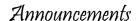
Kensington Presbyterian Church

Meeting us in our fear

December 4, 2022

WELCOME, to worship. We are offering a variety of ways for people to gather. We are welcoming people to worship n person (with singing), as well as through Zoom, YouTube, and this printable PDF. If this is how you are worshipping, know that you are not alone... and if you like, you can invite those who live with you to join you, or connect with others through the phone or 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)



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

Communion this week: All who want to know our Lord better are invited to join us the Lord's Supper. If you are celebrating from home you will have to provide your own elements.

WMS Women's Missionary Society: Our local chapter has decided to stop meeting. They would like to thank all the members of the congregation who have been so generous in their support over the years. We would like to thank them for all the good work they did and supported through their ministry.

Barbara Reich Funeral: Friday afternoon. For more information please contact Rev. Peter

Vacinations: Flu & Bivalent COVID Dec 6th Here in our building. No registration required.



Joyful Mystery - Janknegt

Advent Devotions: This year we have a lovely Advent devotional from Sanctified Arts. While it is daily, it also contains a variety of activities to invite you closer to God. Rev. Peter can print you a copy, or give you access to an online version.

Family explorations of Christmas around the world and Advent Calendars are also available.

presbyterian.ca/2022/11/01/ecumenical-advent

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

Christmas Pageant Service: Sunday, Dec. 18 at 10:30 a.m. Join us as we celebrate God in each other

Blue Christmas: a peaceful service: Wednesday, Dec 21 at 7:30 pm Christmas is not always an easy time. Please join us for this meditative service.

Caroling in the Community: Thursday, Dec. 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve: Saturday, Dec. 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Morning: Sunday, Dec. 25 at 10:30 a.m.

A fun worship for Jesus' birthday.

Advent Discussions: The moderator of the General Assembly will be hosting discussions with leaders of other denominations through advent. For more information visit:

Christmas Presents: Are you wondering what to get friends and loved ones who don't really need something more? We encourage you to donate to a project of your choice with the Presbyterian Church in Canada (including PWS&D and Canada Ministries projects) that you think would be most appreciated by the person you are giving the gift for/to. presbyterian.ca/donate/giving-tree-kensington-presbyterian-church-montreal

NDG Christmas Dinner: Dec 25 from 1 pm to 7 pm
The NDG Community Council is hosting a Christmas Dinner
for everyone, free of charge. It will be held at St. Ignatius Church

Choir: would like you to join them. We practice Sunday at 9:15.

Jesus & Java: Join us as we share the joys and questions of faith. Thursday, 3:30 pm at Beetz, 5914 Sherbrooke @ Clifton Thursday, 7 pm at 2nd Cup on Monkland

Drop Box: We are now accepting food donations to help the St. Monica's Food Pantry, AND items to help the young parents program at Head & Hands (ex. clothing, diapers, toys).

Contacts

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514-773-4620
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Zoé Dupont-Foisy (music director).....zoedupontfoisy@hotmail.com



Approaching God

Call to worship & Advent Candle
We are people of peace.

God seeks justice and compassion.

God listens to the cries of the vulnerable and longs for wars to cease.

We pray God's peace is at work in our hearts, our homes, our neighbourhoods and the world.

The second candle of Advent reminds us that we are called to live as people of peace.

We light this candle as an invitation to work for justice and peace.

(Light the candle of peace)

Let us pray:

Holy One, help us to fan the flame of peace.

May our lives reflect the warmth and wonder of this candle. Make your church a place of peace and sanctuary in our community.

Amen.²

² Provided by the Presbyterian World Services and Development 2022

Prayer of Confession³

Fear can be a good thing. It can help us be attentive while driving down the highway. It can alert us to possible accidents. It can motivate us to do our best.

However, fear can also be harmful.

For so many of us, fear of the other, fear of failure, or fear of the unknown has led us to make sinful choices in our lives—choices such as building walls or tearing others down.

Today, in confession, we ask for mercy and pray for guidance. As we confess, we come before an entirely merciful and loving God who says to us, "Do not be afraid."

Let us pray:

Patient God,
you know just how often
we make decisions from a place of fear rather than love.
You know just how often
we allow fear to take the place of logic,
fanning unhealthy fires in our lives.
You know just how often

we tuck your words, "Do not be afraid" on dusty shelves and in the back of closets, stubbornly holding onto our own point of view. Forgive us for giving fear the microphone.

Silence the voices of scarcity, shame, and rejection, which spark and feed so much of our fear, to recenter us in love.

