



Kensington Presbyterian Church

Ascension - now what?

May 16, 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).



Ascension - Hanna Varghese

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

Announcements

India COVID Crisis: One way to respond is through the Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D). You can find out more here:

presbyterian.ca/pwsd/2021/05/04/india-covid-crisis/
or call 1-800-619-7301

WMS: If you would like to financially support the Women's Missionary Society you can make cheques out to *Kensington W.M.S.* and leave them at the church. Howie will pick them up.

Sunday School: is available Sundays, noon to 1st

Join Antoinette for a chat, reflections on a Bible passage and an activity. For more information, contact Antoinette (below).

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

The Liturgy of the Ordinary helps you find God in all aspects of life... one chapter a month. You are still welcome to join the group. If you are interested, please contact Ines.Rombeek@gmail.com.

This is also a good activity to invite a friend who is open to the idea of God or curious about what it means to be a Christian.

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=dkhMck1ZRXBKTmdvK2VsaHRlOFFlUT09>

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.

Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca



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 (Psalm 47:5-8)
God has ascended amid shouts of joy,
the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.
Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.
For God is the King of all the earth;
sing to him a psalm of praise.
God reigns over the nations;
God is seated on his holy throne.
Let us worship God.

♪ Hymn: Hail the day that sees Christ rise.....pg 9 (265)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRiJ5cFhRzo



Prayer of Approach
We sit here looking for you.
Are you here?
Are you gone?
Couldn't you just be sitting with us?
But then, you couldn't be elsewhere.

Jesus, we come looking for you,
because you're Spirit has called us.
and helps us know that you are present
here and everywhere else.

As we come looking up to you,
you remind us to look around
and at ourselves.

We confess to our brokenness:
to the ways we wound our lives...
the lives or others...
and the life of the world. . .

We come to you because you know what it is like to be human,
and that you know us,
and that you love us.
We come here in prayer and worship.
Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Here the Good News
“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish but may have eternal life.
Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world
to condemn the world,
but in order that the world might be saved through him.”²
Know that you are forgiven and be at peace
Amen.



Listening to God

♪ Hymn: Peoples, clap your hands.....pg 10 (31)
youtu.be/pAUUKZg5BE0?t=349

Prayer for Illumination

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.³



ascension - Sagrada Familia Barcelona

3 Worship Sourcebook N.3.1.1

Intro to the readings

- Our last hymn was psalm 47. I suspect the lectionary chose this one because of its celebration and global vision... and that it includes the word 'Ascend'.
- The passage from Ephesians provides a vision of Jesus in heaven. One where Jesus is not only more powerful than anyone on earth, but also accessible.
- Today's 'gospel' is actually found in Acts. It's also found at the end of Luke as the end of Jesus' ministry on earth - but it is told again here as the start of the acts of the apostles. What happens, and what do they do?

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

[Ephesians 1](#): 15-23

[Acts 1](#): 1-14

Sermon: Ascension - now what?

Dear Lord, please bless these words
and the meditations of our hearts.⁵ Amen.

Are we there yet?

You've heard this.

but try to distance yourself from the cartoons (or memories) of whiny kids in the back seat on the "long" trip. Think of when you've felt like saying it...

Chances are you were expecting to have arrived somewhere, and you hadn't. It was even obvious that you hadn't, because you

4 If you'd like a new Bible with helpful notes, I recommend the 'Life with God Bible' NRSV from Renovaré. ISBN 0061834963

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

5 Psalm 19:14

were still on the journey. I imagine you were feeling one of two things - maybe both. Either you had just woken up and were curious for an update on when you would arrive. The other is a need to express your disappointment, and perhaps frustration, at not being there yet.

“Lord, is this the time?” ask the disciples.

Now remember what it’s like to be asked “Are we there yet?”

