



Kensington Presbyterian Church  
*Growing in faith and sharing God's love*  
*since 1786*

*Creation's wonder*

*April 23, 2023*

**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.<sup>1</sup> 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)

*Announcements*

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

**NEW Zoom Prayer Group:** We are starting a new prayer group that will meet for about 20 minutes over zoom one morning a week. Some possible times are 6, 6:30, 8:30 and 9 am (we are open to suggestions). If you are interested, please contact Rev. Peter.

**Choir:** would like you to join them. We practice Sunday at 9:30.

**Jesus & Java:** Join us as we share the joys and questions of faith.

Thursday, 3:30 pm at Beetz, 5914 Sherbrooke @ Clifton

**Pizza & Movie Nights:** Fridays at 6:30

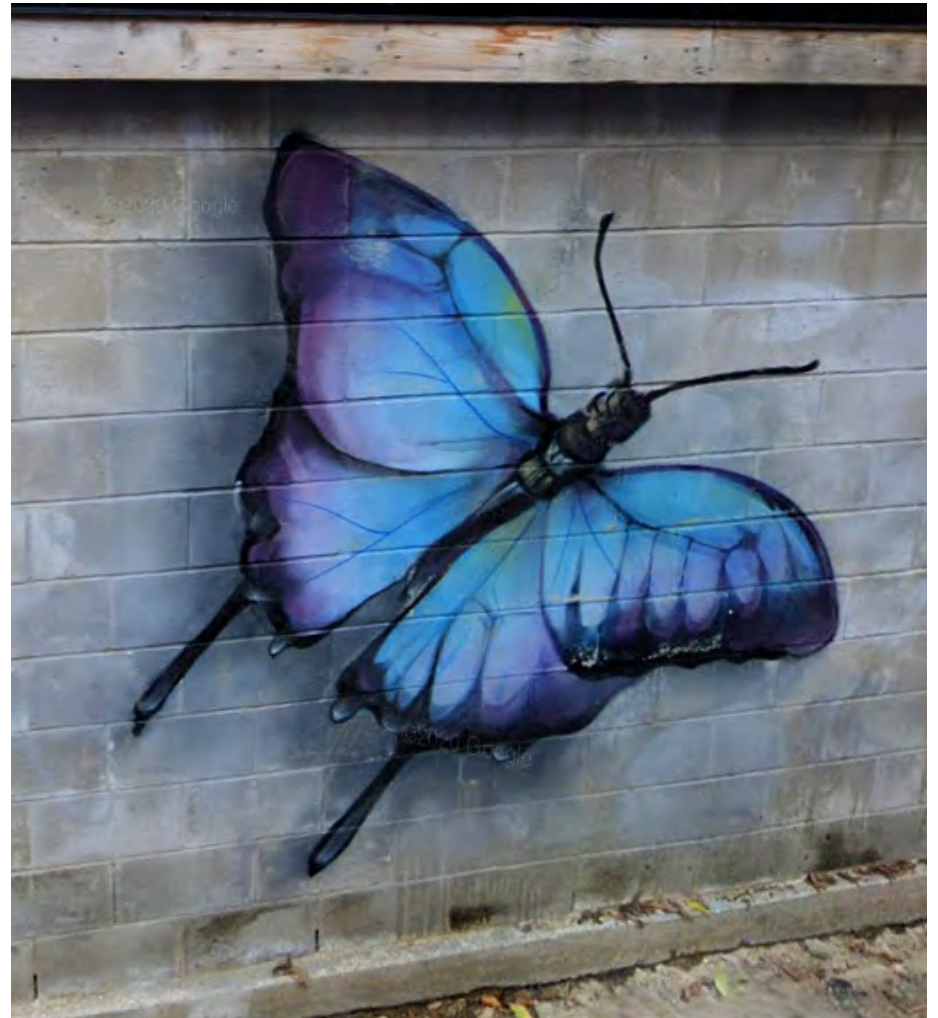
April 28: Mary Poppins

May 5: TBA

Please let Rev. Peter know if you want to come.

**Drop Box:** Food donations are welcome for the local Food Pantry.

<sup>1</sup> note: that the footnotes are not as thorough as an academic paper.



