



Kensington Presbyterian Church  
*Growing in faith and sharing God's love*  
 since 1786

## *What's needed for God?*

*February 9, 2025*

**WELCOME**, we come to you from the un-ceded lands of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation.

We're glad this PDF has come to you.<sup>1</sup> If you're using a device, clicking on or tapping blue text will take you to a web-site. We are also welcoming people to worship in person on Sundays at 10:30, over Zoom, and on YouTube. Know that you are not alone.

If you have any prayer requests, ideas, or just want to talk, please reach out to your elder or Rev. Peter (Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca).



### *Announcements*

**Sunday Singing:** Join Zoé on Sundays at 9:15 to share in the music.

#### **Prayer Groups:**

**Zoom:** Wednesday 6:30 am

**Woman's Prayer Group:** Thursdays 2-3:30 pm at Cathy's house  
 talk to Ines or Cathy for more information

**Bible Study** on Luke: Wednesday 7-8 pm over zoom and in person

**Jesus & Java:** Thursday, 3:30 pm at Beetz, 5914 Sherbrooke @ Clifton  
 A casual discussion about life and God

**Drop Box:** Food donations are welcome for the Food Pantry at  
*Women on the Rise*, and items for children (ex. diapers) for young  
 mothers through Head & Hands.

<sup>1</sup> note: that the footnotes are not as thorough as an academic paper.



Embodying Forgiveness - Bernard Racincot

#### **Sanctuary Mental Health exploration: Fridays**

6:30 pizza (RSVP with Peter appreciated)

followed by video and discussion exploring key mental health  
 topics and examining meaningful ways to offer companionship,  
 support recovery, and promote wellbeing.

### *Contacts*

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## Approaching God



### Lighting of the Christ Candle

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



### Call to worship

We gather in your presence, God,

**in our need,**

**and bringing with us the needs of the world.**

We come to you, for you came to us in Jesus,

**and you know by experience what human life is like.**

We come with our faith and with our doubts;

**we come with our hopes and with our fears.**

We come as we are, because you have invited us;

**and you have promised never to turn us away.<sup>2</sup>**



Granlund, Resurrection

Resurrection - Granlund

♪ Hymn: My hope is built on.....pg 10 (349)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tf3u0TbVz2c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tf3u0TbVz2c) (choir & organ)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoPcy2oYhg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoPcy2oYhg) (gentle band)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=28\\_a12s-RhY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28_a12s-RhY) (family)



### Prayer of Approach

Loving God,

you gather us here this morning

here, where many have come before us

seeking your healing, strength and love.

You know us, God:

you understand who we are,

you know what troubles and puzzles us,

what makes us smile and what makes us sad.

You listen to our questions and our prayers.

You know the people we love, God,

and the people we struggle with.

Sometimes we hurt others;

sometimes we hurt ourselves.

So, we bring our own hurt

asking for your healing,

and we bring the hurt we have caused others

asking for forgiveness.

...

Listen to these words of Jesus,

words that we can trust:

<sup>2</sup> Iona Abbey Worship Book 2017. Service of prayers for healing A



♪ Hymn: Jesus, lover of my soul.....pg 11 (676)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFaiiPv-Q6I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFaiiPv-Q6I)

## 🧘 Prayer for Illumination

Lord, open our hearts and minds  
through the power of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may know you better.

Amen.

## ✨ Intro to the readings

Last week we heard about Jesus doing things on the Sabbath that some people found upsetting. However Jesus was healing and letting his disciples 'harvest' on the Sabbath to remove distractions/barriers from focusing on God. Then he prayed all night and chose 12 of the disciples to become apostles, or messengers with authority, to help spread the good news.

After that Jesus did some teaching. He calls people to go above and beyond what is expected when helping others. He reminds them that no-one is perfect (log in your own eye), so don't judge. He challenges them to go beyond not judging and to love even their enemies. He then questions those who call him "Lord" but don't do what he says. They are like a house built on the sand.