Jesus invited this group of people to learn from him. They journeyed from rural Galilee to Jerusalem, the centre of Jewish culture. Along the way Jesus taught crowds about the Kingdom of God through stories and gave them glimpses through healings and his actions. His disciples also received private tutoring from The Teacher to help them better understand. Then there was the trauma of the trial and crucifixion... and the shock & joy of his resurrection. After which Jesus continues to appear to them over the course of forty days - teaching them again about the Kingdom of God. You’d think they would be experts by now - but they’re still not sure. They are wondering, ‘Are you going to do it now Jesus? Is it time? Are we there yet?’

It’s a question everyone is still asking - not just kids in the back seat. Do you remember first hearing about COVID? Ever since the pandemic was declared people have been asking ‘is it time yet?’ And for those of us who dream of the Kingdom of God in which the world is at peace and everyone is well... we ask God, ‘is it time yet?’ We are waiting to arrive into the promised Kingdom of peace, love and happiness. We’re unsure about what’s happening. Are we close? Why aren’t we there yet?

As Jesus gathers the disciples on a nice hill outside Jerusalem the disciples were unsure about what was happening. They had

the expectations of peace and happiness under the Kingdom of God. There were different expectations of how it would be done: perhaps Jesus would bring a big army of angels, or an army of the people, or make everything peaceful, or perhaps wave a wand.

Is it time?

‘Don’t focus on that,’ Jesus replies. ‘Instead, I want you not to leave town. You are going to receive power through the Holy Spirit and spread the dream from here to the ends of the earth.’

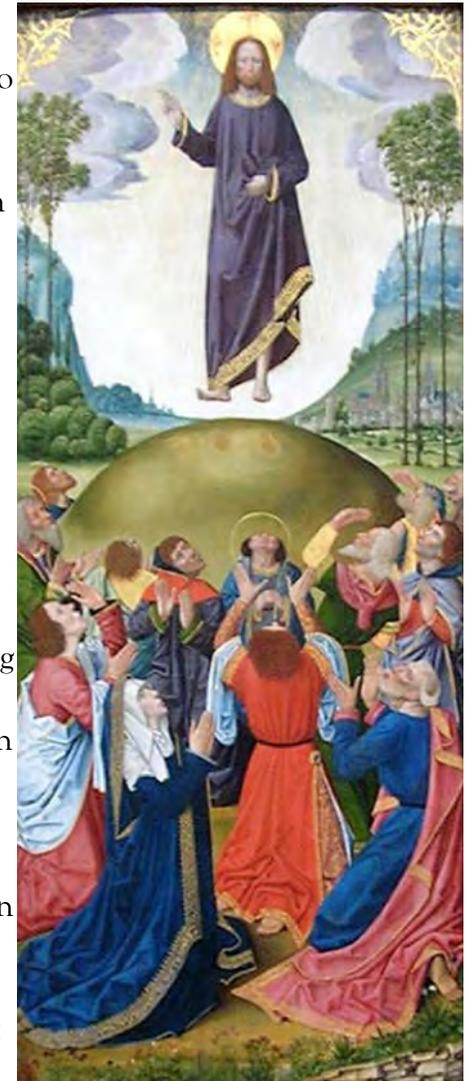
and then Jesus ascended...

not up a flight of steps or a ladder. *“As they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.”*

What’s going on?

There’s a few things.

There’s the physical Jesus going up. We probably have a better idea of what that might have been like having seen movies where people float up into the sky. I would assume it wasn’t supper fast. Maybe starting slow and then speeding up. Then again, maybe it’s a poetic description. This doesn’t seem to be the important part of Jesus ascending.



Ascension - Thuison-les-Abbeville France (notice his footprints)

But it is important. While we don't talk about Jesus ascending much, it does show up in the creeds - summaries of what we believe. Take the *Apostle's Creed*, there's the line, "he ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty."

What important about this?

This is Jesus we're talking about. He is like us. Yes, a perfect example of what we could be, but still like us. His ascension shows a breaking of the barriers between earth and heaven. There is no spiritual realm and physical world. Physical bodies are not bad. They can go to heaven. We can go to heaven.

This was important to the early Christians. It's one reason why this story is included in the Bible and included in the creeds.

It's also a story of transitions. There's Jesus transitioning from his mission on earth to duties in heaven, and there's transition for his followers. They are told to keep sharing the dream.

