



Kensington Presbyterian Church

What's with creation?

October 17, 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)



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
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.
Easter Appeal: an update from Presbyterian World Service & Development is available on our website.
kensingtonchurch.ca/2021/10/07/thanksgiving-letter

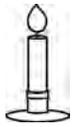
Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca
Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca
514-773-4620
Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca

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

O God, who called all life into being,

The earth, sea and sky are yours.

Your presence is all around us,

every atom is full of your energy.

Your Spirit enlivens all who walk the earth,
with her we yearn for justice to be done,

For creation to be freed from bondage,

for the hungry to be fed,

for captives to be released,

for thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven.²

♪ Hymn: For the beauty of the earth.....pg 9 (434)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CFhYi5KHCM

Prayer of Approach

All your creation dances in rhythm
and you have left your signature there for all to see:

in the ceaseless circling of the planets;

in the nights that always turn into day;

in the rain that makes a drumbeat and lifts a snowdrop;

in the throbbing of a bumblebee's wing.

In the rhythm of a dancing creation we sense you,
and glimpse something of the great composer
who also conducts this great symphony



² from *Holy Ground*, wild goose publ. 243.

of which we are a part.

However we don't always dance with Creation,
stop to appreciate the relationship of it all,
or how we can dance closer with you.

We are sorry, Lord,
that just by living without thought

we pollute the air,
poison the waters,
damage the land,
and each other.

We are sorry, Lord,
for the way we try to lead the dance,
and spoil the beautiful relationships you created.

Holy Spirit,
heal and restore us,
that we may live gently on earth,
and join with all creation in praising you,
the Living God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.³

Assurance of Pardon

Hear these comforting words spoken through Jeremiah (33:8):

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.

³ includes and adapts prayers by Glendon Macaulay in *Dirt, Mess & Danger* (145), and Christ Polhill in *Acorns and Archangels* (158) - both from Wild Goose Publ.

 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.

**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: God of the Sparrow.....pg 9 (307)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXm1VOUH3eY

 Prayer for Illumination

O God, open our hearts and minds
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
that as the Scriptures are read
and your Word is proclaimed,
your Wisdom will help us see you
and ourselves, in Creation.
Amen.⁴



⁴ adapted from Worship Sourcebook 3.1.28

 Intro to the readings

- What is the impression the psalm leaves you with?
- Similarly, what stands out for you in the section of Paul's letter? What's the scope of it?
- The passage from John is famous. What is the scope of it?

 Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,⁵ or click on the name to be taken to an online version.

[Psalm 104](#): 1, 10-24

[Romans 8](#): 18-25

[John 3](#): 16-17

Sermon: What's with creation?

Dear Lord, please bless these words
and the meditations of our hearts.⁶ Amen.

Do you remember when you were young and would put very complete addresses on things. Mine went something like this: 164 Rutherford Crt, Kanata, Ontario, Canada, North America, Earth, Sol, Universe. I'm sure that psychologists would tell us this is a stage we go through trying to place ourselves and figure out who we are. I remember it being really cool to think of how big everything was and how it was connected.

How do you describe where you live now?

This is slightly different than just where do you live. To that question you might say Montreal, or another political territory (perhaps even the unseeded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation). But how do you *describe* where you live? This probably leads to the physical building you live in, or perhaps the grounds

⁵ 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

⁶ Psalm 19:14

where that building is found. It may go beyond the physical geography and into the social if you describe the people you interact with as part of where you live.

The act of describing is important. It brings so much more to the answer. You start to share your situation and your values.

Now, how would you describe the world?

I suspect if you asked your non-church neighbours they'd use the word 'nature' would come up. Dr. Norman Wirzba, the speaker at the church climate conference, received a similar response when he asked his class of environmental studies students at Duke. They replied they were studying 'natural resources'. What values does this suggest? Natural resources makes it sound like we live in a giant reservoir of resources that are just naturally there.. things to be gathered and used. Wizba suggests a healthier way to describe the world, or where we live, is 'creation.'

What values does this suggest?

