



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

Impossible Hope

December 7, 2025

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

We are offering a variety of ways for people to gather. We are welcoming people to worship in person, as well as through Zoom, YouTube, and this printable PDF.¹ If this is how you are worshipping, know that you are not alone... and if you like, you can invite others to join you. Clicking on or tapping blue text will take you to a web-site.

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

Elections: Session has used the votes to approach people. We are giving them time to pray and decide if God is calling them to this

Prayer Groups:

Zoom: Wednesday 6:30 am us04web.zoom.us/j/773730107?pwd=eUo2M09YMEw5dkZvdm9uQmpHNIUrUT09

Women's Prayer Group: in person Thursdays 2pm
 book & video series Oct 23-Nov 27 'When you pray'
 and through *What's App*

Bible Study: Wednesday 7-8 pm

Join us in the minister's office and over zoom
 as we discuss the upcoming week's main scripture passage.

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



Friday's Fabulous Food & Film Festival: pizza at 6:30, movie at 7:00
 Dec 12: The Man who Invented Christmas

Carolling: Friday Dec 19

7:00 walking to our neighbours and singing

7:30 indoors for hot chocolate, crafts & more singing

Christmas Pot-luck Lunch: Dec 21 after worship

Christmas Eve Worship: Wednesday Dec. 24 at 7pm

Christmas Day Breakfast: Thursday Dec 25 at 9:30 am

Please join us for a pot-luck breakfast & fellowship,

Advent—We continue to encourage you to participate in an Advent daily reading series. There are some print ones at the top of the stairs. Online you could try the short devotions from University Hill (www.uhill.net/daily) or the rather large collection of daily scripture, art, poem, reflection, & music from Biola University (cca.biola.edu/advent) - pick what you like.

Montreal Children's Theatre: Santa's Secret Workshop - Dec 13
 chance for children to buy gifts from between \$1 and \$5

Montreal Children's Theatre: Community Dinner

Dec 20th. 6-9 pm free tickets: info@montrealchildrenstheatre.ca

Drop Box: Food donations are welcome for the local Food Pantry,
 diapers for young mothers through Head & Hands.

Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca
 Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca
 514-773-4620
 Zoé Dupont-Foisy (music director).....zoedupontfoisy@hotmail.com
 Orly (Outreach co-ordinator).....orly.kensington@gmail.com
 Rose Ngo Mbenoun (Clerk of Session). admin@Kensingtonchurch.ca

Approaching God

🗨️ Call to worship²

Piano: **The psalmist dreamed of a world where leaders govern with righteousness, and the poor are treated with dignity and justice.**

Windows: **In this new creation, the oppressed are set free, the vulnerable are protected and peace flows like a river.**

Piano: **Today, too many experience violence, poverty and persecution. Yet, they need hope.**

Windows: **We long to live in that new creation, where God's glory is revealed on earth, through justice and peace. Today, on this second Sunday of Advent, we light the candle in hope of seeing your peace on earth.**



(The candle of love is lit.)

Let us pray together:

Dear Lord,

**you have brought us to this time
so that we may breathe deeply of your Spirit.**

From our fears and sins release us,

to be filled with hope, joy, love and peace.

As we wait, and share, the hope that is to come.

Amen.

♪ Hymn: Hark the glad sound.....pg 10 (118)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_A_CeFBZl4

² adapted From Presbyterian World Service & Development 2025

Listening to God



Children's Time

Today the adults are going to hear a strange story (and a little creepy) about God showing Ezekiel a valley full of the bones of dead people - and then God connects them all back together again. It inspired a fun song. It's pretty simple, so you can probably sing along... but I also encourage you to touch the bones they sing about. www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrzBsUtUdts



Bible Project

I also recommend listening to the Delta Rhythm Boys version:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFQrjXywx6A

prayer

*Dear Jesus, Help us remember that when people hear your words,
they can have hope and life.*

Amen.

♪ Hymn: People in Darkness are Looking for Light.....pg 10 (124)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5im4x-VHtE

🧘 Prayer for Illumination

Lord, open our hearts and minds
through the power of your Holy Spirit,
that we may know and share your power to bring living.
Amen.

