



Kensington Presbyterian Church *Sheep and Shepherd*

April 25, 2021

WELCOME, during these times of physical isolation we are putting out these worship services that you can do at home.¹ This doesn't mean you have to do them alone. You can invite those who live with you, or connect with others through the phone or computer, or even in small groups outside.

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



Contacts

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

Announcements

Communion: We will be celebrating the eucharist next week. All those who want to know Jesus more are welcome to join us. You will have to provide your own elements (juice/wine, bread)

Annette Cappon van Vliet passed away peacefully on April 18th. The family wants us to know how much Annette and themselves appreciate the community and support they experienced from Kensington. A lovely memorial can be found here:
mountroualcem.permavita.com/site/CapponVanVlietAnnetteJoan.html?s=50

You may watch the funeral service here:
funeraweb.tv/en/diffusions/28490

Book Study: first Wednesday of the month at 7:30

Join Ines Rombeek and others in exploring *The Liturgy of the Ordinary* by Tish Harrison Warren. As the title suggests it helps you find God in all aspects of life. We will be exploring the book one chapter at a time. If you would like to join in, please contact Ines.Rombeek@gmail.com or through Rev. Peter.

Prayer Group: will be meeting through Zoom on Wed. at 11:30 a.m. If you would like to pray at a different time, please contact Peter.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78266904325?pwd=dkhMck1ZRXBKTmdvK2VsaHRIOFF1UT09>
or phone: 438-809-7799

Meeting ID: 782 6690 4325

Passcode: 7864826

Visiting: The government considers ministers to be essential workers. If you need a visit, please contact Rev. Peter.

Live Worship: After Montréal is no longer a Red Zone, Session will reconsider when we feel it is safe to open. If you would like the Zoom information (or to practice), please contact Peter.



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
The Lord is my shepherd
The Lord is your shepherd
**The Lord is our Shepherd
and we shall not want**
We have been led here
**so that we might rest in a safe pasture
and drink from still waters.**
Let us praise our shepherd
Let us worship our God.

♪ Hymn: At the dawning of salvation.....pg 10 (248)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=p15RloxR7JI



Prayer of approach
O LORD our God, we give you thanks that you are our God.
That you are like a shepherd,
looking out for us,
That you came as Jesus,
pulling together a flock to give witness to your glory.
Showing us what a Good Shepherd really is.
We're thankful that you don't simply turn us lose
to wander the hills, hoping that we will return in the fall.

Although, sometimes we do slip out and follow other ways.
Please forgive us for the damage we do

to the flock by not living out your love,
and to the earth by not using it the way you lead.
Help us to turn from paths that caste shadows or pain
and follow you. . .

We are grateful that your Spirit
is drawing us together,
bringing us to green pastures
and leading us beside the still waters,
that in your presence we may find refreshment,
and our hearts may be at rest;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Assurance of Pardon
We are told that Jesus is the Good Shepherd,
who will always seek out the lost sheep,
Know that you are wanted,
loved and forgiven - in the name of Jesus.
Thanks be to God.



Lord's prayer (feel free to use another version/translation)
Jesus left us a prayer to guide us into a healthier relations with
God and each other. Let us join with Christians around the
world, saying...

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.



Listening to God



Prayer
 God of life,
 your Spirit raised Jesus from dead.
 Your Spirit inspired the prophets and writers of Scripture.
 Your Spirit draws us to Christ
 and helps us to acknowledge him as Lord.
 We ask that you will send your Spirit now
 to give us deeper insight, encouragement, faith, and hope
 through the proclamation of the Easter gospel. Amen.²



Intro to the readings

- the psalm will be very familiar. You already have guess it.
- Like many passages in John, this one is part of something longer. This story starts back with chapter 9 with a blind man

seeing the light (literally & figuratively). Because of this he is caste out of the community and found by Jesus.



Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,³ or click on the name to be taken to an online version (NRSV).

[Psalm 23](#)

[John 10](#): 11-18



Hymn: My Shepherd is the king of love.....pg 9 (691)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=PiZk2hAkauw

Sermon: What's the shepherd doing?

Dear Lord, please bless these words
 and the meditations of our hearts.⁴ Amen.

Was psalm 23 the first psalm you ever learned? Somebody at the prayer group this week shared that she remembers saying it every week in the nursery when she was that young - and that it was a comfort.

