



Kensington Presbyterian Church

Under the costumes

October 31, 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)



Robin Williams behind the mask - Plastic Jesus

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

Announcements

Clicking on or tapping blue text will take you to a web-site

Re-opening: We are pleased that we will now be able to sing in the building, as well as over Zoom, YouTube, and with the Text.

Sunday School: is available every week for those who are interested.

Book Study: first Wednesdays of the month at 7:30 - ex. Nov 3rd

This month's chapter is about eating leftovers and asking where there is overlooked nourishment in your life.

While reading the chapter ahead is helpful, you can join in the conversation without that. The group is good for people who have been Christians for a long time, or those with a new curiosity (ie. good to invite friends or family).

Prayer Group: Wed. at 11:30 a.m. in 3500 Benny Av (off the Benny Farm Courtyard). Please let Rev. Peter if you would like to join with zoom and this can be arranged.

Calendar: Howie Dealove is selling church calendars to raise money for the Women's Missionary Society (WMS). Let us know if you're interested.

Communion: All who want to know Jesus better are invited to join us for the Lord's Supper next week. At home you will have to provide your own elements (bread/juice/wine). If you come in person we have a pre-packaged sanitary option.

Time Change: next Sunday our clocks 'fall back' an hour.

Contacts

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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 ([Mark 10:14](#))

As we gather, hear the word of the Lord,
Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.”

**We are all children of God,
Let us come to God with prayers and praise.**



Jesus blesses children - Annie Vallotton

♪ Hymn: Come, children, join to sing.....pg 8 (377)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Owaj33Ounns

Prayer of Approach

Dear Jesus

You come to us with your arms open,
ready to embrace us like lost family.

So we put on our best clothes,
and turn towards you.

Trying to hide parts of ourselves
from you, and from ourselves.

But in your light nothing is hidden.

Lift our masks and help us recognize the ways we hurt
ourselves, others, and your creation. . .

May your Spirit help us turn our whole lives to you,
and relax into who you created us to become.

Walking with you into whatever life brings,
knowing that you are with us,
and we are yours.

Amen.



Assurance of Pardon

Hear these words spoken through Jeremiah.

I will cleanse them from all the guilt
of their sin against me,

and I will forgive all the guilt
of their sin and rebellion against me.

Know that you are forgiven and live into God's peace.²



Lord's prayer (feel free to use another version/translation)

Just as Jesus Christ taught his disciples how to pray, so too do we follow in their footsteps. Let us take a moment to pray the prayer that Jesus taught us together.

² Jeremiah 33:8

**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

♪ Hymn: Praise the One who breaks the darknesspg 9
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mk8iXVJh3K4 or
www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwFIHmLmFfU

🙏 Prayer for Illumination

○ God, please open our hearts and minds
 by the power of your Holy Spirit,
 that as the Scriptures are read
 and your Word is proclaimed,
 we may absorb what you are saying to us today.
 Amen.³

✦ Intro to the readings

- The Psalm is an interesting one. The first verse is one that Jesus says on the cross, and so we connect it with that.
- In our Gospel reading Jesus has gone beyond the ‘other side of the tracks’ to the other side of the sea. Just in case we might

have forgotten that the people here are not the chosen people, there’s the mention of how important pigs are to them. A Jew would never keep pigs.

- Our last reading is from Paul’s letter to the churches in Galatia. This passage can sound like Paul is against the Law, and perhaps even Jews. Please don’t go down that road. In other places Paul emphasizes that Jews, of which he is one, have a special and important place with God, and that this relationship includes the law. They were given it and told to follow it... though, as Paul points out, not us none-Jews.
 - If that’s not the point of this passage, then what is?

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

[Psalm 22](#): 1, 19-28

[Luke 8](#): 26-39

[Galatians 3](#): 23-29



Sermon: Under the Costumes

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

While you may not be reading this on the Sunday, I’m speaking it on Oct 31st... Halloween. It’s one of the big festivals in our society. It’s changed from it’s Celtic origins, and the modification to speak Christian truths. Now it’s mostly about costumes, candy, and parties. There’s an element of being scared, and perhaps even acknowledging that death and evil exist in the world, but in a light-hearted way.

