



Kensington Presbyterian Church

What's it coming to?

May 15, 2022

WELCOME, to worship. We are offering a variety of ways for people to gather. We are welcoming people to worship in person (with singing), 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 those who live with you to join you, or connect with others through the phone or 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)



NDG alley graffiti - flowers and cross

Contacts

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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

Pictures of creation: Could you please send me pictures of creation. We'd like to use them next week in a prayer.

The Chosen: Join us for this Bible study to explore what Jesus was about, and what it's like to be a follower of Christ. We'll be basing this on Season 2 of *The Chosen*. While you can join anytime, the series is good and worthy of catching up on.

Thursdays April 21 - July 16

7 pm viewing of video over Zoom

8 pm discussion

Ask Rev Peter for the Zoom address.

Prayer Group: Thursdays 9 am at Benny Farm
3500 Benny Ave. Common Room beside central courtyard)

Drop Box: As The Depot has learned new ways of operating during COVID, we are now accepting food donations to help the St. Monica's Food Pantry. We are also accepting items to help the young parents program at Head & Hands (ex. clothing, diapers, toys).

CAB: Camp d'action biblique is welcoming campers this summer. For more information visit their website cabqc.ca

New Hope Senior Centre Annual Meeting: June 8, 11 am
In person (with lunch) and over zoom.
call 514-484-0425.225 to RSVP

Easter Appeal Donations: We are pleased to share that we raised over \$1895 (some donations are still coming in) to help with the painting of Kensington Hospitality Hall.



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 Revelation 15: 3-4)

Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God Almighty!

**Just and true are your ways,
King of the ages.**

Who will not fear you, O Lord,
and bring glory to your name?

For you alone are holy.

All nations will come and worship you!

♪ Hymn: Shall we gather at the river.....pg 10 (797)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=8VjUhzSH_rc



Prayer of approach

Lord, we have come here looking for you,
to catch a vision of your glory
and be filled with your hope.

We have come here to this time
because it is easier to feel your comfort
and see your light
then when we are walking through the dark valleys.

Sometimes when we walk through those valleys
we give in to the temptation to do what's best for ourselves,
what's best for me.

We will look away from those who need help
so that we might keep along the road
...perhaps getting out of the depths.

Sometimes we even step on others,
so that we might have a better impression.

Please forgive us. . .

May your Spirit help us see by your light,
so that we can focus on your way,
and help others up so that they can see too.

In this time Lord,
may you grant the vision of your glory
and the path of righteousness.

In Jesus name
Amen.

✦ Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news,
To all who turn from sin in sorrow,
to all who turn to God in hope,
this is God's Word of grace:
We are accepted, we are forgiven, we are loved.
This gift we have from God.
Thanks be to God.

Amen.

✦ 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 story

Today our psalm is going to be Psalm 23. It's a really good one, but there are a few things that might be confusing.

- for a sheep to lay down it needs to feel completely safe.
- a sheep has difficulty telling if water is safe to go in. It can go into a river that is too fast and get washed away, so the shepherd has to watch out for it.

- having your head anointed with oil is a sign that you have received a special blessing. People also thought that it made your hair look healthy (like conditioner now)
- having your cup run over was good. It wasn't considered spilling and making a mess, but having sooo much that it couldn't all fit in your cup.
- even if there are enemies or big problems around, you can enjoy the feast

Let's say the psalm together....

📖 Reading

[Psalm 23](#)

Dear Jesus,

*Thank you for always being with us
and helping us through the worst.*

Amen.



♪ Hymn: All the way my shepherd leads me.....pg 10 (699)
youtu.be/awQ11reZbzU?t=3

🙏 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 drew us to this moment.
We ask that you will send your Spirit now
to give us deeper insight, encouragement, faith, and hope
through the Easter gospel.
Amen.²

✨ Intro to the readings

- Last week's passage from the Gospel According to John started Jesus' farewell speech and emphasized loving one another like he loves us. This is from near the end of that speech.
- Our passage from Revelation is also from near the end of this long vision of what the world is coming to.