My teacher training says that part of the reason is that repetition and pattern are comforting to young children. But this psalm is also very personal and full of caring. That is comforting.

There are times when it's good to leave it at that - just relaxing into the words and feelings. Personally, it's what I normally do with the 23rd Psalm, but there's so much more in these familiar words. What's this psalm tell us?

Let's hear it again in the tradition King James translation.

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
 he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

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

⁴ Psalm 19:14

² Worship Sourcebook N.3.1.1

He restoreth my soul:

he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.



Good Shepherd - J Dupre

The psalm starts with a beautiful vision. Is it of a fantastic future, or the present? It says, “*I shall not want.*” Chances are there’s something you want, so I guess it’s the future. Although, I’ve met people who are wiser than me. They know God is there for them and while they have some desires, they don’t have wants. They trust the Good Shepherd.

It is then all pastoral with lush meadows and nothing to fear. We are led to places we need to go to receive food, safety, and

walk “*the paths of righteousness.*”

What does it mean to follow the path of righteousness? One writer I came across this week talked about ‘justice’ being a better translation. It certainly would be nice to walk in a just world. Imagine a world where there is no discrimination by colour or gender or orientation or money or ability or language. A world where everything was fair.

But perhaps being “*led in right paths*” (New Revised Standard Version, NRSV) is less about what we are being led through than the journey we walk. This is very much ‘righteousness’. As Christians, this means to live right with God, or to live the way God would like us to. Living God’s way will look after our needs; it’ll be the breath of life.

Could these three things (nourishment, safety, righteousness) be what “*restores my soul*”?

In Hebrew it’s much more physical than ‘soul’. It’s about your life-breath. Think of those melo-dramatic moments in a TV show when everyone thinks the person has died, and then they draw in that life-breath. This is the breath you need to live - given by the LORD.

So, God is the Good Shepherd and leads us to all these things so that we don’t want anything. Why isn’t the world like that?

Because it was broken. God has set things right, but it’s not there yet.

One of the ways that this psalm brings comfort is its acknowledgement that there are times when we “*walk through the darkest valley,*” (NRSV), even under “*the shadow of death.*” (KJV) There are lots of difficult times along our journey. I’m sure you can think of some examples. This psalm reminds us that we are

not alone. That The LORD is leading us. Our Shepherd has a rod and a staff to protect us from the worst.

Even the first part of the psalm has this under the pastoral beauty. It acknowledges various needs we have, and that God wants to lead us in ways that meet those needs. If there weren't challenges finding green pastures, then our Shepherd wouldn't have to lead us to them.

This is a source of comfort for the writer, and we are invited to take comfort from it as well. In following God there will be dark times, but in sticking close to God we are also protected.

And this isn't heading to a mere field, but to a glorious feast. This isn't an ordinary table, but the kings table. And the oil moistening our skin. While this is used for marking people with a special blessing (anointing), here the word is more sensual. This will be a luxurious feast.

I wonder about being in "*the presence of my enemies.*" Is this like flaunting my success in their face, or is it that they are at the table with us. What would Jesus say if we asked him? Perhaps this is were we listen to the passage from John in which Jesus tells us, "*I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.*" Who are these others and what does it look like to include them? Are they our enemies? Are they also at the table? What would this look like here?

So, this psalm presents us with a view of the world - our world. The one in which we have needs, and sometimes feel the dark shadows surrounding us. It reminds us of God's leading us through these challenges.

Is the psalm just a call for us to follow God?
Is that what it's about?

I don't think so.

One of the big reasons is the line near the end. "*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.*" The word 'follow' is a weak translation. Pursue or chase is better.

Somebody shared with me that when they were really young they were confused about why Shirley was following her - and she wasn't sure she wanted Shirley to. This line is almost saying God is stalking you - except it shouldn't be creepy. This is about a healthy love. A love that will allow us to go, but will never leave us. When you lose something, such as a coin or a sheep, you might look everywhere for it. To God, we are much more precious.

Which isn't to say that God doesn't try and direct us sometimes - or you could say lead us. A shepherd doesn't just use their rod and staff on attacking animals. Still, it's not just children in the nursery who find comfort in routine and rules. It's not just giving that shows love.

So, while this psalm talks a lot about us, it's really about God's love for us.