✨ Intro to the readings

A few weeks ago we heard God speaking through Jeremiah. Jeremiah was writing from Jerusalem to the first round of exiles take from Judea to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar II. Ezekiel was one of them. He was a priest that God also used to deliver messages to those in exile, and those back home. Ezekiel received and delivered messages in all sorts of ways, making for interesting reading.

In the first part of Ezekiel we can read how he tried reminding people that the exile was the consequences of their actions - of not living as God designed. He reminded both those in exile and back home that if they didn't change there would be more consequences - the destruction of Jerusalem. Not only would they not take responsibility for their actions, but they couldn't imagine God allowing Jerusalem to be destroyed - and they didn't change. After the Temple and much of Jerusalem were destroyed, feelings changed - as did the message God sent through Ezekiel.

A few details to remember as you hear the reading.

- For a long time it has been important for Jews to bury their dead soon after death. I haven't found out how long this has been the practice, but it could easily go back to before Ezekiel.
- Like all languages, Biblical Hebrew has words that mean multiple things. In English we try to figure out which

meaning is meant. Sometimes we make jokes by using a double meaning. Today's reading includes a triple meaning. The word 'Ruach' means wind, breath, and spirit. Remember, the English translator had to choose a meaning to use - but in Hebrew wind, breath & spirit are one word. Try to imagine all three.

And consider what message God is sending through Ezekiel.



📖 Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,³ or click on the name to be taken to an online version.
[Ezekiel 37: 1-14](#)
[Psalm 130](#)

✨ Sermon: Is being agreeable helpful?

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

In our passage God tells Ezekiel to listen to the whole house of Israel, “Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off

³ 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

completely.” The original audience for this vision feels like the Spirit has drained from their souls. They have gone beyond dispirited to dead - dried up with no hope of a future.

In their case, it was because they believed that God would protect them and Jerusalem no matter what. That the first exile was like getting sent to their room, but they’d still be given supper before going to bed. Now the reality of their situation has hit hard. Their precious city has been smashed. The temple they thought of as the home of God has been destroyed. They’ve lost their homes, self-government, their dreams, their pride... and it seems that even God had abandoned them. There is no life left in them - their bones have been scraped bare.



Ezekiel in the valley of the dry bones - St. Nicholas Church

As a society/nation, it’s been a long time since we’ve felt this way in Canada. Individually is another story. While I pray you haven’t felt dispirited, it is likely that there have been times when you felt lost, or abandoned, or like all hope has dried up and you couldn’t imagine a way forward. Perhaps it was the breaking of a relationship, or having your desires smothered, or the inability to find a way forward. ...and I suspect your neighbours have felt this sometimes as well - perhaps even now. And then, like the Israelites, larger situations societal do exist: such as systemic racism, the unavailability of basic needs, or war.⁴

Into these situations God gives Ezekiel a vision - showing what can happen with those who feel their lives are a pile of dried bones. God tells Ezekiel to prophesy. Sure, God could have done all this without Ezekiel, but doesn’t. God regularly invites people to have a role. In this case, to actively speak impossible words of hope.

Impossible? in so many ways. Can you imagine being given all 206 bones in the human body and assembling them. But this is more, because it’s a mass grave that fills a valley. I’m sure Ezekiel was glad it wasn’t up to him to pull the people back together. Grievously, there are investigators now who have experience at this. Shifting to the metaphorical level, as our story does, have you had to pull a friend back together? It can be hard... and sometimes beyond us. In this case God invites Ezekiel to speak to those dry bones that God can bring to life (did Ezekiel have faith that this would make a difference or did he doubt?) - and God pulls them together. God provides needed connections and strength - everything that is needed to be a living body... except there is no life. It seems you can have everything needed to live

⁴ Note: Kate Bowler has a lovely series of podcasts with people who have had experiences that challenge hope, and yet have found life. katebowler.com/
And at the church **NA** has open meetings Tuesday and Thursdays at noon,
and **AA** has closed meetings Wednesday at 7:30 pm

and yet not really have life.

Then God invites Ezekiel to call the wind to breathe into the bodies and fill them with breath/Spirit - God's Spirit. It is beautiful that the same word means wind, breath & spirit. Wind can be gentle and incredibly powerful. It is wild and outside. Breath is from inside and a sign of life. Breathing deeply can bring peace. and Spirit is our centre, the essence of God living in us and through us. Wind, breath & Spirit are all unseen, yet we can see their effects. Snow blowing across the park. Breath clouding in front of us on a cold day. Spirit... giving us hope.