📖 Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,³ or click on the name to be taken to an online version.
[John 14: 23-29](#)
[Revelation 21: 10, 22 to 22:5](#)

✨ Sermon: What's it coming to?

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

² adapted from Worship Coursebook N.3.1.1

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

Out of the dark hallway you hear breathing, like somebody on a ventilator. It's getting louder. Then a metal arm reaches out for our heroes. It says something about wanting to 'update' them. After some running around the metal man falls and the face mask rolls away revealing a real person.

This would be a typical scene from a Doctor Who story with the cybermen. They are one of my favourite 'bad guys' from the series. It turns out there are various versions of them in the universe, but the origins are similar. There is an issue which is affecting people's health. This leads to the replacement of body parts for survival... until too much is replaced and they lose their humanity.



I'm a big fan of science fiction. I like how it projects an aspect of our society, often a scientific development, and explores how that impacts everything. In Doctor Who, Star Trek, Isaac Asimov's books, and so many others there are visions offered of the future - ones with something negative to create drama, but also with hope. (even if it's just a warning that we don't need to take that road)

Visions of the future are important. They help us walk through the present.

Take Psalm 23. It has brought comfort to people for thousands of years. When I mentioned to Hazel that we would share it this week she immediately recited it. I could feel the peace it brought her.

Psalm 23 alludes to all sorts of threats: hunger, thirst, dangers in the dark, ... but the focus is on God and a vision for our journey. It starts with how God leads us to what we need - like a

sheep needing grass and still waters. While there are dark valleys, we are led through them to a great banquet in the end.

It's a vision that gives us hope for the future.

So is the passage from Revelation. That whole book is about acknowledging issues in the present and leading to a utopian dream of our future. Like any dream, it's probably best not to take it literally. Visions can be complicated and strange. The rules of reality may not only be different than our waking world, but be fluid. However, visions do bring us hope.

Let's take a look at this utopia from Revelation.



Tapisserie de l'Apocalypse du Château d'Angers

John of Patmos, the dreamer of this vision, is taking to a high mountain. I suspect you've been up on a mountain and had the view. It doesn't need to be the Rockies. It could even be the one here in Montréal. When you see the view, it opens things up inside. Many people describe a mountain view as a 'thin place' - a place where they can sense the divine in the world. It can bring peace to your soul. ...And then we descend back into the valley -

where it's easier to find water and fertile soil; where there are shadows and it's harder to see the way ahead. In this vision, these are no longer issues.

Something that is different from other Biblical visions of what the world is coming to is that this is an urban vision. The prophet Micah (4) talks about beating swords into ploughshares and sitting under our own vines and fig trees - a rural vision. The prophet Isaiah (11) shares a vision of peace on the mountain with the wolf and the lamb living together, and a great feast for the nations (Isaiah 25). Jesus focuses on relationships and banquets (ex Luke 23:43, Matthew 8:11). The vision offered through John of Patmos focuses on a city.

This isn't a city like any other. Often cities are places of problems: crime and darkness, dirt and pollution, poverty for many and opulence for a few. This city is different. It is stunningly beautiful. The verses we skipped today describe all the jewels adorning everything. The streets are paved with gold. This is a city that sparkles. While very different from previous nature images in the Bible, they all have an element of the unbelievable. This is a city that only the King of kings could afford - and the whole city is like that, not just the homes of the leaders.

...and it's not just any city, this is the new Jerusalem. The Old Jerusalem was central to God, or at least the church. It contained the temple, until it was destroyed by Babylon and the people were subjugated and scattered - and then the new Temple was destroyed by Rome, and the people were again subjugated and scattered. The vision of this new Jerusalem is one of permanence for a community threatened by forces that they can't beat. I pray you haven't felt physically threatened in a long time, but there are many refugees from unsafe cities who may find refuge in this vision. There are people struggling in Montreal who dream of a

city where everyone shares in the wealth. Then there's the tree of life who is always bearing fruit. There is never a season of hunger - again, a wonderful vision of hope for those who struggle.