While this is drawing out the ending of the sermon, I'd like to share with you a recent translation of the psalm by Robert Alter, an expert in Biblical Hebrew.⁵

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
In grass meadows He makes me lie down,
by quiet waters guides me.
My life He brings back.

⁵ take from [The Book of Psalms](#) by Robert Alter. 2007

He leads me on pathways of justice
for His name's sake.
Though I walk in the vale of death's shadow,
I fear no harm,
for You are with me.
Your rod and Your staff—
it is they that console me.
You set out a table before me
in the face of my foes.
You moisten my head with oil,
my cup overflows.
Let but goodness and kindness pursue me
all the days of my life.
And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
for many long days.

To God be the glory
Amen.



Responding to God

FaithTalk

Memories: Where do you find comfort?

Values: Read through a version of the psalm and share what arises to your heart of mind.

Wonder: Ponder how God leads people. What examples can you come up with from your own life?

Actions: Create your own version of Psalm 23. It could be a poem or story with updated images instead of sheep. Perhaps something visual, musical, with actions, or even culinary?

Spirit Sighting

The most common way we see the Holy Spirit at work is through others and their love. I'd like to share a couple of Spirit Sightings from Annette van Vliet obituary.

One of the places that Annette drew strength to help her through the dark valleys was the love of her children. Caring for - loving - others is a great source of strength... and a gift from God.

Another sighting was her favourite Bible verse - one that shows great faith in following the Good Shepherd to lush meadows or into dark valleys. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Thanks be to God for Annette's witness.

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.



 Prayers of the people

Gentle Shepherd

While the sun and vaccines are helping,
there is still a lot of stress dammed up within people.
LORD, may your Spirit restore our souls. . .

Strong Shepherd

There are those who are feeling the shadows towering over them.
Whether this is due to stress in their relationships,
or isolation,
or work,
or so many other enemies that try to drag us down.
We pray that your rod and your staff will guide, protect and
comfort them. . .

Righteous Shepherd

We see injustice in the world
in the ways that people are treated by people in their
communities, and sometimes by their own governments.
We see that the way the world is being treated is not right.
LORD, may your Spirit stir us to walk paths of righteousness. . .

Caring Shepherd

We also pray for others outside our 'fold'.
We pray for the struggling medical system in India and
Ontario. We pray for 'hot-spots' that have faded from the
news, but not from need, such as Brazil.
We celebrate the creation of the new malaria vaccine and for the
healing it will bring.
There are those in our community who need healing physically
and mentally. Recently there are those who have learned about
cancer, others who are experiencing COVID, and others who

are suffering from other ways that our bodies break.
LORD, may your Spirit bring healing. . .

Generous Shepherd

We thank you for the places you have led us,
and are leading us still.

uIn Jesus name

Amen

♪ Hymn: Come, children, join to sing.....pg 9 (377)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Owaj33Ounns

 Benediction

*Now to the one who by the power at work within us
is able to accomplish abundantly far more
than all we can ask or imagine,
to God be glory in the church
and in Christ Jesus to all generations,
forever and ever.⁶
Amen.*



Sunday, April 25

MISSION MOMENT

(Mission Awareness Sunday) We remember in prayer and give thanks for all former and current mission staff who, in faith, accepted God's call to participate in God's mission in Canada and globally.



Arising

ARISE Ministry offers compassionate outreach and spiritual care to survivors of sexual exploitation living in the Greater Toronto Area. Inspired by Jesus' healing of the woman who was afflicted for 18 years with a condition that kept her bent over (Luke 13:10-17), ARISE aims to help those who have been living "bent over" by exploitation, trauma, abuse and addiction. Staff and volunteers work with vulnerable women, youth and children by providing one-on-one, goal-oriented support. As relationships strengthen, hope and empowerment are fostered, making it possible for futures to be reclaimed. Like the woman in the gospel of Luke, several women that ARISE has helped are now standing straight and tall, and God continues to do amazing things in their lives. This is a reason to rejoice!

DAILY PRAYERS

Monday, April 26 We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Montreal in Que.

Tuesday, April 27 We pray for congregations that are concerned about finances, and that God will provide the resources they need to continue the ministry they are called to do.

Wednesday, April 28 We pray that congregations that are searching for a new minister will be filled with hope, wisdom and patience.

