



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

Filling in the potholes

June 28, 2026

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

Sunday Singing: Join Zoé on Sundays at 9:50 to share in the music

Prayer Groups:

Women's Prayer Group: resuming in the fall

Zoom: Wednesday at 6:30 am

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.

Friday Friendly Food & Film Series: returning in the fall

St. Ansgar's new minister service: Today at 2pm
 4020 Grand Boulevard (at NDG)



pothole in Montréal

Contacts

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¹ 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 (from Psalm 147)

Praise the LORD!

How good it is to sing praises to our God;

the Lord is gracious, and brings healing.

The Lord gathers us and builds community,

delighting in those who hope in God's steadfast love.

Praise the LORD!

How good it is to sing praises to our God.

♪ Hymn: Oh for a thousand tongues to sing.....pg 10 (374)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbiQ17uulKU



choir of 21 262 participants: the Inglesia Ni Cristo (Philippines)



Prayer of Approach

This morning Sybil will lead us in prayer. You can create your own opening prayer, join her on YouTube, or use the one below.

Wondrous God,
who sets suns and moons above us,
mountains and valleys beneath us,
and friends and strangers among us:
how often have we tried to hide from your presence,
how seldom have we looked for your creating face
and your fashioning hand!
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Wondrous God,
who took upon yourself flesh of our flesh in Jesus our brother,
and being found in human form
made the ultimate disclosure of yourself
in the face of Jesus Christ:
how often we have forgotten you,
how seldom have we really loved and followed you!
Christ, have mercy upon us.

Wondrous God,
who pours out freely the Holy Spirit:
how often have we ignored your promptings,
how seldom have we asked for your help or accepted your gifts!
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Amen.

 Assurance of Pardon

God demonstrates his own love for us in this:

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since we have now been justified by his blood,
how much more shall we be saved
from God's wrath through him!

Amen.

Knowing that you love us, we join together in singing The Lord's Prayer.



 The Lord's Prayer (please use a version you are comfortable with)

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

Amen.



Listening to God

Children's Time

Our next hymn is called Siyahamba (practice saying it).

and all the words are this, *Si-ya-hamb' e-ku-kha-nyen-i kwen-khos*.

Does anybody know what it means? “*We are marching in the light*”

of God.”

Do you know what language it is? *isiZulu*.

And where is it spoken? *Parts of South Africa.*

While nobody knows who wrote it, or why, it is used as a song to protest against things that are unfair. One example is when the government in South Africa was racist (treated people unfairly because of the colour of their skin) this song was used to encourage people to protest - to march - against the government (though more to encourage international protests).

What are some things that are unfair in the world? . . .

(ex. racism, political prisoners, being detained without rights, limited or no access to education, . . .)

What could we do to help change things, to help people? . . .

(ex. march, listen, write letters, tell others)

Let's sing it with these verses: marching, listening, writing, telling.



Martin Luther King Jr at march

Prayer:

*Dear Jesus. help us to listen to people who need help,
and to march with them.*

Amen.

♪ Hymn: Siyahamba.....pg 10 (639)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQwmjLjoPKQ

Prayer for Illumination

Lord, open our hearts and minds
through the power of your Holy Spirit,
that we will listen so that everyone can hear you.
Amen.



Begging Jesus - T Schmalz

Intro to the readings

Today's psalm is about "*How good it is to sing praises to our God*", but that's not always possible. Sometimes there are aspects in the life of a person or community that prevent that, and that's what today's passages from Acts are about.

In our first story we will meet someone sitting by an entrance to the Temple looking for handouts. This will likely remind you of people you've seen sitting on the sidewalk or walking between cars begging for change. The most common response in our

society is for people to avert their eyes and try to pretend those begging don't exist. Sometimes people will speculate on why the beggars are there, or talk about the 'system' that doesn't look after them. It's important to know that the society in the Bible also had a system. Back then people in need would sit in a place, like the entrance to the Temple, and expect handouts. This came out of God freeing the Israelites from slavery and giving them instructions to also look after the vulnerable - especially widows, orphans, and strangers.² Those going up to the Temple, and other places, would expect to find people in need, and knew it was their duty to help directly with money, food, or actions. There wasn't the awkwardness that we feel. That was their system. Though, as we'll hear, the early Christians organize it a bit more.