Ezekiel's words are important, but it is God who pulls people together and gives life... in the vision, to those struggling with the destruction of their beliefs, and to people now.

It's advent. We are waiting for the world to become a perfect loving place - for Christ to come again. As we wait we can be faced with situations that make the future seem dead. But soon I shall invite you to proclaim the mystery of the faith: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again. There is hope. We have seen signs. We can believe that through God, all things are possible.

*To God be all the glory
Amen.*

Angels & Shepherds
Marcia Carole



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: Breathe on me breath of God.....pg 11 (389)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=1N_EXkWA-qM

- ☞ 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: Think about the overlaps between wind, breath, & spirit. Look through the passage and change them around. What's it mean that the wind/breath/spirit comes from all directions? or that the terms combine inside and outside? physical and spiritual?
- Visions: Did Ezekiel believe the words he spoke would make a difference, or did he doubt, or believe that bringing life here was impossible? Think of a situation with no hope... what if we believed God could bring hope? How could we have that conviction?
- Actions: Check out Kate Bowler's podcast: katebowler.com
- Prayer: ...that you will feel God's Spirit fill your life. And pray that you will have the confidence of Ezekiel to share where you find hope to those around you that need to hear it.



Spirit Sightings

Thinking of places that people find hope - it is often with others who can listen and share stories of hope. God has blessed us with a building, and we share this building with groups such as NA and AA. Over the last month or so I've had quite a number of them stop and tell me how much they appreciate having a space to meet. While they are speaking the word to each other, we are providing the valley where they can be pulled together.



Offering

Financially, we have set up a donation option on our **website**: 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.

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



Communion

♪ Hymn: All who hunger, gather gladly^{spg}..... 12 (534)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXrB8x6-jbU



Adoration of the Shepherds - Gerard van Honthorst



Invitation to the table

In today's passage God, through Ezekiel, reminds people who feel separated that there is life through God's Spirit. Hundreds of years later Jesus invited people to gather around the table to share a sign of the coming kingdom - one in which everyone is invited to share the hope that is found through God.

So come,
 all who have much faith,
 and those who would like to have more,
 all who have come often
 and those who have not joined for a while,
 all who follow Jesus,
 and those that realize they need help.⁵

Rassemblons-nous autour de la Table de notre Seigneur.
 Parce que c'est la volonté de Dieu
 que tous ceux qui veulent connaître Jésus
 partager ce repas.

As we come together to share this taste of the Lord's Supper,
 let us also join with Christians around the world and through the
 centuries in speaking the Apostle's Creed.



Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the Virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;

⁵ very adapted from Iona Wee Worship Book 4th ed

he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come again 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.

We thank you that you are with us
in our hearts

and also filling up our lungs with your Spirit.

May we take this time to slowly breathe in... and slowly out
feeling your peace soak into our souls.

Creating time to remember your blessings:

- friends
- shelter - from the elements, and worse
- our bodies
- creation - with all it's interconnected wonders

As creation reveals your power
so we join with the whole of creation
to lift our hearts in joyful praise.

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

We thank you Lord for all who speak your word.
For the prophets who spoke words of warning
reminding us that there are consequences to our actions
...as we consider our actions and priorities,
we realize there are ways that we do not live
as you want us to - individually and as a society.
...

Jesus, please forgive us.
and help us to remember the consequences our living had on
you, and what happened next.

Together, we proclaim the mystery of the faith.

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

Through you there is hope, peace, love & joy.
Through you there is living beyond our imaginations.

As your Spirit blows us on our journey,
pulling us together
giving us the muscles we need
Help us to breathe deeply of your Spirit,
so we may live.

We also pray that your Spirit will be known by

- for those feeling lost or disconnected
 - for those who need hope
 - those in need of healing: physical, mental, and spiritual
- this week we pray especially for Peggy.

Jesus,
we thank you for your presence
and for your gift of the Lord's Prayer:
(which I invite you to say together)

 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.**

As we gather at your table
we are reminded that your Spirit
can do the impossible.
May your Holy Spirit make this time come alive
in ways that bring us closer to you.