³ adapted from Worship Sourcebook 3.1.28

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

There's been changes, but there's still similarities. The Celts would remember their dead at this time, and this is also what Christians did. The Christians just added the reminder that the dead go to live with God, and that we can still learn from them. The Celts also had a tradition of dressing up so that the evil spirits that were wandering on this night wouldn't recognize them. In the Christian version the costumes were more about scaring off the evil spirits. Our modern tradition of costumes is about having fun: imagining ourselves as somebody else, or getting a reaction out of others.

One of my costumes as a kid was Batman. Much later I got into reading Batman comics.⁶ The topic of his costume comes up in a number of stories. One of the ideas behind it, in the stories, is that it turns the tables on the scary bad-guys by scaring them. Another is that it's important to have a mask to protect the ones you love by hiding your identity.



While Halloween can be an obvious time to wear a mask, it's something most of us do at other times as well. Not costumes like Batman, but some that serve the same purpose. You may 'put on' a behaviour to protect yourself and the ones you love. It might be words or behaviours so that you'll not attract unwanted attention, or ways to try and gain acceptance by others, or even, like Batman, to scare or fight against what you feel threatened by. What makes it a costume? That your behaviour, in hindsight, isn't something that fits with your values. It's not who you really are, or want to be. It's not your identity.

I remember showing a friend the chest of drawers I built for

Ines. His first comment was that I used the wrong joint for plywood. I'd put a lot of work into designing and building this, and that first comment hurt. I could have reacted by quietly mumbling something, or redirecting his attention to something else. I could have expressed appreciation for something he had built, and the wisdom and skill behind it - without sarcasm... or I could have attacked with sarcasm. These responses wouldn't reflect who I really am. They'd be a mask or armour. It's hard to think through a response when you're hurt. In this case I explained why I'd copied the joint from my chest of drawers, and the increased glue surface seemed to be doing okay.

Sometimes the costumes we wear are put on us by others. This would be when somebody assumes something about us, and we live into that role. This week a neighbour we've recently connected with shared a memory of her son in costume. He was dressed as an Egyptian mummy. She used lots of wide masking tape - lots. It was great until he tried to get on the bus and couldn't bend his knees enough. A funny story of being trapped by a costume.

More seriously, I remember a poem from grade 6, I think. It's about a father who was so proud of his son because he didn't need to wear old work clothes and work on the farm... and his son felt choked by the tie he wore Monday to Friday at the bank. He was trapped by living somebody else's expectations and denying who he was created to be.

This week I heard (from an American) about a black man who dresses up in a suit and puts on an accent when he goes to see the doctor. Without doing this he finds that he isn't taken seriously. He has to change who he is to be accepted.

Co-incidentally, there's a new movie about this. It's called

6 i0.wp.com/www.tor.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/20-3.jpg?resize=640%2C480&type=vertical

Passing and is about a woman in 1930s New York hiding her identity as a black woman by pretending to be white. I haven't seen it, but it sounds like an examination of trying to balance 'freedom' with the peace of being who you are underneath.

And there are many other examples of assumptions put on others that trap them. It might be your name, or gender, or sexual orientation, or economic status, or education, or how you speak or dress. Assumptions that can become an identity.

This is not the way it should be.

In Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia he reminds them of their identity. Yes, some are Jews and others Gentiles (not Jews), slaves or free, male or female. These are important in their daily life. Some of these distinctions can be helpful to living out who they, or we, are created to be. At other times they get in the way of God's dreams for us. They trap us, or stop us from being able to get on the bus.

What's worse, is that we can forget who we really are.

Underneath any mask we put on, or any role that is put on us, we need to remember what Paul told the churches in Galatia. "For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith."

How far does this extend? The Greek grammar is unclear who's faith this is through - yours or Christ's. Personally I hope it's Jesus' faith as he has a lot more than me.