When we use the term 'creation' in a church context we remember our Sunday School stories and God creating the world in seven days. Hopefully you also remember that after each day God surveys what's been created and says, 'That's good' - not because of anything it's done, or what a useful resource it is, but simply because it is.

Outside of the church context the world 'creation' is likely to bring to mind artists who express themselves through something beyond the ordinary. Frying an egg may not be seen as a creation, but how about an omelette. The cook decides what to add and how to cook it. They create something tasty/beautiful/good. They put some of themselves into what they create. The creation of an

omelette provides a temporary insight into the creator. Other creations offer insights that last longer.

I think we need to remember this aspect of creation when we describe this world we live in. The world⁷ is an expression of God.

Take trees for example. There's more than one type (over sixty thousand according to Botanical Gardens Conservation International).⁸ We know that trees don't have to shed their leaves, but many around here do. The leaves could just fall, but they don't. Most change colour first... and not all the same colour. There's oranges and yellows and reds and purples. It's beautiful. It is good. It brings me joy. What does this say about God?



Sadly there are many aspects of Creation that no longer reveal God the way they once did. Don't hear me saying we should do away with civilization. God made us curious and ingenious and

⁷ The whole universe really, but that's a little hard to wrap our minds around.

⁸ www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-39492977

builders - which is also a revelation about the Creator. I am lamenting the extinction of so many plant and animal species due to how we live as a part of Creation. Scientists think it's somewhere between 25 and 150 species a day. Of those 60 000 trees catalogued in 2017, over 50% were only found in one country. This suggests they are not wide-spread and are vulnerable. When they are gone, how do we learn what they had to say about God... and what does it say about us if our desires led to their extinction?

While the impact of humans on the rest of the world has increased tremendously since the start of the industrial revolution, this news of Creation suffering isn't new. When Paul is writing to the churches in Rome he talks about Creation being subjugated to futility. We've all heard reports of how Creation is being damaged. Yet another scary one I've heard recently is that if we keep farming the way we do now the soil has about 100 harvests left in it. The soil is being subjugated to futility for maximum short term production. My kids might have food, but what about the next generation? There are other methods of farming, but they cost more... but can we afford the cost of not changing how we subjugate the soil?

Thankfully we Christians believe in Good News.

It's not hopeless.

Paul reminds us that creation is still hopeful and waiting until it "*will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*" The promised coming of the Kingdom isn't just for people - it's for all of creation. Even with all the problems, there is hope.

I especially love Paul's words here, "*We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains.*"

I was able to be there when Ines delivered the boys. Delivered.

It sounds so orderly. Like a waiter elegantly delivering your meal, or perhaps a courier casually delivering your package. Most of the time it's nothing like that.

Labour is a very good word to describe birth. Yes, it's natural. But it's also a lot of work that takes everything you've got.

That's the stage we're at. There are pauses of relief and beauty, and lots of work that will take all we've got... probably more than we feel we have. Thankfully we're not doing this alone, because we couldn't do it. God is active.



As John put it, "*God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.*" It doesn't say, God so loved people, but the world. This fits with the many, many, many ways that wider creation is included throughout the Bible as witnesses, and examples, and providers.

God cares about Creation, and so should we. After all, we call ourselves Christians. We try to follow Christ, and Christ came to save the world. We're also created in God's image, which suggests we would be most at home living as God would.

What could we do?

This is an important question, and there are many ways to approach it. Here's a few examples.

- consider how God relates to the world not as commodities or objects, but relationships. How could we do that as well?
 - This isn't about feeling guilty for using parts of creation to build things or feed ourselves. It's about respect. A reminder I heard from an Algonquin, but is

also a part of our tradition.

At home we're blessed that we can usually afford to buy the more expensive eggs from chickens that are better treated. This week I actually cracked open a fertilized egg. I thanked God for this egg that could have been a chicken, and for the nourishment it would give me.

- reduce, reuse & repair before we recycle
- take advantage of The Depot NDG to learn more about the food industry and how we can make wise choices.
- encourage our politicians to set goals that look after Creation and bring healing - from diverse gardens to less need for 'rush hour' (maybe buses, maybe working from home), . . .
- talk about it with others and see what else you come up with.