Rose will read two stories from Acts (and a psalm). Both the stories from acts start new sections of the book: leaving the room and going out into Jerusalem, and then leaving Jerusalem and going out into the world. The first comes just before Peter & John were arrested, made a blunt speech to the priests, and then rejoined their community to pray for boldness (worship June 7th).³ The second comes a little before Saul is introduced at the execution of Stephen. (personally I see this section of Acts as allowing new people to take leadership... and then going out).

Listen for those who may have distractions, or even barriers, to singing praise to God - and what is done.



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

[Acts 3: 1-8](#) & [Acts 6: 1-6](#)

[Psalm 98: 1-11](#)

² check out Deuteronomy 24:17-18, 10: 18-20, 27:19, Exodus 22:21-27, and many of the prophets

³ kensingtonchurch.ca/covid-opportunities

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



Sermon: Healing connections

*Dear Lord, please bless the words of my mouth
and the meditations of all our hearts. Amen.*

Last week we heard about how the early Christians knew what God wanted, and how this confidence almost stopped people God wanted involved from joining in - which challenged us to think over our assumptions about people who are new or different.

This week we're hearing that the problem with people connecting with Christianity and a church isn't always us... it can be something about them or their community. Some examples we have from Acts include health, fear (or knowing it all), and unfairness.

Take the first story. We hear about someone who doesn't get to go into the Temple and praise God because he has physical issues. Because he is lame his job is to sit by the gate for people to offer alms - to share God's blessings. Everybody expects this. It's the system. And it prevents him from being able to go in and sing praises to God. If only the Lord would "*bind up their wounds*" and *lift up the downtrodden*". After a lifetime of this he wasn't expecting to be healed. He was probably hoping for some food or money, though I'm sure that not everybody going into the Temple gave to everyone sitting at the gate. Still, when he makes eye contact with Peter, and Peter doesn't look away. Then Peter says, "*Look at us*" - expectations rise.

And then Peter says he's got no money. Argh, what a tease... until Peter heals him in the name of Jesus, God's saviour. His physical health no longer prevents him from joining in praising God - and he does.

There are lots of people who suffer from physical or mental health issues that prevent them from praising God. As Christians, like our Jewish ancestors, we believe in helping people because God loves them... but we can also help people so that they can join in worshipping God. This week I looked through the annual report of the Life and Mission Agency. This is the department at our national office that includes giving out grants.



It was interesting to see that Amberlea Church (Pickering) received a grant to support family ministry initiatives for families with neurodiverse children. This will allow these children, and also their families, to be able to gather and praise God without being overwhelmed by the experience. The Presbyterian Music Camp receives a grant to offer mental health support because this can be

a barrier, as much as the person who was lame, to praising God. On a larger scale ARISE ministry in Toronto started a prayer circle outreach ministry for survivors of human trafficking. These people have been hurt in so many ways that can stop them reaching out for help... but this ministry is reaching to help them up in the name of Jesus, the one who saves. These examples are different than what happened in the Bible story, but they show ways that the church is helping to remove barriers to people praising God.

Last week we heard about how the established Christians were afraid to let Paul into their circle, and then their concern that Peter was allowing Gentiles (non Jews) to join. This was as big as

when science split the atom.⁵ They were afraid, but the fear can go the other way as well. I wonder if Paul was afraid to put his life in the hands of those he had hurt.

Fear and past hurts can prevent people from going to a church or accepting God. There are examples of this everywhere. I've met a number of people who grew up in a church, but now want nothing to do with it because they were hurt or saw the people as hypocritical. You could write them off as confusing the people in the church with God... but God never writes people off. An aspect of Québec that is stronger than elsewhere in North America is that the church held so much power for such a long time - and many people were hurt. Since I mentioned this after the course I took I've heard more stories about priests showing up at people's grandmother's place every year to offer forgiveness, but asking where the new baby is first - and that each family was expected to literally give some of their children to the church. One of the reasons why there are so many new libraries in town, and several private ones, is that the church didn't think people needed other sources of knowledge. The people should just trust the church to tell them. I've heard stories about students getting hit by nuns at school. I've also heard about generous and grace filled priests and nuns, but experiences like these have led to a culture that is afraid of religion having any power in Québec - hence the laws limiting religious expression. That said, individuals in Québec are looking for something more to life, and there are congregations connecting in non-threatening ways to share God. The barrier separating them from God is being healed - and they praise the Lord.