Another aspect of Jerusalem is that it is the city of the people of God. Who does that include? The passage mentions those "*written in the Lamb's book of life.*" Has God decided who is in and who is out? Is our fate pre-decided or predestined? I don't think so. While it's vague, I believe that the names in the book of life are descriptive rather than prescriptive. It's more like Santa's list; have you been naughty or nice. Did you practice abomination and falsehood, or love? Did you accept God? The passage offers hope for those who realize they need help. "*The leaves of the tree [of life] are for the healing of the nations.*" This suggests that healing is possible for those in need - even in this utopia.

The breakdown of barriers throughout this vision also speaks to who is included, and perhaps bigger changes in how the world works. There's no distinction between the nations - gentile or Jew. There's no promised land and wilderness - it is all renewed. There's no distinction between day and night. There isn't even any difference between heaven and earth - this is heaven on earth. Can you imagine a world where there are no barriers? where everyone is equal? We believe this is true before God - and here it is shown in everything.

An end to fear for safety, hunger and need, no barriers between anything - this is big, ...but there's an even bigger difference between this new version of Jerusalem and the old. There's no Temple. The Temple had been the place that people could approach God. It was considered the dwelling place of God. It was the heart of the religious community and the focal

point of the city - and their society. ...and it's not here. This isn't because a superior power has destroyed it, but because it's not needed. God is in everything. Everything is around and through God. We believe that's true now, but in this vision you can see it. There are no dark corners. Can you imagine it?

Oh, but that's just a utopian vision, you say. They never really exist. True, but that doesn't mean they aren't good or important. Visions give us a view of things that may come. In Science Fiction there's a dark side, a warning of something to avoid. In the book of Revelation the dark side was in the first 20 chapters. Warnings to churches of the fate that they are headed towards with their actions. All these visions help us choose our path - the positive ones too. After all, who doesn't want to end up in a positive place?

And the world is heading towards this heaven on earth utopia. I don't think it'll be quit the urban city portrayed in Revelation, or the pastoral ones in the Prophets, or the feast in the Gospels... well, maybe the feasts. We won't be focused on the city, or streets of gold, or the mountain. The focus will be God. This is how we'll get from war, and hunger, and tears to utopia. God and the Lamb, who is Jesus, are from whom all things flow: the river of life, the light of the world, ...everything. This is God's world, and everyone and everything will, one day, live that way.

To God be all the glory

Amen.



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: City of God.....pg 11 (471)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAECgrj_wSY

🗨️ 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: Describe what your utopia would be like?
What vision of hope do you have for the world to come?

Actions: Create something that shares a vision of the world renewed through God. It could be a painting, a collage, a poem, a dance, ...
Check out the poem/hymn by Brian Wren on pg 9

Values: God is the focal point of the vision in Revelation, wrestle with the implications of that with our actions 'here and now'?

Actions: How can we be beacons of hope in the community?
Prayer: ...that you may have visions that bring you hope, and that you can share that with others.

✦ Spirit Sightings

Before COVID the Session decided that our Mission Statement was far too long and grammatically flawed to be helpful. It didn't give us the vision of where God was leading us. We had a series of meetings. Then we had some opportunities for everyone to get involved. Then we crafted some statements... which all got overshadowed by the pandemic.

The Mission Statement became:

We are a Christian community committed to growing in faith and sharing God's gifts of love,

hope, and healing.

Like the city described by John, the gates are open. We name the fruit being offered as love, hope and healing. We went on to describe the vision more, though not as a city, or a pasture. Our vision of the Mission Statement is:

As a vibrant Christian community, we aim to realize our mission through opening our doors in welcome and sharing fellowship generously. We build up our faith engaging all ages through Sunday worship, active prayer and mission groups, and creative activities. We reach out to the community at large to those who need our understanding and support.

Everything was disrupted by the pandemic. Quite unexpectedly we were involved in a lot more computers and broadcasting than we ever thought. In response to the feedback from last fall we are continuing to work on ways that people can engage with faith and each other (ex. worship in various formats, the Chosen Bible study, and Messy Church), rebuilding our community that has been disrupted by the pandemic (ex. you may have noticed I'm mentioning people more in worship), connecting with our community outside the congregation (ex. the drop box is back, and an initiative Mike will introduce...).