With hope we pray, Amen.



Annunciation - Simone Martini 1333

Assurance of Pardon
Family of faith,
even when we forget God's words,
God does not forget us.
Even when we lose our way,
God does not lose us.
Even when we fall short or make mistakes,
God forgives and holds onto us.
We are known, forgiven, and loved.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

B by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.



Listening to God

Prayer for Illumination

Lord, open our hearts and minds

by the power of your Holy Spirit,

that we may be nourished by your Word.

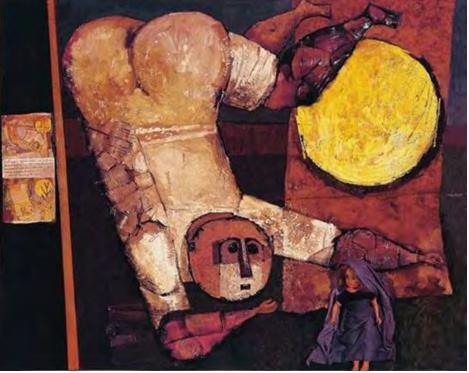
Amen.

☀ Intro to the readings

- Our first passage is from Isaiah and describes the one God will send and what the world will be like.
- This advent our passages focus on people in the story. Last week was the larger family. Today we hear about Mary.
 - Try to put your Christmas card images behind you. Angels are scary.
- Our responsive psalm isn't from the book of psalms. There are many other hymns/songs/psalms scattered throughout the scriptures. This one is sung by Mary, and contains many themes are emphasized in this gospel.

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

<u>Isaiah 11</u>: 1-10 <u>Luke 1</u>: 26-38 <u>Luke 1</u>: 46b-55



Annunciation - Senggih

Sermon: Meeting us in our fear

Dear Lord, please bless these words

and the meditations of our hearts.⁵ Amen.

"Do not be afraid"

It was the most searched for phrase within Bible Apps in 2020... the year the pandemic hit, and Black Lives Matter was recognized.

Fears

We have many.

This time of year brings Christmas stress. Can you be happy

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

enough for others... when you may not be feeling very jolly. Can you meet the family expectations? Will you give the right gifts? Can you afford them?

and that's on top of other fears: being able to afford housing & food, fear of getting sick, and falling outside, and being lonely inside.

These are real fears that suck the peace out of life.

and the Bible tells us "Do not be afraid"... a lot - 365 times... that's once for every day of the year!

Is it realistic?

Today's passage is a good example. Mary was just going about her day minding her own business, when an angel came to her. It starts with a friendly greeting - there's actually a pun in the Greek. Maybe Gabrielle thought to put Mary at ease with a joke? It didn't work.

Mary is 'perplexed', or when that word is translated elsewhere, 'disturbed' or 'terrified'. After all, angels are powerful - and represent the all powerful God. When someone who has power over you (and the universe) shows up, feeling fear is quite reasonable. Is she going to be judged? Even if you've been good, are you good enough for God?

Gabrielle goes on to say, "Do not be afraid, Mary." Why? Because there's a lot to fear.

Mary is being told she'll be a mother. In her society this is what she would hope for. This story follows right after the one about Mary's relative Elizabeth carrying the shame of not having children before becoming too old (until becoming pregnant just

six months earlier). Still, there are fears with becoming a mother. I wasn't a mother, but I remember worrying if I could do a good job. I remember fears about Ines being healthy. I can only imagine all the changes that happen in the body, from hormones to the belly. That it would feel unsettling... and bring some fear. Mary would also have known that she might not survive the pregnancy - another reason to fear.



Overshadowed - Patty Wickman

Then there's the added pressure that she will be carrying the 'son of God'. What will it be like? We don't know anything about her family, but she wasn't from a royal palace. She's from an insignificant village. What does she know about raising a king let alone The King? Can she do it? How do you feel when asked to do something you don't feel qualified to do?

And then there's the political side of that. Calling Jesus the

'son of God' and talking about him having a kingdom that lasts forever are two direct challenges to Rome. Caesar was the son of god, and Rome was the only empire that would last forever. How do you feel about standing up to the government here with our laws about free speech? How about getting sucked into a challenge to the dominant empire, and army, with no laws to protect you? This is a realistic source of fear.

and there's the social side. There would be the gossip and the stares following her at the market. Would Joseph divorce her? Would she be turned out of her parents home? If that happened, how would she provide a home for this baby, or herself? Would her neighbours kill her for having an affair? ...something that legally happened. Being faced with social stigma, exile, and even death - all good reasons to fear. Have you ever faced those choices? What would you do?