The story from Luke does hint at the extent of God's reach. Jesus is talking to a man everybody else avoided. I suspect he even tried avoiding himself. This man wasn't a Jew. Despite all that, Jesus is treating this man like he's a child of God - and the man gains a new identity... or perhaps he just remembers who he really is.

And this is what we need to remember too.

Everyone is a child of God.

Living that out can be hard, and will take a much longer sermon.

Today remember that you are a child of God.

No matter what, God has chosen you, loves you and wants the best for you. When we embrace this identity we discover God's love, hope and healing.

To God be all the glory.

Amen.



Become like little children - Bota



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: Amazing Gracepg 9 (670)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7n145-J8ejg just voices

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tvt6E9N7AQw with guitar

www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p2CbHG9O0s with everything

✦ Spirit Sighting

Many issues related to seeing yourself as a loved child of God are related to mental health. Like physical health, this can include minor bruises to degenerative diseases, to a life threatening emergency. It can come from an outside source, or your own genetics. While mental health is still a sensitive topic in many homes, it is a blessing of the Spirit's work that our society is starting to be more open out this.

Another part of this is allowing people to be who they are, and not forcing them to be like you. We see this work happening with more conversations about racism and gender inequality in Canada. We are different, *and* all God's children.

We pray that more people will be able to live as a child of God, growing into God's dream for them and the peace that brings.

💬 FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies. This week they are a little more personal than usual. Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).

Memories: What is your favourite Halloween costume?

Memories: Share a time when you felt completely accepted for all that you are - no 'costumes'.

Wonder: Reread all of Psalm 22. What does this say about life?

Actions: How can you treat yourself as a loved child of God?

Etching: This can be hard and needs an encouraging and

listening ear. Look back at when you find yourself acting in a way you feel is not like a child of God. How did you react? (see examples in sermon) What triggered this? Take this part of yourself and pray for healing. You may also want to talk more.

Actions: How could you treat ____ (another person) as a loved child of God?

✦ 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 - by Alex Plant

Loving God, as we take this time in prayer, we thank you for your compassion and mercy that you have shown us. We thank you for your faithfulness to us and for the blessings you give freely through your son Jesus Christ. On this Reformation Sunday, we thank you for your living Word which reveals the mystery of Christ and the Holy Spirit as you guide us in the traditions that shape us as followers of Christ. We also take a moment to remember your saints. We give thanks for your creation, for the people in our lives that help to show your love through witnessing Christ. Inspire us we pray, so that we can live out our faith, even in challenging times.

Lord God, we pray for those in need, those who are in pain, and those who are healing from pain - including Peggy, as she recovers at home from her surgery. We pray for faithful recovery

as you are with them. We pray for all those who are undergoing challenges, physically, mentally, and spiritually. May you bring your healing touch to your people.

We pray for world leaders, as they gather all over the world to face the challenges of climate change and economic equality. For those at the G20 Summit in Rome, for those at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, we pray for clarity and wisdom as you walk with them and bestow upon them compassion for your creation and healing for a broken world. We pray for our local leaders, as we face a decision in our government here on the island of Montreal. We pray for your strength and your guidance as our leadership forms once again to govern our city.

Loving God, we thank you for the hope that you bring us in the face of discouragement. We pray for courage in the face of fear, and as we go forth and live out the Gospel that you have given to us, be with us we pray. Be with those in our hearts and in our minds. Be with those who are hidden away, who do not have a voice. Grant them your love and compassion. This we pray in your most precious name.

Amen.

♪ Hymn: We are one in the Spirit.....pg 10 (471)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bL5bT_Ezeq8 or
www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ZY9kS1Fu0A

✦ Benediction (2 Corinthians 13:13)
*The grace of our brother Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.*
Amen.



Prodigal Son - Kristi Valiant

Relief Through Food Assistance

Mohammad and his family had to leave their home behind when COVID-19 made finding work difficult in their community in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, Mohammad and his father were seriously injured by a bomb blast on the journey. Mohammad's right knee now causes him a lot of pain. Mohammad still worked hard to provide for his family through the harsh winter, but it was far from enough. Things improved when the family was selected to take part in a food assistance project. Five monthly cash distributions were made to 1,100 vulnerable households—allowing families to purchase much-needed food and essential items. "This assistance has brought relief in my life," said Mohammad. This project is implemented by Community World Service Asia, a partner of Presbyterian World Service & Development.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, October 31 (Reformation Sunday) Strengthen our hearts, O God; make them eager to serve you and your purposes. Trouble us with the smallness of our vision and waken us to the greatness of your glory and the breadth of your grace.