One way that the Holy Spirit invites us to share God's love, hope & healing in our community is through sharing our building. In order to do this better, and to witness that God is the reason we do this, we are going to improve the entrance to our building and access to Kensington Hall (were we had refreshments after worship). Masa has prepared a document explaining the projects and inviting your opinions that will be distributed soon. If you don't receive a copy by next week and would like one, please let us know.

✦ 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.



Embrace - C Aust

🧎 Prayers of the people

○ Lord, our God,
There is so much about the world that clouds our vision.
Sometimes it feels like there are dangers on every side
and we don't see the Shepherd that protects us from the worst.
Sometimes it feels like darkness is encroaching on every side,
and we wonder what the world is coming to.

Help is to remember that it is coming to you.

That all nations will gather before you,
and your light will shine in all the dark corners.

Some of the things that we are concerned about now include

- the war in Ukraine
and other parts of the world
- the drought in East Africa
- that the Taliban is placing even more limits on the
freedom of women
- that COVID is not done,
and for North Korea that has finally admitted to having it.
- ...

While these shadows can overwhelm us at times,

we thank you for light that we see showing a good way forward

We thank you for

- the pressure that is being brought to end the war
(may it become stronger for all conflicts).
- the work of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank
in helping the hungry to feed themselves
- the work of the PWS&D that supports education of
women, and their say in how they live
- for all those involved in developing the vaccines
that are making this wave of COVID less deadly.
- ...

We thank you for your vision for Kensington,

and pray that you help us to share your love, hope and healing
with everyone around us.

We thank you for this time that we can take to look for you.

May your Spirit help us to see you,
to feel your hand lead us
into the vision of your reign.

In the name of Jesus, the Christ.

Amen.

♪ Hymn: *Siyahamba*.....pg 11 (639)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQwmjLjoPKQ

✦ *Benediction (2 Corinthians 13:13)*

*May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.*

Amen.



When all is ended by Brian Wren

1. When all is ended, time and troubles past,
shall all be mended, sin and death out-cast?

In hope we sing, and hope to sing at last:
Alleluia!

2. As in the night, when lightning flickers free,
and gives a glimpse of distant hill and tree,
each flash of good discloses what will be:

Alleluia!

3. Against all hope, our weary times have known
wars ended, peace declared, compassion shown,
great days of freedom, tyrants overthrown:

Alleluia!

4. Then do not cheat the poor, who long for bread,
with dream-worlds in the sky or in the head,
but sing of slaves set free, and children fed:

Alleluia!

5. With earthy faith we sing a song of heaven:
all life fulfilled, all loved, all wrong forgiven.

Christ is our sign of hope, for Christ is risen:
Alleluia!

6. With all creation, pain and anger past,
evil exhausted, love supreme at last,
alive in God, we'll sing an unsurpassed

Alleluia!

Shall we gather at the river

HANSON PLACE 8 7 8 7 with refrain (8 10 9 7)

D A7 A

1. Shall we gath-er at the riv-er, where bright an-gel feet have trod,
 2. On the bos-om of the riv-er, where the Sav-iour King we own,
 3. Ere we reach the shin-ing riv-er, lay we eve-ry bur-den down;
 4. Soon we'll reach the shin-ing riv-er, soon our pil-grim-age will cease;

D A 7 D

with its crys-tal tide for-ev-er flow-ing by the throne of God?
 we shall meet, and sor-row nev-er 'neath the glo-ry of the throne.
 grace our spir-its will de-liv-er, and pro-vide a robe and crown.
 soon our hap-py hearts will quiv-er with the mel-o-dy of peace.

Refrain G (dim) D A7 D

Yes, we'll gath-er at the riv-er, the beau-ti-ful, the beau-ti-ful riv-er,

G (dim) D A 7 D

gath-er with the saints at the riv-er that flows by the throne of God.