Transitions can be exciting, and stressful; full of worry and the unexpected. Change is often hard. It's all magnified when there's waiting involved. Ignoring COVID for a minute, I'm sure you've all experienced this. Before starting in a new school, remember waiting through the summer. Perhaps you were moving out for the first time - exciting and concerning. What about starting a new job, or the trial of looking for one. Then there's waiting for the doctor to call. What would it mean?

Waiting. Wondering how the world would change.

What do you do?

What did the disciples do?

We read that they did as they were told and went back to Jerusalem to wait.

I wonder if that was hard? I can find waiting for something hard. They had seen some exciting things. They'd been told to go

out and tell people. How tempted were they to just start. Maybe get a head start on God.

But they waited.

and they didn't do nothing.

Which I'll admit is a confusing sentence. Sometimes when people wait they do nothing - which is what they didn't do.

They stayed together. It's important to gather your community when there's a transition or change happening. And it wasn't just the twelve men, there were the women and others. People who were important parts of the community.

And they dealt with some administration details. The twelve were no longer twelve. Judas was gone. Figuring that Jesus had made a point of having twelve assistants, they elected a replacement. (It's rather interesting, and you can find it in the next few verses of Acts.) Even if we don't know what's coming in our lives, you can still do things to get ready.

And mostly they prayed - actually, always they prayed. In the original Greek it's a continuous verb. They prayed non-stop... until God moved them - but that's next week's story.

In the mean time, we can learn. We can remember that transitions are not new. That when we find ourselves in them we should be a community, sort out details so we can be ready to go when God calls us, and pray - lots.

And we can remember that Jesus is real. That Jesus isn't past tense, because Jesus ascended and is with God working to bring everything into God's way. We'll hear more about that next week when the Spirit comes in at Pentecost - but for this week, let's pray.

To God be all the glory

Amen.

Responding to God

 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: How do you think the disciples felt when they saw Jesus disappear to Heaven?

Memories: How are you at waiting? Talk about times when you've had to sit and wait (yes, you can include now if you like). What do you do?

Values: What do you value/appreciate about transitions/change? It might be easiest to pick a specific example.

Etching: Share about different experiences you've had with prayer? (ex. verbal, written, collective, alone, silent, with movement, with images, making images, ...) You can start by listing experiences, but also share the experiences.

Actions: Pray every day this week for Kensington and our community. This can be done alone or together. It can involve questions/requests and listening.

Spirit Sighting

Often we hear of companies polluting the environment to save some money. Recently I read about over 40 European and UK companies who sent a letter to the Brazilian government saying that if they passed a new Bill that would make it easier to chop down the Amazon Rain-forest they would stop buying from Brazil. The bill is currently receiving lots of amendments. We'll see what happens, but having companies fight for the environment is a sign of the Kingdom.⁶

⁶ BBC www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-56989711

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.



Ascension - Le Breton & Gaudin

Prayers of the people

Dear Jesus,
We thank you for your stories from the Bible;
and the examples they give to your Kingdom.
Stories of how you were physically with us,
living as one of us.
and how that doesn't stop access to God;
that we have access to God. . .

Brazilian government www25.senado.leg.br/web/atividade/materias/-/materia/146639

We pray
Your Kingdom come.
Your will be done.

We thank you for community.
As your disciples collected together to wait for you,
we thank you that you have collected us through Kensington.
Help us to support each other,
and reach out to those who need your hope. . .
We also pray for communities that have forgotten your vision for
looking after others.
Communities with abuse and racism;
communities in open warfare like in Israel/Palestine. . .

Your Kingdom come.
Your will be done.

We thank you for sunlight and warmth
that warm our souls.
and we pray for those who are struggling with
mental illnesses such as stress & depression,
seasonal illnesses such as allergies,
debilitating illnesses such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's
and those fighting cancer.
May they know your peace. . .

Your Kingdom come.
Your will be done.

We pray for those struggling with COVID.
Governments such as those in India, South America, and here in
Canada: Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia. May they receive your

wisdom as they try to save people physically, mentally and
economically...
Families struggling with the virus, whether being sick, or dealing
with the loss of loved ones...
Those struggling with the economic impact through loss of work,
or too much work demands...