Looking at the fear of church from a different angle, immigrants and refugees can find worship, when they don't know the language, draining, embarrassing, and even with with fear of

mistakes. Wexford Church (Toronto) received a grant to launch a language lounge program that welcomed people, strengthened their language skills, and explored Christian faith. People don't have to be Christian, or become Christian, but faith is included in the conversations. Here in Montréal Christian Directions and St. Michael's Mission both offer various programs for anybody while maintaining the Christian identity. This helps people feel they trust the church, and trust God.



The issues in Acts with the Greek speaking widows not getting the same support as the Aramaic speaking ones helps remind us that the early church wasn't all peace, love, and happiness. They had an identity of being open and caring. There were stories earlier about pooling their resources so that nobody had any needs, but there were issues. We don't know if the Greek speakers were neglected because of prejudice or accident, but they were. This was creating a barrier to people praising God. Unlike the earlier story, it was addressed less miraculously. People listened to each other. A suggestion was made and accepted. New leadership was brought in (all with Greek names). Despite the original Jesus followers trying to create a special ministry position to make themselves more important, these new leaders went on to do the same ministries of preaching, and sharing, and stretching Christianity. Stephen is seen as being very like Jesus, even in his execution, and Phillip we'll hear more about next week.

This model of listening and meeting needs so that people will join in praising God also received numerous grants last year. Several congregations received help to connect with their neighbours as more than just a community centre. Somewhere quite specific in the report, talking about setting up a garden mentoring program so that neighbourhood children spent time with older adults learning about gardening and discussing bigger questions of life (including God). Another did this through basketball. Other congregations focused on becoming more multicultural so that people from different cultures felt valued and comfortable in praising God. Erskine (Hamilton) took all this to a new extreme hitting the restart button and becoming a church replant with the goal of being “a healthy family for each and every neighbour.”



Now these programs are all aimed at outsiders, but they connect to the issues of the Greek and Aramaic widows. Tensions are part of living in a community - especially when there is diversity. If they aren't dealt with, then people will be more focused on that than praising God. Community needs listening, and representing everyone in leadership. It means change and work, ...and that things won't go as planned. Still, regardless of where the barriers come from, together we can remove barriers so that everyone can praise God.

I want to end with two interesting projects that aren't focused on helping people to praise God, but could help create bridges.

One is Paul Jenkinson. He's a retired social worker who has travelled around Canada setting up a table, a couple of chairs, and a sign saying, “You are not alone, I will listen.” He brings his empathy and listening, and has not shortage of people needing somebody to talk that won't judge them, and they can afford (Paul's listening is free).⁶ Being available where people can walk by, stop, and be listened to will not only bring some healing, but could also help people experience Christians that listen and don't judge - bringing another aspect of healing that the person probably wasn't looking for.

In Winnipeg David Balzer and his wife (Christians) changed their priorities after a health scare. He converted a camping trailer into a mobile recording studio. With this he goes to community events and invites people to share why their neighbour is a great neighbour. He puts what they say together and the the gratitude can then be shared with their neighbour. Not only does the person telling the story feel better, the community is strengthened as people start sharing deep, and positive, feelings with each other.⁷ I don't see this project getting people into church, but if that's the point then the idea will fail. I can imagine people appreciating this and the relationships it builds - including with the person or group enabling it.

There are lots of issues that people have that make it hard to connect with church and/or God. With the support of the Holy Spirit, we can help bring healing and connections so that everyone can praise God

To God be all the glory Amen.

⁶ www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/volunteer-listening-tour-1.7534025

⁷ longer interview: www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-63-the-current/clip/16219058-a-winnipeg-man-shares-neighbourly-love

text and video interview: www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/mobile-recording-studio-boler-chatterbox-9.7215690



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: Jesu Tawa Pano (Jesus, We Are Here).....pg 11
www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCiBN33QTrQ

💬 FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies.

Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).

Reflecting: What are some of the big issues as to why people don't come to church? Explain why you think that?