Words: Robert Lowry (1826-1899) Music: Robert Lowry (1826-1899)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

All the way my Saviour leads me

ALL THE WAY 8 7 8 7 D

Ab Eb (/Db) Ab/C Ab

1. All the way my Sav-iour leads me; what have I to ask be-side?
 2. All the way my Sav-iour leads me, cheers each wind-ing path I tread,
 3. All the way my Sav-iour leads me, oh the full-ness of his love!

Db/Ab Ab Eb7 Fm Ab/EbEb Bb 7 Eb

Can I doubt his ten-der mer-cy who through life has been my guide?
 gives me grace for eve-ry tri-al, feeds me with the liv-ing bread.
 Per-fect rest to me is prom-ised in my Fa-ther's house a-bove.

(Eb7) Ab (Db/Ab) (/C Eb) Ab Db (Ab) Eb

Heaven-ly peace, di-vin-est com-fort, here by faith in him to dwell;
 Though my wea-ry steps may fal-ter, and my soul a-thirst may be,
 When my spir-it, clothed im-mor-tal, wings its flight to realms of day,

Ab7 Db6 Ab/Eb Eb7 Ab

for I know, what-e'er be-fall me Je-sus do-eth all things well.
 gush-ing from the rock be-fore me lo, a spring of joy I see.
 this my song through end-less a-ges, "Je-sus led me all the way!"

10/1: Words: Fanny J. Crosby (1820-1915) Music: Robert Lowry (1826-1899)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

CITY OF GOD

Dan Schutte

Verses 1, 2

1. A - wake from your slum - ber! A - rise from your
2. We are sons of the morn - ing; we are daugh - ters of

1. sleep! A new day is dawn - ing for all those who weep.
2. day. The One who has loved us has bright - ened our way.

1. The peo - ple in dark - ness have seen a great light. The
2. The Lord of all kind - ness has called us to be a

to Refrain

1. Lord of our long - ing has con - quered the night.
2. light for his peo - ple to set their hearts free.

Refrain

Let us build the cit - y of God. May our tears be
turned in - to danc - ing! For the Lord, our light and our
love, has turned the night in - to day!

Verse 3

3. God is light; in him there is no dark - ness.
3. Let us walk in his light, his chil - dren,
3. one and all. O com - fort my

Text: Based on Isaiah 9; 40:1-9; 1 John 1.
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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. We are march - ing,
khos'. Si - ya - ham - ba,
Dieu. Oui, nous mar - chons,
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

In Malawi, unreliable rainfall patterns are a significant issue affecting farmers. As a result of climate change, these unpredictable rains greatly impact food security and limit what farmers can and cannot plant. To assist farmers in Malawi's Karonga District, workshops that teach conservation agriculture techniques are held. Farmers learn how to use mulch and make compost to nourish the soil and grow better crops. Farmers also learn other essential techniques, including weed and pest management, to address the ongoing challenges of climate change. **Since implementing a conservation agriculture approach, many farmers have significantly increased their crop yields.** This agricultural project is supported by Presbyterian World Service & Development, in partnership with Canadian Foodgrains Bank.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, May 15 We give thanks for Presbyterian World Service & Development partners who teach farmers in Malawi about conservation agriculture, helping them to protect and revitalize life-giving soil and cultivate plentiful harvests.

Monday, May 16 We pray for those who have suffered racial discrimination within the church. May we, as a church, take action to repent of the harm that has been caused by acts of discrimination.

Tuesday, May 17 (International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia) We pray for an end to all forms of hatred and discrimination that target LGBTQI2+ people. As a church, we have been part of this harm, and we repent.

Wednesday, May 18 We pray for new graduates of our theological colleges who are patiently listening to God and seeking a call to congregational ministry.

Thursday, May 19 We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Halifax and Lunenburg in Nova Scotia.

Friday, May 20 We give thanks for the mission and ministry of Place of Hope Indigenous Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and for the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Margaret Mullin.

Saturday, May 21 We pray for those planning the 2022 General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, which will meet online beginning June 5.