Your Kingdom come.
Your will be done.

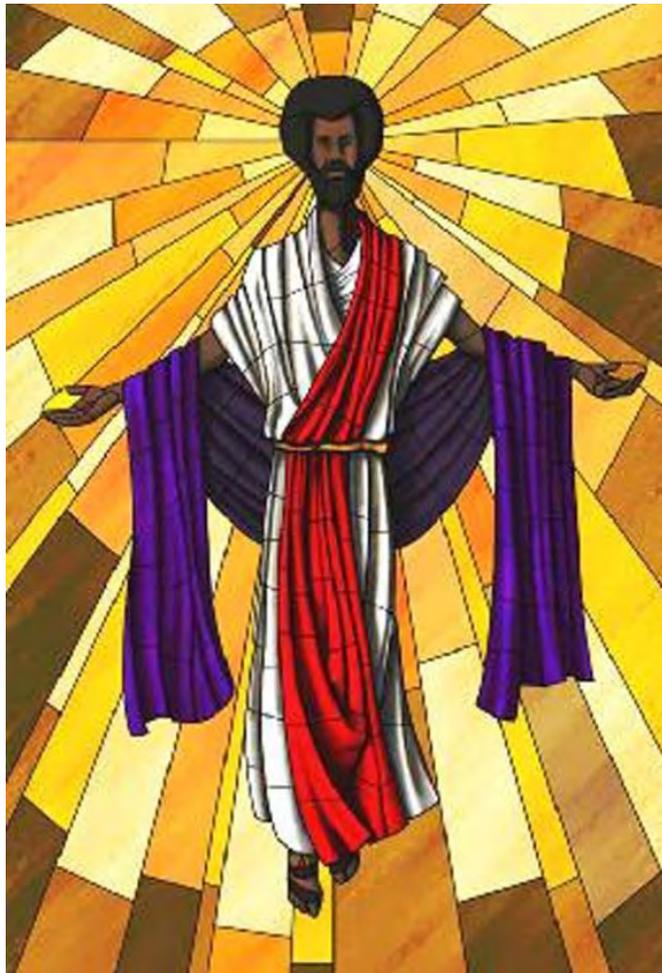
Jesus, because you ascended you are not just in one location.
You are with us. You gave power and glory.
Although we don't understand your ways,
we turn to you with faith that you will be with us
as our journey brings forth your Kingdom.

As we pray for your Kingdom,
we now say together the prayer you left us.

**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.**

♪ Hymn: Christ is alive.....pg 11 (251)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Rgr3E6dxlg

✦ Benediction
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with all of you.



Transform Online Course

Last fall, ministry leaders from across Canada came together for The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Transform online course. Over four weeks, Rick Morse—co-creator of the New Beginnings church renewal program and author of *Making a Congregational Plan that Makes Sense*—challenged leaders to imagine what it means to faithfully respond to God's mission and engage others to be missional. The course, which was made possible through gifts to Presbyterians Sharing, equipped leaders with the transformative tools, principles and insights necessary to discern God's call for their ministries' futures and create plans for moving forward.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, May 16 (Ascension Sunday) We give thanks for creative faith formation programs that congregations have developed to nurture people's faith.

Monday, May 17 We pray for the Cariboo House Churches in B.C. and their pastor, the Rev. Mark Carter, as they reach out to those who live in remote areas of the Cariboo-Chilcotin.

Tuesday, May 18 We thank God for opening eyes to racism against Indigenous people in Canada, and for moving hearts to turn knowledge into action.

Wednesday, May 19 We pray for the Canadian Council of Churches and the unity of the whole church as its governing board meets over the next few days, and we give thanks for presbyteries who serve the Council in a variety of ways.

Thursday, May 20 We pray for Winnipeg Inner City Missions (WICM) in Manitoba, and pray that healing hands provide health and well-being for the residents of WICM who struggle to make ends meet.

