with, and the dreams people have been sharing. God is with us.

## → 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.

## **F** Prayers of the people

God of compassion, we seek your guidance in our lives. When we are faced with confusing and frustrating moments, you offer us hope and light. We look to you for the lessons that you bring to us. You show us who we are and how we should live. We pray that you allow us to see ourselves, to see our shortcomings, and to inspire us to repent in your name. We pray that you be with us as we work to accept the Holy Spirit transforming our lives so that we may better love you and our neighbour. We give thanks for the lessons that we have learned, and the ones that we have yet to learn. You change our hearts, forging new paths for us to follow, even in the midst of chaos. We pray for those who cannot see the path you lay out for them, who feel confused or afraid in troubling times.

God of peace, in the face of so much conflict and hostility, we seek your loving embrace. We pray for those who are struggling with relationships that are tense and overwhelming. Bring your

spirit of peace upon your people and allow reconciliation to take place through your spirit. We pray for the relationships in our community and our country, that they may be rooted in love instead of bigotry. We especially pray for those living in Ukraine and Russia. Inspire the leaders to take up the mantle of peace and throw down the weapons of war. Let your righteousness descend upon the people and the leaders. We pray for all the other nations engaged with violent conflicts. May your spirit of peace descend upon them as well.

God of joy, we give thanks for the moments of celebration in our lives. We give thanks for the blessings that you have freely given to us. We pray for those who feel isolated from the joy that you bless your people with. Be with those who are facing loss and hardships in these times, and all those who are suffering from health conditions, poverty, or uncertainty in their employment or life situation. We take a moment now to pray for those who we keep in our silent hearts. (Silence)



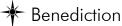
Mother's Love - Roxana Gonzales

God of compassion, we give you thanks for your presence among us. We seek your blessing among us. We pray for your inspiration in our leaders and volunteers. May you bless the work of their hands. We pray for each and every one of us at Kensington, that you enhance our love for one another, and to sustain us in the midst of the pandemic and that which challenges us. Receive these spoken prayers and the unspoken prayers of our hearts. Be with us as we go from this place to live out the commandments that you give us. Deepen our trust in you for the week ahead and be with our hearts this day and always. This we pray in your most holy name.

Amen.

☐ Hymn: Lead Us, Heavenly Father,.....pg 13 (647)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGsvbqErM2A



Amen.

As we go out into the world, let us carry the love and compassion that the Lord has blessed us with. Let us be a blessing to all those we meet, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, this day, and always. Amen.



#### Sunday, March 20

#### MISSION MOMENT

Through gifts to Presbyterians Sharing,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
is able to support many important
outreach ministries associated with
Cyclical PCC, a church planting
support initiative. One such ministry
is Cornerstone Ministries. Cornerstone



Ministries provides Christian hope and healing through innovative and supportive practices to struggling single moms and families in the Dunnville area of Ontario. Since moving most of their ministry work online, many more people have been positively impacted by Cornerstone. Through outreach, counselling and practical support, over 200 local families have come to know the God who loves them, helping them to blossom in faith, courage and wholeness.

#### DAILY PRAYERS

**Sunday, March 20** (Third Sunday in Lent) God of Life, help us to hear your Word to us in the scriptures so that we may become instruments of your saving love in the world.

**Monday, March 21** (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) God of Truth, we pray that your Spirit guides us to work in faithful solidarity to eliminate race-based violence and prejudice so that all people may flourish.

**Tuesday, March 22 (World Water Day)** We give thanks for the sacred gift of water. Let us work to ensure that all people have access to safe water in Canada and abroad.

**Wednesday, March 23** We pray for the members and work of the Life and Mission Agency Committee.

**Thursday, March 24** We pray for the Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM) and for Jennifer Martin and Leslene Laing as they support the 14 member churches.

**Friday, March 25** We pray for the people who gather and serve at the Anamiewigummig Fellowship Centre in Kenora, Ontario, and we give thanks for their mission and ministry.

**Saturday, March 26** We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Newfoundland.

## **Empowering Young Women in India**

The night her husband came home intoxicated and began arguing with her and physically abusing their one-month-old son, Murat knew she needed to get help.

Fearing for their safety, she approached a local group for assistance: a task force that had been established through a PWS&D-supported project in Bihar, India.

Murat was appreciative of the task force's quick actions. They intervened right away by contacting local police officers who arrested her husband and brought Murat and her baby to safety.