After this Jesus and his followers return to Capernaum - where Jesus had already taught, healed, and called several disciples.

Before Anne reads, two notes.

The second story is set in Nain. This is about 40 km outside of Capernaum and in the region of Nazareth. In Capernaum people liked Jesus, but I wonder if news of his last time in Nazareth had spread to neighbouring towns - including that they'd tried to kill their hometown boy as a dangerous heretic.

We'll also hear the word 'fear'. While this can mean scared or afraid, like we often use it, when referring to God the word 'fear'

is a combination of awe and anxious.<sup>4</sup> In today's passage we'll be told that "*Fear seized all of them, and they glorified God.*" Remembering that 'fear' includes 'awe' helps this make sense.

As you follow the stories, consider what these stories say about us, and about God.

📖 Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,<sup>5</sup> or click on the name to be taken to an online version.

[Luke 7: 1-17](#)

[Psalm 119: 105-107](#)

## ✨ Sermon: What's needed for God?

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

So, what do these stories say about us? and about God?  
To get at these questions, let's look at what's going on?

The big event in each story is a healing: the centurion's slave and the widow's son. The slave is officially not a person, they are an object belonging to their owner. This could mean a horrible life, but not necessarily in Roman. It depended on the owner and their role in the household. The only son of the widow would be the opposite. He was the only hope for the family continuing. One is officially unimportant, the other very important - and

<sup>4</sup> Thanks to the Bible Study group with pairing those two words.

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





What's this say about us? That it doesn't matter how important you are in the world, you are important to God.

The people at the resurrection, those following Jesus and the locals at the funeral, all realize something about Jesus. One seeing the son raised from the dead they don't assume he is God, but do assume is powerfully connected with the Divine - like the great prophets of old. Both Elijah and Elisha raised people from the dead. Elijah even raised the son of a widow... an event Jesus referred to in his sermon back in Nazareth. This time he gets better reviews - and the news spreads over throughout the region.



Roman (gentile).....Jew  
Centurion.....Mother  
has Authority.....no power  
wealthy.....no money  
well thought of.....did have a crowd at the funeral  
humble..... ??  
had hope.....probably no hope  
had expectations.....no expectations  
asks Jesus.....doesn't directly ask,  
but is obvious in need  
faith in Jesus.....may not know who Jesus is  
might even have been offended  
or insulted at his intrusion

Which is part of what the comparison says about God. God notices everyone. God listens to what is said, and what is felt.

Another aspect of God this comparison reveals is that God doesn't help because of what we've done. Jesus didn't help the Centurion because he was important to the local Jews and had helped them out. Jesus was impressed with the Centurion's faith, but the next story shows that that isn't why Jesus helped. If it's not something that we do or believe that gets God to help us, then what? God helps out of love and mercy.

This leads to some good questions.

What about those who ask for healing and it doesn't happen? These stories don't address that. On Friday night in the mental health series we heard from someone struggling with various illnesses. He shared that there were lots of times he didn't feel God, but occasionally he did. This gave him comfort and hope. The video also reminded us that many of the psalms are laments that acknowledge those times when we don't feel God's presence. Healing doesn't come to everyone like it does in these stories, but Jesus does; and when Christ comes again all will be well.

The other questions that can come from the comparison are directed more at us as followers of Jesus. If God doesn't have pre-conditions on offering compassion... do we? If Jesus will interrupt his journey/plans to give compassion... will we?

I want to touch on one other aspect to what's going on that will reveal something about us and God. It comes out of our Wednesday Bible study (everybody is welcome to come online or in person): Boundaries.

There are all sorts of boundaries in these stories: class, race, and the physical. Jesus meets the dead son at the gate to the town. And, of course, the boundary of death and life. You could say that Jesus was standing on all those boundaries, or breaking them, or crossing them... or bridging them. This reminds us that

God is working in the boundaries between what we might think divides us. Instead Jesus crosses the boundaries - even bridges them so that we can cross as well.