That's nice Peter, you may protest, but we're just a small group of people. True, but only if we don't join in the work of the Holy Spirit - and the Spirit is working this in many ways. With the Spirit we can do mighty things. As Jesus says later in John's Gospel says, "*Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these.*"⁹ This is Jesus talking, and saying that we will do greater works than his! That's impressive.

So, look on the world, and everything in it, as part of the creation of God. Nothing is just an object or a resource. Look to see God in Creation, and join with Jesus and the Holy Spirit in saving the world - or at least the parts God is calling us to labour with.

To God be all the glory. Amen.

9 John 14: 12



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: God in great love for us lent us this planetpg 10 (719)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwBLsS6M4jQ
www.youtube.com/watch?v=W36SHEuVPOs (more familiar tune)

🗨️ FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies. Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).

Memories: Share a time when you were amazed by a part of creation.

Wonder: What can we learn from Creation about the Creator? It can be fun to consider specific examples, such as a raspberry.

Actions: Identify one thing you will change this week to live in a more respectful relationship with a part of Creation.

Wonder: What is one thing you would changed about the way people related to the rest of Creation (it doesn't need to be practical).



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.

✦ Spirit Sighting

One topic that all the parties could agree on in the last Federal election, for the first time, was that the environment was an issue. What to do about it varied, which is good as long as things are done. It shows that politicians are seeing the need to change our relationship with Creation, thank God (literally).

It was also good to see multiple Presbyterian churches engaging in these questions this week at the Synod Climate Conference.

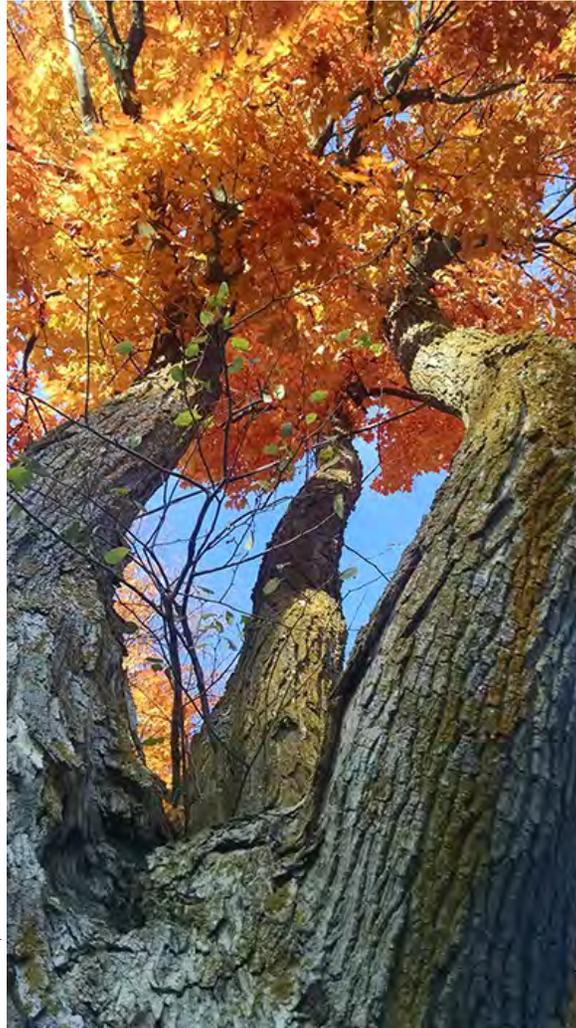
🙏 Prayers of the people

God of Heaven,
God of Earth,
Creator of all that is,

Your creation can take our breath away
sometimes in fear
and sometimes in wonder.
Help us to learn about you in
the scurrying squirrels and they hide seeds
for winter,
the colourful leaves that change with the
season,
the flowers that become strawberries and
apples,
which as such delicious ways to nourish
our bodies.

Jesus, bless those who work with creation,
those who work in the parks,

those who deal with our garbage and recycling,
and especially the farmers & fishermen
who labour so hard to feed us
while trying to respect Creation
and survive.