Wonder: How could we help our neighbours trust the church? trust God?

Visions: Think of someone in our neighbourhood or your community who could use some more love, hope, or healing. What could Kensington do to help them open up to God?

Actions: Look through the annual report of the Life & Mission Agency and share which projects catch your attention or imagination.

Prayer: ...that Kensington will be able to help others.

✦ Spirit Sightings

You can also read the report from the Life & Mission Agency to this year's General Assembly. There were many more grants granted that I didn't include in the sermon, and many other things that they are doing to support the work of God. Visit this page and scroll down to report 13 'Life and Mission Agency'. presbyterian.ca/gao/ga2026

✦ 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.

🧎 Prayers of the people

Today we will be basing our prayers on the prayer book passed around during worship. You can say your own prayers of thanksgiving and concerns to God, or use this.

Almighty God, gracious Father,
in the presence of your bounty keep us humble,
in the presence of all people's needs
make us compassionate and caring.

Give us faith in our praying and love in our serving,
knowing that by your power
all may find a new balance in living
and a new victory in adversity.

We pray for all unhappy lives,
those who are bitter and resentful,
feeling life has given them a raw deal,
those who are sensitive to criticism and quick to take offence,
those who desire their own way,
whatever the inconvenience
or cost to others.

May your judgment and mercy be for their healing.

We pray for those who are lonely,
who are shy and self-conscious,
who find it hard to make friends;
those who are nervous and timid,
who ever feel themselves strangers in a world
they can scarcely understand.
May your presence inspire confidence
and ensure companionship.

We pray for those who live with bitter regrets,
for loving relationships brought to ruin,
for opportunities freely given and woefully abused,
for the bitterness of defeat or betrayal at another's hand,
or for failure in personal integrity.
May your grace give new hope
to find victory in the very scene of failure.

We pray for all in illness and pain,
weary of the day and fearful of the night.
Grant healing, if it be your will,
and at all times through faith the gift of your indwelling peace.

Bless the company of Christ's folk, the church in every land.
Make her eager in worship,
fearless in proclamation of the gospel,
and passionate for caring.

Bless our country. Bless our leaders.
Bless our children and grant us peace within our borders.
Grant us as a nation to be found effective in establishing peace
throughout the world.

Bless us, each one, in the communion of the saints,
and keep us ever mindful of the great cloud of witnesses that,
following in their steps, as they did in the steps of the Master,
we may with them at the last receive the fulfillment
promised to your people.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

♪ Hymn: Servant Song.....pg 11 (635)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9atbM9FNyc (good to sing)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=FejoxTNwbiY (choir)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iu_T_FRvbY (different)

✦ Benediction (Romans 15:13)
*May the God of hope
fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.*
Amen.



Oh for a thousand tongues to sing

RICHMOND 8 6 8 6 CM

G D/F# D C/E G C D7 G Em6 D/F# G6 D/A A7 D /C

1. Oh for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great Re-deem-er's praise, the
 2. Je - sus, the name that charms our fears, and bids our sor - rows cease-'tis
 3. He speaks, and lis - tening to his voice new life the dead re - ceive; the
 4. Hear him, you deaf; you voice - less ones, your tongues a - gain em-ploy; you
 5. My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, as - sist me to pro-claim, and

G/B Em Am D/C G7/B G7 C G/B C/B D7/A G C G/DD G

glo - ries of my God and King, the tri - umphs of God's grace.
 mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears; 'tis life and health and peace.
 mourn - ful, bro - ken hearts re-joice; the hum - ble poor be-lieve.
 blind, be - hold your Sav - iour comes, and leap, you lame, for joy.
 spread through all the earth a-broad the hon - ours of thy name.

Instrumental Descant

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt Music: Thomas Haweis (1734-1820);
 arrangement, Samuel Webbe, the younger (1770-1843); descant, C.S. Lang (1891-1971)

Words: public domain Music: descant, copyright © Novello & Co. Ltd. CCLI #4440603

We are marching / Siyahamba

G D7 G C/G G C D (C/D)

We are march-ing in the light of God; we are march-ing in the light of
 Si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos', si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen
 Nous mar - chons dans la lu - mière de Dieu, nous mar - chons dans la lu - mière de

Sop.