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 sang;
faites ceci en mémoire de moi”

[take and drink]

Prayer after Communion

We thank you, O God,
that through Word and sacrament
you have given us your Son,
who is the true bread from heaven
and food of eternal life.

*Nous te remercions, Seigneur,
d'être ici maintenant avec espoir et amour,
et de nous permettre de faire rayonner ta lumière dans le monde.*

So strengthen our bones, sinews and muscles
that our daily living may show our thanks
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

♪ Hymn: O breath of life come sweeping through us.....pg 11 (384)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-r3xd9_P3k

Benediction (Ephesians 3:20-21)

*Now to him who by the power at work within us
is able to accomplish abundantly far more
than all we can ask or imagine,
to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
to all generations, forever and ever.*

Amen.



MISSION MOMENT Sunday, December 7

On World AIDS Day, we come together to remember the lives lost and to celebrate the progress made in combating the HIV and AIDS epidemic. In countries like Malawi, despite enormous progress, challenges persist. PWS&D, along with local partners, is ensuring that HIV testing services are available and that people have access to oral quick-test kits—a crucial tool for HIV prevention and early detection. Additionally, adolescent outreach clinics are being established to distribute condoms, helping ensure that young people can access safe sexual health options. As we mark World AIDS Day, we are reminded that the fight is not over. With continued collaboration, we can move closer to a future where HIV and AIDS are no longer prevalent.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, December 7 (2nd 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 8 We pray for the Rev. Lyton Kilowe, head of the Internal Audit Department of the Blantyre Synod Office in Malawi, who completed the MBA program with the PCC's support.

Tuesday, December 9 We pray for all those who serve on committees throughout the church as they discern together the mind of Christ, the will of God and the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Wednesday, December 10 (Human Rights Day) We pray today for PWS&D programs around the world that are ensuring people know their rights and can advocate for themselves.

Thursday, December 11 We pray for the Rev. Dr. Ary Fernández Albán in his second year as Rector of Seminario Evangélico de Teología in Matanzas, Cuba

Friday, December 12 We pray for the staff at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre, especially the kitchen and housekeeping staff, who quietly do the hard work required to ensure guests find welcome through nourishing meals and fresh accommodations.

Saturday, December 13 We pray for the Rev. Rebecca Simpson, Assistant Dean at St. Andrew's Hall, as she provides leadership for staff and students and works collaboratively with the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart as Dean to advance the mission of the Hall.

Hark the glad sound

RICHMOND 8 6 8 6 CM

G D/F# D C/E (D7/F#) G C D7 G Em6

1. Hark the glad sound! The Sav - iour comes, the
 2. You come the pris - oners to re - lease in
 3. You come the bro - ken heart to bind, the
 4. Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, your

D/F# Em/G D/A A7 D /C G/B Em Am D/C

Sav - iour prom - ised long; let eve - ry heart pre -
 Sa - tan's bond - age held; the gates of brass be -
 wound - ed soul to cure, to bring the treas - ures
 wel - come shall pro - claim, and heaven's e - ter - nal

G7/B G7 C G/B C/B Am6 G Cmaj7 G/D D G

pare a throne, and eve - ry voice a song!
 fore you burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of God's grace, good ti - dings for the poor.
 arch - es ring with your most hon - oured name.

Words: Philip Doddridge (1701–1751), Scottish Paraphrases, alt Music: Thomas Haweis (1734–1820);
 arrangement, Samuel Webbe the younger (1770–1843)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

People in darkness

PEOPLE IN DARKNESS 10 6 10 5 11 8

D Em F#m Gmaj7 A Bm

1. Peo - ple in dark - ness are look - ing for light.
 2. Peo - ple with sick - ness are pray - ing for health. Come, come,
 3. Peo - ple in trou - ble would like to be free.
 4. Peo - ple in sad - ness are try - ing to sing.

Em7 A Em /D A/C# D

come, Je - sus Christ. Peo - ple with blind - ness are long - ing for sight.
 Peo - ple in pov - er - ty want to have wealth.
 Peo - ple with ar - gu - ments want to a - gree.
 Bells in the stee - ple are wait - ing to ring.