We thank you for initiatives like The Depot,
and the farmers markets.
We thank you for the eco-museum,
that helps animals in need,
and educates people about the animals we
share Québec with.
Help us Jesus to see how you want us
individually and as a church to improve
our relationship with Creation.

Jesus, you are the head of the church, and we
are your hands.
We thank you for the community you have
gathered that is Kensington, and we pray
for your guidance as we continue to seek
and follow you. Help us to share your love,
hope and healing with all parts of
Creation.

Lord of all,
we recognize that you love the world,
We pray for the healing to every plant &
animal,
landscape & water.

So that they can be a part of the web of life
as you created them to be.

We pray for the healing of our relationship with Creation,
and with each other,
and within ourselves.

We pray for those who are suffering physically, mentally or
spiritually and need your healing touch.

May you open our minds and lives,
to see you all around us
and help us to join in your dance.

In Jesus name
Amen.

♪ Hymn: All things bright and beautiful.....pg 10 (435)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErYNkr5eG7o

✦ Benediction (Numbers 6:24-26)

*The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.*

Amen.



Keeping Hope Alive

For Palestinians, the olive tree is a symbol of their nationality and connection to the land. Cultivated for thousands of years, it is a major source of income for many Palestinian households. Between 1967 and 2009, over 830,000 olive trees were uprooted by Israeli settlers and military to build settlements and roads. In 2002, the Joint Advocacy Initiative launched the Olive Tree Campaign (OTC), inviting partners to sponsor olive trees as a sign of solidarity with Palestinian farmers. The OTC has supported 15,000 households with 200,000 olive trees, allowing them to maintain their lands, earn an income and keep their hope alive. The PCC has been supporting this life-giving project since 2018. In celebration of the campaign's 20th anniversary, organizers hope to plant 40,000 olive trees in 2022, and they still need sponsors for 15,000 trees to reach the goal.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, October 17 (Students and Colleges Sunday) We pray for the staff, faculty and students at The Presbyterian College in Montreal, Knox College in Toronto, and Vancouver School of Theology/St. Andrew's Hall.

Monday, October 18 (Feast Day of Luke the Evangelist) We pray that those who ask, who seek, and who knock will receive, find, and have doors opened to them.

Tuesday, October 19 We pray for the safety of Palestinian farmers and their families and friends as they gather to pick olives during the harvest season. May all those participating experience a bountiful harvest.

Wednesday, October 20 We give thanks and pray for coaches involved in Cyclical PCC and the New Beginnings program who help ministers continue Christ's ministry in new ways.

Thursday, October 21 We pray for doctors, nurses and all those who work in hospitals and medical clinics.

Friday, October 22 We pray that all Survivors of Residential Schools be heard and healed from the hurts of the past.

Saturday, October 23 We remember Chanie Wenjack who died of hunger and exposure on this day in 1966 after running away from Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School in Kenora, Ontario. We pray for all those who carry deep pain and trauma from Residential Schools.

For the beauty of the earth

G D7/A D/F# G C/E D7/F# G C D/C G/B C G/D D G

1. For the beau-ty of the earth, for the beau-ty of the skies,
 2. For the beau-ty of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3. For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de-light,
 4. For the joy of hu-man love, broth-er, sis-ter, par-ent, child,
 5. For each per-fect gift of thine, to the earth so free-ly given,

G D7/A D/F# G C/E D7/F# G C B7 Em Am7 G/D D G

for the love which from our birth o-ver and a-round us lies,
 hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light,
 for the mys-tic har-mo-n-y link-ing sense to sound and sight,
 friends on earth and friends a-bove, for all gen-tle thoughts and mild,
 grac-es hu-man and di-vine, flowers of earth and buds of heaven,

G D7 Em D/F# D 7 G C D/F# G/B C/E G/D D 7 G

Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sac-ri-fice of praise.