1. 2.
 God. God.
 khos'. Si - ya - march-ing,
 Dieu. Si - ya - ham - ba,
 Oui, nous mar-chons,
 C

G (C/G) G7 C

God. We are the light of God. We are march-ing, march-ing, we are
 khos'. Si - ya - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'. Si - ya - ham - ba, ham - ba, si - ya -
 Dieu. Nous mar - lu - mière de Dieu. Oui, nous mar - chons, mar - chons; oui, nous

G C D (C/D) G

oo,
 march-ing, march-ing, we are march-ing in the light of God.
 ham - ba, ham - ba, si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'.
 mar - chons, mar - chons; nous mar - chons dans la lu - mière de Dieu.

Words: South African (Xhosa) traditional; English translation, Anders Nyberg (1955-); French, Andrew Donaldson (1951-) Music: South African traditional; arrangement, Anders Nyberg (1955-)

Words: English translation, copyright © Walton Music Corporation, 1984; French, copyright © The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1997
 Music: arrangement, copyright © Walton Music Corporation, 1984 CCLI #4440603

Jesus, We Are Here

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Jesu, tawa pano

1 Je - sus, we are here; Je - sus, we are here; Je - sus,
1 Je - su, ta - wa pa - no; Je - su, ta - wa pa - no; Je - su,

Leader: Wel - come, Je - sus.
Mam - bo Je - su.

we are here; we are here for you.
ta - wa pa - no; ta - wa pa - no, mu zi - ta re - nyu.

2 Savior,... 3 Teacher,... 4 Spirit,...

When coming to worship involves long and possibly dangerous travel, "we are here" voices a powerful commitment as well as a desire to build community with those who have gathered. Some of that meaning can be grasped if this song is sung in parts, especially in the original Shona.

TEXT and MUSIC: Patrick Matsikenyeri, 1990
Text and Music © 1990, 1996 Patrick Matsikenyeri (admin. General Board of Global Ministries t/a GBCMusik)

JESUS, TAWA PANO
Irregular

635

Brother, sister, let me serve you

SERVANT SONG 8787

1. Broth-er, sis - ter, let me serve you; let me be as Christ to you;
2. We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, and com - pan - ions on the road;
3. I will hold the Christ - light for you in the night - time of your fear;
4. I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh I'll laugh with you;

pray that I may have the grace to let you be my serv - ant too.
we are here to help each oth - er walk the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
I will share your joy and sor - row, till we've seen this jour - ney through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven,
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Words: Richard Gillard (1953-) Music: Richard Gillard (1953-)

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MISSION MOMENT

Sunday, June 28

In Karkhola, India, 18-year-old Raunak Khatun experienced early difficulties. After her mother passed away, she was raised by her grandmother, but they were eventually forced out of their home when her father remarried. Without any support, they built a hut on government land, surviving by begging and farm work. Then Raunak learned about vocational training for out-of-school girls and enrolled in a tailoring course. When she finished it, she began sewing clothes for her village. However, she faced a major obstacle—she did not have her own sewing machine. The Karuna Project supported her to buy one. Raunak is now able to take care of herself and her grandmother. She is also training two other girls from her community, passing on the skills she learned. This project is supported by PWS&D through Duncan Hospital.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, June 28 We pray for all God's people working in faith formation—from churches to camps to campuses, communities, and beyond.

Monday, June 29 We give thanks for church treasurers who offer faithful stewardship of the gifts received for the work of ministry in their congregations.

Tuesday, June 30 We pray for Knox College and its new students who will be invited to register for program studies in early July, and for their continued discernment of God's call to equip and prepare for service.

Wednesday, July 1 (Canada Day) We pray that this land will be a just, equitable and welcoming country and that all those who form and keep our laws will carry out their responsibilities with wisdom, courage and mercy.

Thursday, July 2 We pray for staff and campers at Presbyterian Music Camp in Goderich, ON, as they learn and grow together in faith in a Christian camping community.

Friday, July 3 We pray for leaders in the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba as they minister among people suffering increasing daily hardships due to dire shortages of food, medicine, gas and electricity.

Saturday, July 4 We pray for participants who recently completed the online course, "Becoming Intercultural". May they feel supported and more equipped in their ministry within their diversifying congregations.