Bm E7 Asus4 - 3 A/G D/F#

Come, Lord Je - sus Christ. These days of ad - ven - ture when

Em7 F# G6 D/A A7 D

all peo - ple wait are days for the ad - vent of (1) love.
 (2) hope.
 (3) peace.
 (4) joy.

Words: Dosia Carlson (20th cent.); v.4 Ken Stright (1952–), Jeanne Stright (1953–) Music: Dosia
 Carlson (20th cent.)

Words: v. 1–3, copyright © Dosia Carlson, 1983 All rights reserved. Used by permission; v. 4, copyright © Ken and Jeanne Stright, 1996
 Music: copyright © Dosia Carlson, 1983

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Breathe on me, breath of God

TRENTHAM 6 6 8 6 SM

F Bb/F Bbm/F F /A C7/GF Bb6 Dm/BbC F Bb/FGm6

1. Breathe on me, breath of God; fill me with life a - new, that I may
 2. Breathe on me, breath of God, un - til my heart is pure, un - til with
 3. Breathe on me, breath of God, till I am whol - ly thine, un - til this
 4. Breathe on me, breath of God, so shall I nev - er die, but live with

F/A F Bbmaj7 Bb6 Gm /Bb F/C (C F/C) C7 F

love what thou dost love and do what thou wouldst do.
 thee I will one will to do and to en - dure.
 earth - ly part of me glows with thy fire di - vine.
 thee the per - fect life of thine e - ter - ni - ty.

Words: Edwin Hatch (1835–1889) Music: Robert Jackson (1840–1914)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

God the Holy Spirit

384 O Breath of life, come sweeping through us

SPIRITUS VITAE 9 8 9 8

D F#m G A6 A/G F#m7 D/F# Bm /A G6

1. O Breath of life, come sweep - ing through us; re - vive your
 2. O Wind of God, come bend us, break us, till hum - bly
 3. O Breath of love, come breathe with - in us, re - new - ing
 4. O Tongues of fire, come rest up - on us, so we may

D/F# F#m Gmaj7 E7/G# Asus4-3 Bm F#m G F#/G G6

church with life and power. O Breath of life, come cleanse, re -
 we con - fess our need; then in your ten - der - ness re -
 thought and will and heart: come, Love of Christ, a - fresh to
 speak your word a - right; kin - dle the flame of love a -

A/G D/F# G D/F# Em6 D F#m G6 A7 D

new us, and fit your church to meet this hour.
 make us, re - vive, re - store, for this we plead.
 win us, re - vive your church in eve - ry part.
 mong us; e - quip your church to spread the light.

Words: Bessie Porter Head (1850–1936), alt; v.4, Iona Maclean (1954–)

Music: Mary J. Hammond (1878–1964)

Words: v.4, copyright © The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1997 Music: copyright © the estate of Mary J. Hammond

All who hunger, gather gladly

HOLY MANNA 8 7 8 7 D

Unison

F Dm Gm Dm Am Gm7

1. All who hung-er, gath-er glad-ly; ho-ly man-na
2. All who hung-er, nev-er strang-ers, seek-er, be a
3. All who hung-er, sing to-geth-er; Je-sus Christ is

Bbmaj7 Dm C/E Dm C Bbmaj7

is our bread. Come from wil-der-ness and wan-dering.
wel-come guest. Come from rest-less-ness and roam-ing.
liv-ing bread. Come from lone-li-ness and long-ing.

Am Bbmaj7 C6 F F /E Dm7 /C

Here, in truth, we will be fed. You that yearn for
Here, in joy, we keep the feast. We that once were
Here, in peace, we have been led. Blest are those who

See also: Holy Manna 305

Words: Sylvia G. Dunstan (1955–1993) Music: attributed to William Moore (fl.1825); harmony, Charles Anders (1929–)

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Bbmaj7 /A Gm7 Dm Bbmaj7 C6 Bbmaj7 Am7 Bbmaj7 Gm7 Csus2 - 3

days of full-ness, all a-round us is our food.
lost and scat-tered in com-mun-ion's love have stood.
from this ta-ble live their days in grat-i-tude.

F Dm C Gm7 Am Bbmaj7 C6 C F

Taste and see the grace e-ter-nal. Taste and see that God is good.