Since that night, Murat has attended training sessions through the project where she has learned how to handle potential crises and stand up for her rights.

While there is still healing that needs to take place, Murat and her son are being supported by her family and community after their difficult ordeal.

This Lenten season faithfully respond to Christ's call to serve those in need. Through support of PWS&D, we can help empower women and girls to advocate for their rights.

WeRespond.ca

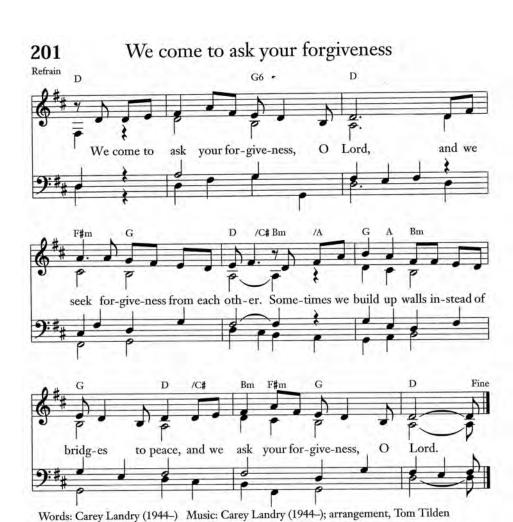




Church of Light cross - Ibaraki Kasugaoka



2103123308





Words: copyright © Carey Landry and North American Liturgy Resources, 1986 All rights reserved. Music: copyright © Carey Landry and North American Liturgy Resources, 1986. All rights reserved. CLI #4440603



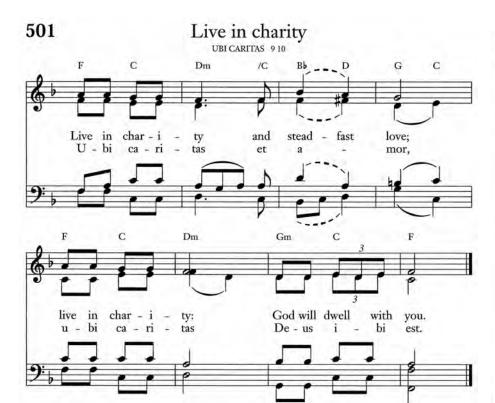
#### 688

#### As water to the thirsty



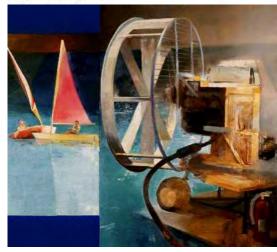


Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926–) Music: T. Brian Coleman (1920–) CCLI #4440603 Words: copyright © 1979 by Hope Publishing Co. Music: copyright © 1979 Stainer & Bell Ltd. & Methodist Church (UK) Division of Education & Youth. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Hope Publishing Co.

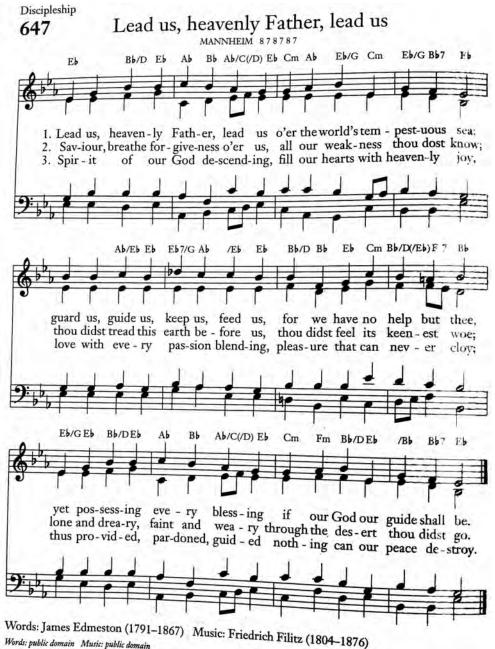


Words: traditional; translation, Taizé Community (France) Music: Taizé Community (France) Words: translation, copyright © Les Presses de Taizé (France), 1991. Used by permission of G.I.A. Publications Inc., exclusive agent. All rights reserved.

Music: copyright © Les Presses de Taizé (France), 1991. Used by permission of G.I.A. Publications Inc., exclusive agent. All rights reserved. CCLI #4440603



Wind blows wherever Phil Irish



Words: public domain Music: public domain