Thursday, April 29 We pray for the Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning as it works to build a society and churches that fully honour diversity and God's unequivocal welcome.

Friday, April 30 We pray for university students completing the academic year, that God brings them peace as they complete this part of their journey and move on to the next.

Daily prayers are submitted by the colleges,
committees, agencies and mission societies
of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.



My shepherd is the King of love

DOMINUS REGIT ME 8787

G D C/E (F#) G /B (/C) D7sus4 - 3 Em D7/F#

1. My shep - herd is the King of love whose
 2. Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my
 3. Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but
 4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with

Gsus4 - 3 A6/E A7/E G/D D G/B Am7 D G 6

good - ness fails me nev - er; for all things good from
 ran - somed soul is guid - ed, and where the ver - dant
 yet in love you sought me, and on your shoul - der
 you, dear Lord, be - side me; your rod and staff my

Am/F# B Em D7 G/D D7 G

God a - bove re - store my soul for - ev - er.
 pas - tures grow, with heaven - ly food pro - vid - ed.
 gen - tly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.
 com - fort still, your cross, be - fore to guide me.

5. You spread a table in my sight,
 anointing grace bestowing,
 and, oh, what rapture of delight:
 your cup is overflowing.

6. And so through all the length of days
 your goodness fails me never;
 Good Shepherd, may I sing your praise
 within your house forever!

Alternate tune: St. Columba

Words: Psalm 23, paraphrase Henry Williams Baker (1821-1877), alt
 Music: John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876)

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Come, children, join to sing

MADRID 6666D

Bb F/C Bb/D Eb /G Bb /Ab Eb/G Eb6 Bb/F F Bb

1. Come, chil - dren, join to sing—
 2. Come, lift your hearts on high— hal - le - lu - jah, a - men—
 3. Loud now our voic - es raise—

Bb F/C Bb/D Eb /G Bb /Ab Eb/G Eb6 Bb/F F Bb

praise to our Ser - vant King,
 let prais - es fill the sky— hal - le - lu - jah, a - men!
 no power can still our praise—

F Bb/D F7/C Bb F F Bb F7/A Bb F

Let all with heart and voice saved by God's gra - cious choice,
 Christ calls his peo - ple friends; lost, out - cast he de - fends
 On heav - en's bles - sed shore, God's good - ness we'll a - dore

Bb F/C Bb/D Eb /G Bb /Ab Eb/G Eb6 Bb/F F Bb

now in this place re - joice—
 with love that nev - er ends— hal - le - lu - jah, a - men!
 sing - ing for - ev - er - more—

Words: Christian Henry Bateman (1831-1889), alt Music: Anonymous

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At the dawning of salvation

NETTLETON 8 7 8 7 D lmbic

Eb /G Bbsus4 - 3 Eb /G

1. At the dawn - ing of sal - va - tion, in the
 2. He is ris - en in the morn - ing; he is
 3. For the glo - ry of sal - va - tion in the

Ab Eb Bb6 7 Eb Gm 9 Cm /Bb Abmaj7 Eb/G

morn - ing of the world, Christ is raised, a liv - ing
 ris - en from the dead; he is laugh - ter af - ter
 dawn of Eas - ter day we will praise you, lov - ing

Fm7/C Bb Eb /G Ab Eb/G Bb6 7 Eb

ban - ner by the love of God un - furled.
 sad - ness; he is light when night has fled.
 Fa - ther; we re - jice to sing and pray

(Eb/Bb) Fm6 Eb/G (Ebmaj7 Ab Eb/G) Ab (Bb/F) Cm Bb6 /Ab

Through the day - light, through the dark - ness, Christ leads
 He has suf - fered; he has tri - umphed; life is
 with the Son and with the Spir - it. Lead us

Eb/G (Ebmaj7 Fm7 Gm) Cm7 Bb6 7 Eb/G Ab(sus#4-3)Cm7

on his great ar - ray: all the saints and all the
 his a - lone to give: as he gave it once, he
 on, your great ar - ray, saints and sin - ners cel - e -

Fm7 Bb Eb /G Fm7-6 Eb/G Bb6-7 Eb

sin - ners he has gath - ered on his way.
 gives it ev - er - more, that we may live.
 brat - ing your tri - um - phant love to - day.

Words: Jock Curle Music: American folk melody; harmony, John W. Wilson (1905-1992)

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