And the boundaries message for us? It's similar to the other messages. If you feel like you are disconnected or out of reach, know that God crosses boundaries. If we bring in the other lessons we can have the assurance that God will cross those boundaries whether we deserve it or not, simply because God loves us and has compassion for us.

While this may not mean a miraculous return to health, I pray that it brings healing.

I want to leave you with a story. I think I've told it before, but not in quite a while - and it fits. Greg Paul was called to minister to people in downtown Toronto.<sup>6</sup> In his book *'God in the Alley'* he shares various stories about meeting God in the people who live on the streets, and others. The first chapter is about his relationship with a man with AIDS. While his background said he should disapprove of homosexuals, he felt he should cross that boundary. Initially the relationship was cold. He was asked to pick up groceries. Then he was invited into the man's house to help with chores - and they would talk. He would talk him to appointments.

They grew closer, seeing each other as children of God. But the story doesn't stop there. One day when



<sup>6</sup> [www.sanctuarytoronto.org/gregp](http://www.sanctuarytoronto.org/gregp)

Greg stopped by he nobody answered. Knowing the man's health had been getting worse Greg went in. He found him so weak in bed that he hadn't been able to get out to go to the washroom. Greg carried his light frame to the bathtub. As he washed the man he was reminded of Jesus washing the disciples feet. That he was blessing the man as Jesus did... but he was also deeply aware when the man placed his hand on Greg's head that that man was blessing him as God blessed him. God had bridged their differences, blessing each of them, and bringing healing - not physical healing, but peace and love through compassion.

This doesn't just happen in the Bible. God is reaching out to us, and through us, in unexpected ways regardless of what somebody is 'worth' - because God loves and has compassion for you.

To God be all the glory  
Amen.



### *Responding to God*

♪ Hymn: Arise, your light has come.....pg 12 (712)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=X\\_ao8lNaVHc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_ao8lNaVHc)

- 💬 FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies.  
Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).  
Values: Describe what it means to you that God loves and reaches out regardless of what we've done, or even our faith. How could this impact what you say or do?  
Memories: If compassion means 'Caring a whole lot with another person', then when have you felt compassion? Do you have a big example?

Memories: I shared one of Greg Paul's stories about finding God in the divides/boundaries/margins. Can you think of any stories?

Wonder: What are some boundaries that divide people? How could God be building a bridge? Could we help?

Values: Think of different times you've helped people. What makes you want to help?

Wonder: Do we, or you, have pre-conditions on offering compassion?

Prayer: ...that Jesus will bring healing to our lives,  
and use us to bring healing to others.

### ✦ Spirit Sightings

Rev. Francisco Marrero-Gutiérrez, a retired pastor and former dean of the reformed Seminary in Matanzas Cuba, was having difficulty completing his PhD due to the rolling blackouts and limited access to research data. Learning about this from the Rector of the Seminary, and their hopes for his teaching the students, the PCC agreed to host him for four months. His work is on the reading of the Bible in the revolutionary context of Cuba. This is one of the ways that *Presbyterians Sharing* has supported leadership development.

### ✦ Offering

Financially, we have set up a donation option on our **website**: [kensingtonchurch.ca](http://kensingtonchurch.ca). Just click the 'Donate Now' button, and then the pretty button. It gives you various options that are easy to follow.

You can also donate through **interac e-transfer**. Our name is Kensington Presbyterian Church and the e-mail address is [info@kensingtonchurch.ca](mailto:info@kensingtonchurch.ca).

Mailing a cheque or signing up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (**PAR**) are also good options.



## Prayers of the people

This week we will be passing around our prayer diary and having a prayer based on that. You are welcome to create your own prayer based on this<sup>7</sup>...

Lord Jesus,  
healer,  
restorer,  
reconciler,  
hear our prayers for our world,  
our community,  
and for ourselves.