There's another aspect that needs to be mentioned with the awareness we have thanks to the 'Me Too' movement. Gabrielle said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son."

When we think about it, we remember that Mary lived in a different culture than we live in. One that openly accepted (expected) God to be an active participant in daily life. One that believed that God is all powerful over us people.

Still, in the light of the 'Me Too' movement we need to pause here for a minute. How would it be if a man in a position of authority came to a woman and told her the 'powers that be' are going to make her pregnant? In the last five years the 'Me Too' movement has revealed numerous leaders in society that have used their positions to make women do things they didn't want to, but couldn't say no to. Currently there is the call to examine

the culture of elite sports in Canada. If a leader in a Presbyterian church made a suggestion like Gabrielle's, they would immediately be suspended with an investigation.

Is Mary powerless in this situation?
Is she being taken advantage of?
Is she the good example we grew up thinking she is?

Yes. She is.

In the Bible Mary is portrayed not as a good woman, nor a good mother, as we don't have any details about that aspect of her. She is a good follower of God. And this isn't because she just says, 'Let it be' and passively goes along.

Have you wondered what you would do in her place? As I mentioned the various fears she would have had, have you wondered how you would respond?

Would you run away?

Would you jump with excitement? Would you ask questions?

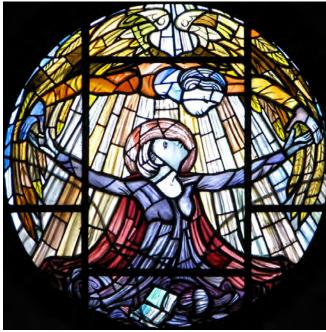
A few verses before our story Zechariah had a visit from an angel telling him his wife would have a son. He questioned whether that could happen at her age. In response to this challenge, Zechariah couldn't speak for nine months to consider whether something is impossible for God. Mary also asked a question. She wasn't so powerless that she couldn't talk back to the representative of the most powerful in the universe - which is a difference from 'Me Too' stories. Unlike Zachariah, Mary didn't doubt what God could do. Instead she asked for details. The answer isn't very scientific, but it seems to satisfy Mary.

Despite the fears, she accepts.

6/16

She accepts these risks that are being brought into her life by God. Risks to bring about God's Kingdom of justice and peace.

Does that relate to our fears? To the ones about money, or getting along with people, or our health? It might. Sometimes we can make choices that help reveal God, but cause us to feel at risk. Sometimes these hardships, or risks, or fears are to help build God's Kingdom - but not all the time. Sometimes they are not being asked of us by God. They are because the world is broken and God's Kingdom is not fully realized yet.



Embraced by Grace - Swaffham Church

It's an important distinction, but either way we can still learn from Mary's story. She could not conceive this by herself - she needed God to conceive this change in the world. We also can't change things by ourselves - but we can be a part of the change. We can be a part of challenging those who take advantage of others. We can address brokenness in the world, or in our lives.

We can be a part of bringing justice & healing to the world, to Montréal, to Kensington, and into our own lives.

Mary receives a message from God. She asks questions. She says yes, despite what might happen.

and she doesn't focus on the fears.

How do we know that?

When we live in fear our joy and hope is smothered. Despite, or because of, the questions Mary trusts God's plan and so gives her fears to God. This allows her to experience the world in a new way. This gives her courage for the present, and hope for the future. And this is more than just Christmas a card tradition, we know it because she can sing the Magnificat.

She recognizes that she is not a nobody, but through God she is important. That from generation to generation God will help those who believe to be filled with good things. That with faith like Mary the phrase "Do not be afraid" is realistic.

To God be all the glory Amen.



☐ Hymn: How firm a foundation.....pg 15 (685)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kA4bTqCiLQw

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

Memories: What did you used to be afraid of, but aren't anymore?

Etching: What are you afraid of? There can be real reasons for these fears.

Wonder: Are your fears from the brokenness of the world, or

the consequence of God inviting you to help bring

in the Kingdom of justice and peace?

Actions: How do your fears affect you?

Wonder: What questions do you have for God?

Wonder: Reread Isaiah's vision. Where do you see glimpses

taking place? How can Kensington help?

Prayer: ...help us hear your angels, ask good questions,

and accept your opportunities to share love, hope,

and healing.

Spirit Sighting

Jehan and her children fled their home in Afghanistan after the Taliban took over in 2021. "For many days, we were surviving on the streets of Islamabad. A kind man took us in," she explains. Now, they share a house in Pakistan with eight other refugee families.