Monday, November 1 (All Saints Day) We thank God for knitting us into one common fellowship; for the people who have gone ahead of us in the faith and who loved us, formed our faith and served God with joy and grace.

Tuesday, November 2 We remember in prayer the Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott, Moderator of the 2021 General Assembly, as he connects with people and ministries of the church.

Wednesday, November 3 We pray for those who are mentors to candidates preparing to serve ministries within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Thursday, November 4 We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Quebec.

Friday, November 5 We thank God for protecting and encouraging the staff and volunteers at Edmonton Urban Native Ministries in Alberta and pray that all those involved in this beautiful ministry stay safe and healthy in the love of Christ who never fails us.

Saturday, November 6 We pray for the Women's Missionary Society Council Executive as they discuss plans for 2022.

Re
fol

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 - joi-ce—
with love that nev - er ends— hal - le - lu - jah, a - men!
sing - ing for - ev - er - more—

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness 93

1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at-ing light.
 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil-dren with a strong yet gen-tle word.
 3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf-fered in our place.

Praise the One who frees the pris-oners, turn-ing blind-ness in - to sight.
 Praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing two-edged sword.
 Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.

Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal-ing ev - ery dread dis - ease,
 Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des-ert's burn-ing sand.
 Let us sing for joy and glad-ness, see-ing what our God has done.

calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou-sands with the ver - y bread of peace.
 From this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench-ing thirst in ev - ery land.
 Praise the one re - deem-ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

WORDS: Rusty Edwards (1955-)
 MUSIC: John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, 1813
 Words © 1987 Hope Publishing Company

NETTLETON
 8.7.8.7.D.

Amazing Grace!

1. A - maz - ing grace!—how sweet the sound—that saved a wretch like me!
 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears re - lieved;
 3. Thro' man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I have al - read - y come;
 4. The Lord has prom - ised good to me, his Word my hope se - cures;

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.
 how pre - cious did that grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 'tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 he will my shield and por - tion be, as long as life en - dures.

5. And when this flesh and heart shall fail,
 and mortal life shall cease,
 I shall possess within the veil
 a life of joy and peace.

6. When we've been there ten thousand years,
 bright shining as the sun,
 we've no less days to sing God's praise
 than when we've first begun.

St. 1–5, John Newton, 1779
 St. 6, *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790

AMAZING GRACE C.M.
 Traditional American melody
 Adapted and harm. Edwin O. Excell, 1900

We are one in the Spirit

WE ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT Irregular with refrain

Fm Cm Fm

1. We are one in the Spir - it, we are
 2. We will walk with each oth - er, we will
 3. We will work with each oth - er, we will
 4. All praise to the Fath - er, from

Cm Fm Bbm

one in the Lord, we are one in the
 walk hand in hand, we will walk with each
 work side by side, we will work with each
 whom all things come, and all praise to Christ

Fm Cm Fm

Spir - it, we are one in the Lord, and we
 oth - er, we will walk hand in hand, and to -
 oth - er, we will work side by side, and we'll
 Je - sus, who is God's on - ly Son, and all

Bbm Cm Fm Cm7

pray that all u - ni - ty will one day be re -
 geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our
 guard each one's dig - ni - ty and save each one's
 praise to the Spir - it, who makes us

Fm Fm7 Db Cm

stored,
 land, and they'll know we are Chris-tians by our
 pride, one,

Fm /Eb Db Fm Fm

love, by our love, and they'll know we are

Bbm Cm Fm

Chris - tians by our love.

Words: Peter Scholtes (1938-) Music: Peter Scholtes (1938-); harmony, Richard D. Wetzel (1935-)
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