We pray for your creation, Lord,  
our home and source of life,  
a world of so much diversity and beauty,  
a world of abundance that  
reflects your overflowing generosity  
and hospitality.

We pray for this world as it groans  
under the weight of our desires and expectations  
for cheap energy,  
for cheap food,  
for cheap clothing,  
for cheap communication,  
for cheap living.

And we know, all the while,  
that somewhere the cost for our expectations  
has to be paid,

and too often it is paid  
by the very environment on which we rely,  
by people paid scant wages,  
by communities who have few choices.

May we recognize the cost of our living,  
and seek reconciliation and restoration.

We pray for people within our communities, Lord,  
who know, even this very day,  
heartache and heartbreak,  
for families that have torn apart,  
for relationships broken,  
for the burden that grief brings,  
for the isolation that loneliness entails,  
for the unwell and  
for those with life-limiting illnesses.

May we strive to bring  
healing to those who are suffering,  
hope to those whose dreams of fulfillment lie shattered,  
new beginning to those who are ready to give up,  
and may we recognize any part we might have played  
in the pain of others  
and seek reconciliation and restoration.

Now hear us, Lord,  
as we take time to bring to mind  
people and situations into which  
we can breathe your healing grace,  
and convict us to action.

...Silence

<sup>7</sup> from *Spill the Beans* #21



Now hear our prayers,  
healing Lord,  
as we bring them to you,  
in your holy name.  
Amen.

♪ Hymn: Where Charity and Love Prevail.....pg 12 (692)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7vSCcbgAEI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7vSCcbgAEI)

## ✦ Benediction

Like our call to worship and opening prayer, our blessing comes from the Iona Abbey Worship Book. This blessing is adapted from a collection of prayers and blessings collected in the highlands and islands of Scotland.<sup>8</sup>

God to enfold us,  
**God to surround us.**  
God in our sleeping,  
**God in our waking.**  
God in our watching,  
**God in our hoping.**  
God on our lips,  
**God in our lives.**  
Amen.



8 Iona Abbey Worship Book 2017. Service of prayers for healing A

## MISSION MOMENT

Sunday, February 9

With rolling blackouts and limited access to research data, the Rev. Francisco Marrero-Gutiérrez, a retired pastor, former Dean and Vice-Rector of Seminario Evangélico de Teología in Matanzas, Cuba was struggling to complete his PhD. At the request of the Rector and hearing that increasing their teaching capacity is a top priority for the Seminary, the PCC agreed to host Francisco so he could concentrate on his research. Supported by Presbyterians Sharing, Francisco spent four months in Canada researching and writing his doctoral dissertation on the hermeneutics in revolution, a critical analysis of the reading of the Bible in Cuba. Gifts to Presbyterians Sharing support leadership development.



## DAILY PRAYERS

**Sunday, February 9** We pray for Professor Francisco Marrero-Gutiérrez at the Seminario Evangélico de Teología in Matanzas, Cuba as he completes his doctoral dissertation.

**Monday, February 10** We pray for the graduates of all our colleges that friendships of honesty, integrity and candour would flourish for the sake of building up the body of Christ.

**Tuesday, February 11** We pray for the mission projects supported by the Atlantic Mission Society.

**Wednesday, February 12** We pray for those currently serving as General Presbyters. May God's grace and wisdom be with them as they carry out their presbytery responsibilities.

**Thursday, February 13** We pray for the Committee on Church Doctrine as they meet this month to discuss how Presbyterians can be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ in a changing world.

**Friday, February 14** We celebrate the gift of love that Presbyterians are generously sharing in communities across Canada.

**Saturday, February 15** We pray for Hummingbird Ministries, where Indigenous people may encounter Jesus Christ and simultaneously uphold Indigenous Circle practices, and for its director, the Rev. Mary Fontaine.