Jehan found out that she was expecting her sixth child just before her husband died in crossfire between two rival groups in

Afghanistan. While she gave birth to a healthy baby girl, the family had left all of their belongings behind when they fled Afghanistan and she had nothing for the newborn. Jehan was also unable to afford food to meet the family's needs.

Earlier this year, Jehan and her family were selected to receive



cash assistance from a PWS&D project supporting Afghan refugees in Pakistan. With this aid, she was able to buy food and other life-giving essentials for herself and her kids.

🖊 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

☐ Hymn: All who hunger, gather gladly.....pg 16 (534)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEJSJskgcb0

☀ Invitation to the table

Every month we gather together and share this same story. The story of a Messiah who gathered his friends together for one last supper. The story of a Messiah who loved us so much he just couldn't stay away.

Why do we do this over and over again? Because, like water in the desert, our spirits need to hear it. We need to be reminded that God has drawn close to this fearful world. We need to be reminded that God couldn't stay away.

So friends, bring the parts of you that feel like the desert, and share in this good news.

C'est la volonté de Dieu

que tous ceux qui veulent connaître Jésus devraient partager ce repas.



As we come together to share the Lord's Supper, we also come together with a statement of faith that we share with Christians of many types, around the world and through the centuries.

Apostles' Creed

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

creator of heaven and earth.

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

Great prayer of thanksgiving
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.

Holy God,
we take a deep breath in
and know that, like the air,
you are all around and within us.
As we breath in and out,
you connect us with the rest of creation.
With the trees that clean our air,
the plants and animals that nourish us;
that we are all amazingly connected
and that you have asked us to look after creation.

We are sorry for forgetting these marvels, and not living our responsibilities.

Now, though, we join with 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.

Soon we shall hear the angels sing loud Hosannas as the Shepherds hear the good news.

The shocking news that you came, not as a king or a general leading an army of angels but as a baby,

born to an unknown woman from a nowhere town.

That you were going to fix the world by changing ordinary people.

That you for being someone we can approach.

even though there is still much about you we don't understand Like why you value us so much,

and why you want to involve us, even when we look away, and why you will continue to help us even when it leads to your suffering even when we killed you.

...Together, we proclaim the mystery of the faith.

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

So today, we bow our heads with tender spirits and ask that once more you would lean in close.

Hear our prayers.

Lift our hearts.

Breath your Spirit into us so we might know peace.

Because these days, God, we have much to fear:

- We fear the increased inflation and what we can afford
- We fear the rise of the flu and the return of a COVID variant that could once again shut down the world.
- We fear the increase in violence.
- We fear global warming. What world are we leaving our children?
- We fear rejection, we fear grief, we fear not being enough.

And so we come to you today, because you are a God who said, "Do not fear".

We come because you come alongside us and refuse to leave us alone

We come because you invite us to see hope and joy and to give our fears to you so we may know your peace.

We come because you are in all things, even humble and ordinary things such as bread and a cup.

We pray that as we share your bread and your cup. your Spirit will make them alive so that we may be closer to you and be strengthened by you until you come again.

As we taste your story of good news, let us once again speak the prayer your son taught us to pray, saying:

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.



The Last Supper Painting 2 - Ivan Guaderrama



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]

Prayer after Communion

Loving God,

You have given us a share in the feast of your peaceable Kingdom, symbolized by the bread and cup.

Vous êtes ici maintenant avec espoir et amour, and continue to bring us all into your love, hope and healing. so that we may share it with all the world.

Amen.

☐ Hymn: My soul gives glory to my God.....pg 14 (123) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrlTjkJl-8Y

╆ Benediction

As you leave this place, may you go knowing that from generation to generation,
we have been claimed and loved.
From generation to generation,
God has been by our side.
From generation to generation,
we are not alone.

The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying, "Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon."

May it be so.

Amen.6



Rev. Peter Rombeek for Kensington Presbyterian Church

Sunday, December 4

MISSION MOMENT

"Where is God in all of this oppression and injustice?"
Upon hearing the anguished cries of Palestinian Christians,
Palestinian clergy felt it was crucial to respond pastorally
and remind them that God is the God of justice, the God
who cares about the oppressed. These Christians need
God's hope. In 1989, Palestinian Christian theologians
developed a theology that could be shared with fellow
Palestinian believers. This led to the establishment of Sabeel
Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem, an



ecumenical grassroots liberation theology movement. **Presbyterians Sharing** supports Sabeel and Director, Omar Haramy, in standing with the oppressed, working for justice and engaging in peacebuilding.

DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, December 4 (Second Sunday of Advent) Give us peace in our relationships, homes, churches, communities and in our souls, O God, as we prepare to welcome Christ among us again.

Monday, December 5 We pray for Omar Haramy, Director of Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem, and Palestinian Christians as they work for justice and engage in peacebuilding.

Tuesday, December 6 Today marks 33 years since the École Polytechnique massacre in Montreal, Quebec. On this day in 1989, 14 women were killed and other women, as well as men, were wounded. We pray for healing and comfort for all who lost loved ones that day and for an end to the misogyny that leads to gender-based violence.

Wednesday, December 7 We pray for the development and implementation of stronger laws and policies that protect women and their rights.

Thursday, December 8 We pray for the people who gather and serve at Hummingbird Ministries in Vancouver, British Columbia, and we give thanks for their ministry.

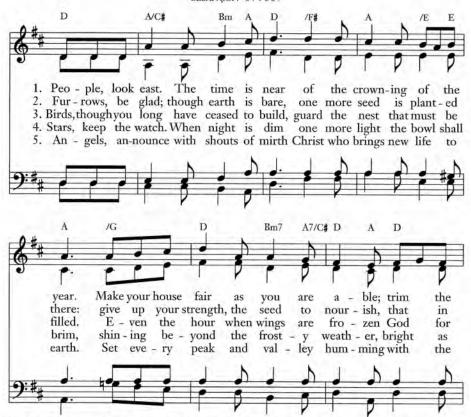
Friday, December 9 We pray for the Continuing Education Grants Committee, which meets this month at the national office of the PCC.

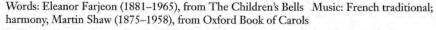
Saturday, December 10 (Human Rights Day) We pray for individuals and organizations defending human rights in Canada and around the world. We pray for their safety and the safety of those they support and protect.

⁶ by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

People, look east

BESANÇON 879887





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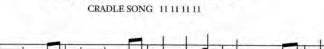
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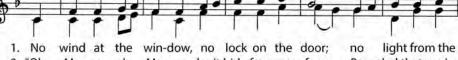




Words: Miriam Therese Winter (1938-) Music: anonymous, 1811; in Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music 1813; harmony, C. Winfred Douglas (1867–1944) CCLI #4440603

Words: paraphrase, copyright @ Medical Mission Sisters, 1978, 1987 Music: public domain





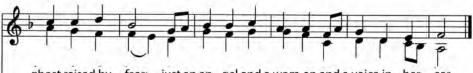
- Ma-ry, oh Ma-ry, don't hide from my face. glad that you're
- 3. "This child must be born that the king-dom might come sal - va - tion for
- pay-ment was prom-ised, no prom-is es made; wed-ding was





floor; no dream born of lamp-stand, no foot on the tired-ness, no fa-voured and filled with God's grace. The hour for re - deem - ing ma - nv, de - struc-tion for some; both end and be - gin-ning, both blue - print dis - played. Yet Ma - ry, con - sent - ing to dat - ed, no





ghost raised by fear; just an an - gel and a wom-an and a voice in her ear. world has be - gun; and you are re-guest-ed to moth-er God's son." both vic-tor and vic-tim, both yours and di - vine." mes -sage and sign, what none could guess, re - plied with con-vic-tion, "Tell God I say yes.



Text: John L. Bell, b.1949; © 1992, WGRG, c/o Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent Music: William James Kirkpatrick (1838–1921); harmony, Eric H. Thiman (1900–1975)

Music: harmony, copyright @ The United Reformed Church in the UK/Oxford University Press

How firm a foundation

ST. DENIO 11 11 11 11 G C Am D Em G/D D 7 G foun - da - tion, ye saints of Lord, with thee; oh not dis be mayed! 2. "Fear not, am call thee to 3."When through the deep wa - ters go, path - way shall lie, 4. "When through fi - ery tri - als thy 5. "The soul that on leaned for re pose le - sus hath D 7 G D G/D C Am laid faith in God's ex - cel - lent word! for your aid; thy God, and will still give thee For am woe shall not thee o - ver flow, of the riv - ers grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup ply: my his foes; will not- I will not- de sert to



Words: K in Rippon's Selection of Hymns 1787 Music: Welsh hymn Words: public domain Music: public domain

All who hunger, gather gladly



Charles Anders (1929-)

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