Friday, May 21 We pray for people who have been hurt in the church. May they all find a spiritual home within the broad unity of the body of Christ.

Saturday, May 22 We unite in prayer with KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, seeking change in Canada and around the world through advocacy, education and research programs in Indigenous rights, ecological justice, women of courage, and migrant justice.

Hail the day that sees Christ rise

LLANFAIR 7474D

G Em G/B C6 D G/B G C/E C6 D7 G

1. Hail the day that sees Christ rise,
 2. Christ, for you high tri-umph waits,
 3. See the nail-marked hands a - bove, Hal - le - lu - jah!
 4. Christ, for us still in - ter - cede;
 5. Now, though part - ed from our sight,

G Em G/B C6 D G/B G C/E C6 D7 G

to the throne in par - a - dise;
 lift your heads, e - ter - nal gates;
 signs of God's re - deem - ing love; Hal - le - lu - jah!
 by your suf - fer - ing for us plead;
 in the depths of star - ry night,

Words: anonymous, Thomas Cotterill (1779-1823), Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt
 Music: Robert Williams (1781-1821) *Words: public domain Music: public domain*

Em Dm 6 C Am D G (D/F#G) Em6 D /C

Christ the Lamb for sin - ners given,
 you have con - quered death and sin:
 hark, Christ's words our hearts as - sure, Hal - le - lu - jah!
 near your - self pre - pare a place,
 may God raise us up a - gain,

G/B G Em G/B C6 D /C G/B G Am7 C6 D7 G

en - ters now the high - est heaven.
 en - ter, Sov - ereign, en - ter in.
 "I will send a Com - fort - er!" Hal - le - lu - jah!
 as the first - fruits of God's grace.
 heirs of your e - ter - nal reign.

Peoples, clap your hands

GENEVAN 47 10 10 10 10 10

D Em A D G D Em A D

1. Peo - ples, clap your hands! Shout to God with joy!
2. God as - cends the throne with a joy - ful cry,

F#m Em A D Bm Em A D

King of all the earth is the Lord Most High;
and with trum - pet sound has gone up on high;

D A D G D A Bm G A D

all hu - man - i - ty stands in awe of God.
sing your praise to God, sing with joy - ful voice!

G D Em Bm A/C# D G/B A

With a might - y hand God brings na - tions low,
Rul - ers, peo - ples, now join to serve the Lord,

D/F# A Bm Em F#m Bm D G D A

and be - neath our feet casts down eve - ry foe;
for earth's might - y ones all be - long to God,

D Bm D/F# G D A Bm G A D

our in - her - i - tance comes from God the Lord.
who ex - alt - ed reigns; now with psalms re - joice!

Words: Psalm 47; paraphrase, Joy F. Patterson (1931-) Music: Genevan Psalter 1551;
arrangement, Claude Goudimel (c. 1505-1572) CCLI #4440603 Words: paraphrase, copyright © Joy F. Patterson, 1990 Music: public domain

* Christ is alive

TRURO 8888LM

D A7/E D/F# D G A7/E D A7/E D/F# G/B A7/G D/F# A7/E D

1. Christ is a - live! Let Chris-tians sing. The cross stands emp - ty to the
 2. Christ is a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant years in Pal - es -
 3. In eve-ry in - sult, rift and war, where col - our, scorn or wealth di -
 4. Wom-en and men, in age and youth, can feel the Spir - it, hear the
 5. Christ is a - live and comes to bring good news to this and eve - ry

A /C# E A D/F# A/C# D A/E E7 A /G D/F# D

sky. Let streets and homes with prais - es ring. Love, drowned in
 tine, but sav - ing heal - ing, here and now and touch - ing
 vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet loves the more, and lives, where
 call, and find the way, the life, the truth, re - vealed in
 age, till earth and sky and o - cean ring with joy, with

G6 Em6 D/F# G6 D A7 D

death, shall nev - er die.
 eve - ry place and time.
 e - ven hope has died.
 Je - sus, freed for all.
 jus - tice, love and praise.

Words: Brian A. Wren (1936-) Music: Psalmodia Evangelica 1789

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