# My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

1 My hope is built on nothing less than Je - sus' blood and  
 2 When dark-ness veils his face, I rest on his un -  
 3 His oath, his co - ve - nant, his blood, sup - port me in the  
 4 When he shall come with trum - pet sound, O may I then in

right - eous - ness: I dare not trust the sweet - est frame, but  
 chang - ing grace; in ev - every high stor - my gale, my  
 whelm - ing flood; when all a - round my soul gives way, he  
 him be found: in his right - eous - ness a - lone, he fault -

## Refrain

whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name,  
 an - chor holds with - in the veil  
 then is all my hope and stay,  
 less to stand be - fore the throne.

o - ther ground is sin - king sand; all o - ther ground is sin - king sand.

Text: Edward Mote (1797-1874)

Tune: William B. Bradbury (1816-1868)

## Jesus, lover of my soul

ABERYSTWYTH 7777 D

Em Em/B B Em B Em B7 Em B

1. Je - sus, lov - er of my soul, let me to thy bos - om fly,  
 2. Oth - er ref - uge have I none; hangs my help - less soul on thee.  
 3. Thou, O Christ, art all I want; more than all in thee I find:  
 4. Plen - teous grace with thee is found, grace to cov - er all my sin;

Em F Em/B B7 Em B G Am6

while the near - er wa - ters roll, while the tem - pest  
 Leave, ah! leave me not a - lone; still sup - port and  
 raise the fal - len, cheer the faint; heal the sick and  
 let the heal - ing streams a - bound; make and keep me

Em/B B7 Em C G C Am6 G D7 G

still is high: hide me, O my Sav - iour, hide,  
 com - fort me. All my trust on thee is stayed;  
 lead the blind. Just and ho - ly is thy name;  
 pure with - in: thou of life the foun - tain art,

Em B Em D G F# Bm C G

till the storm of life is past, safe in - to the  
 all my help from thee I bring; cov - er my de -  
 I am all un - right - eous - ness: false and full of  
 . free - ly let me take of thee; spring thou up with -

Em Am B Em Em/B B7 Em

ha - ven guide; oh re - ceive my soul at last.  
 fence - less head with the shad - ow of thy wing.  
 sin I am; thou art full of truth and grace.  
 in my heart, rise to all e - ter - ni - ty.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788) Music: Joseph Parry (1841–1903)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

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## Arise, your light is come

A D A D A E/B B7 E

1. A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey; show  
 2. A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door; pro -  
 3. A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born, bind  
 4. A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song! Rise

A E/G# D/F# A/E Bm/D B7/D# E A/C# D A/C# Esus4-3 A

forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.  
 claim the cap-tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.  
 up the bro-ken - heart-ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.  
 up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

Words: Ruth Duck (1947-) Music: William H. Walter (1825-1893); descant, Diana McLeod (1931-)

Words: copyright © Ruth Duck, 1974 Music: descant, copyright © Diana McLeod, 1995

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## Where charity and love prevail

TWENTY-FOURTH 8 6 8 6 CM

F Dm C F C F/A Bb C F Dm Bb6 F/A Bb/D C

1. Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;  
 2. With grate-ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;  
 3. For - give we now each oth - er's faults as we our faults con - fess;  
 4. Let strife a - mong us be un-known; let all con - ten-tions cease;  
 5. Let us re - call that in our midst dwells God's be - got - ten Son;  
 6. No race nor creed can love ex-clude, if hon - oured by God's name;

Am Bb C F Bb6 F Bb C F Dm Bb6 F/A C F

brought here to - ge - ther by Christ's love, by love are we thus bound.  
 let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.  
 and let us love each oth - er well in Chris-tian hol - i - ness.  
 be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be ours God's ho - ly peace.  
 as mem-bers of his bo - dy joined, we are in Christ made one.  
 our fam - i - ly em - bra - ces all whose Fath - er is the same.

Words: Latin; translation, Omer Westendorf (1916-) Music: Lucius Chapin (19th cent.)

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