Words: Follitt Sanford Pierpoint (1835–1917), alt Music: Adapted from a Chorale by Conrad Kocher (1786–1872); harmony, William Henry Monk (1823–1889), Carman H. Milligan (1909–)

Words: public domain Music: harmony, copyright © Carman H. Milligan CCLI #4440603

God of the sparrow, God of the whale

G7 Unison C Em Am Dm 7

1. God of the spar-row God of the whale
 2. God of the earth-quake God of the storm
 3. God of the rain-bow God of the cross
 4. God of the hun-gry God of the sick
 5. God of the neigh-bour God of the foe
 6. God of the ag-es God near at hand

G C/E Fmaj7 6 E7 Am /C Em

God of the swirl-ing stars How does the crea-ture say
 God of the trum-pet blast How does the crea-ture cry
 God of the emp-ty grave How does the crea-ture say
 God of the prod-i-gal How does the crea-ture say
 God of the prun-ing hook How does the crea-ture say
 God of the lov-ing heart How do your chil-dren say

Fmaj7-6 Em7 Am Dm 7 1.-5. Gsus G 7 C 6.

Awe How does the crea-ture say Praise
 Woe How does the crea-ture cry Save
 Grace How does the crea-ture say Thanks
 Care How does the crea-ture say Life
 Love How does the crea-ture say Peace
 Joy How do your chil-dren say Home

Words: Jaroslav J. Vajda (1919–) Music: Carl E. Schalk (1929–) CCLI #4440603

Words: copyright © Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1983 Music: copyright © G.L.A. Publications Inc., 1983. All rights reserved.

God in great love for us lent us this planet

STEWARDSHIP 11 10 11 10

Dm (F) A/C# Dm Gm6 A7 Dm /F

1. God in great love for us lent us this plan-et, gave it a
 2. Thanks be to God for its boun-ty and beau-ty, life that sus-
 3. Long have our hu-man wars ru-ined its har-vest; long has earth's
 4. Earth is the Lord's: it is ours to en-joy it, ours, as God's

C/E C 7 F Gm 6 A Dm/F Gm Bbmaj7 C 7

pur- pose in time and in space: small as a spark from the
 tains us in bo-dy and mind: plen-ty for all, if we
 bowed to the ter-ror of force; long have we wast-ed what
 stew-ards, to farm and de-fend. From its pol-lu-tion, mis-

F/A Bbmaj7 C7 Gm6/D Dm7 Gm A (C#) Dm Gm Dm/A A7 Dm

fire of cre-a-tion, cra-dle of life and the home of our race.
 learn how to share it, rich-es un-dreamed of to fath-om and find.
 oth-ers have need of, poi-soned the foun-tain of life at its source.
 use and de-struc-tion, good Lord, de-liv-er us, world with-out end!

Words: Fred Pratt Green (1903-) Music: Valerie Ruddle (1932-) CCLI #4440603

Words: copyright © 1973 by The Hymn Society. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Hope Publishing Co. Music: copyright © 1979 Stainer & Bell Ltd. & Methodist Church (UK) Division of Education and Youth. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Hope Publishing Co.

Rev. Peter Rombeek
for Kensington Presbyterian Church

All things bright and beautiful

ROYAL OAK 7 6 7 6 with refrain

Refrain G G/F# C/E D6 C6 Am G/B G Am D7 G

All things bright and beau-ti-ful, all crea-tures great and small,

G/F# C/E D6 C6 Am G/B G Am D7 G Fine

all things wise and won-der-ful, in love God made them all.

G G/F C/E C /B Am D7 D/C G/B D7/AG

1. Each lit-tle flower that o-pens, each lit-tle bird that sings,
 2. The cold wind in the win-ter, the pleas-ant sum-mer sun,
 3. The rock-y moun-tain splen-dour, the haunt-ing cur-lew's call,
 4. God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell

D G B7 Em C6 (E/B)Am D D/C G/B C D 7 G D.C.

God made their glow-ing col-ours; God made their ti-ny wings.
 the ripe fruits in the gar-den, God made them, eve-ry one.
 the great lakes and the prai-ries, the for-ests in the fall,
 how great is God al-might-y who has made all things well.

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895), alt Music: English folk melody; adapted, Martin Shaw (1875-1958); harmony, The Hymnbook 1953

Words: public domain Music: harmony, copyright © John Ribble, 1955; renewed 1983. All rights reserved. Used by permission of The Westminster / John Knox Press