Oxford Alley, NDG - Rombeek

*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

O God, who called all life into being,  
**The earth, rivers 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 your kingdom to come.**<sup>2</sup>

♪ Hymn: For the beauty of the earth.....pg 10 (434)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CFhYi5KHCM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CFhYi5KHCM)



<sup>2</sup> from Holy Ground Wild Goose Resource Group. 143.



### Prayer of Approach

God, we can't see you directly  
but like other artists  
we can see you in your creations.  
Except you aren't like other artists,  
at our best, we reflect you wisdom, love & hope.  
We can learn of you in the steadfastness of the Canadian shield,  
and glimpses of Magnolia blooms  
on trees that stand humbly on our street corners the rest of the  
year.  
We see you in the tug of stars,  
and the connections of atoms.  
We can even see you in the people around us,  
and what we can accomplish together.

Not that it is all you.  
With your light  
we can see how we serve other dreams than yours.  
We're sorry for the times we've messed up,  
sorry for taking things for granted,  
for taking more than nature can heal. . .  
sorry for people we've hurt  
now, and in future generations. . .  
We're sorry for damaging your world.

To help us change our ways,  
we pray together the prayer you offer your disciples.



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.**

✦ Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news 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.  
Amen.



*Listening to God*

✦ Children's story

This is a version of Genesis 1 by Bishop Tutu. It's from his book *Children of God*.

In the very beginning, God's love bubbled over when there was nothing else - no trees, no birds, no animals, no sky, no sea - only darkness.

Out of this love, God spoke. "Let there be light." And there was day. And there was night. And when the first day was done, God smiled and knew that it was good.

On the second day, God said, "Let there be sky where the clouds can float and the wind can blow."

And the sky was bright blue and beautiful. On the third day,

God said, "Let the waters gather together into oceans and let the dry land appear." Now God decided to make the world even more dazzling, with tall trees and long grass. And then the first flower opened in all its glory.

On the fourth day, God said, "Let the sky be filled with the sun and the moon." And God scattered stars across the sky like sparkling diamonds.

On the fifth day God said, "Let there be birds to fly and sing and fish to swim and splash." And the world was filled with the joyous sound of birdsong.

On the sixth day, God said, "Let there be animals - elephants and giraffes, cats and mice, and bees and bugs." And suddenly the world was a very noisy place.

But something was still missing. Then God said, "I will make people, and I'll make them like me so they can enjoy the earth and take care of it." He did just as he had said, and it was all so very, very good.

God looked at everything that he had made and clapped his hands together in delight. "Isn't it wonderful!"

And on the seventh day, God laughed, and rested, and enjoyed his glorious creation.

*Dear Jesus,*

*help me to enjoy and care for your beautiful earth.*

*Amen.*

♪ Hymn: God of the Sparrow.....pg 10 (307)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXm1VOUH3eY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXm1VOUH3eY)

## Prayer for Illumination


Lord God,  
at the beginning of time your Spirit moved over the waters.  
So send your Spirit to us now to open our hearts and minds  
to receive the re-creating power of your Word.  
Through Christ,  
Amen.<sup>3</sup>



## Intro to the readings

- We'll hear about Adam in Genesis 2. We think of Adam as a name. It's good to remember that it's also the word for dirt - so in this passage Adam may be more of a description than a name.
- In what may be Paul's last letter in the Bible, we'll hear about waiting for the Messiah to return.

- You may find the responses in the psalm a bit repetitive. You could try to vary the way you say them, or go with it and make it more of a subconscious response...which could become an interesting part of your life.

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

[Genesis 2](#): 4b-9, 18-22

[Romans 8](#): 19-23

[Psalm 136](#): 1-9, 23-26



Sermon: Creation's wonder

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

I was talking to somebody this week who is already looking forward to winter, but most people are glad it's spring. Even my friend who tries to seal herself off because of allergies likes it. Why? because creation is beautiful.

It's been said before, but it's worth repeating: Creation is beautiful; it's wonderful; it is amazing.

Would you agree?

The bible certainly does. It's full of glowing descriptions of nature. There's passages about the land flowing with milk and honey. There's glorious feasts on the mountain with all the nations gathered. There's images like sailing on the wings of an eagle, or being gathered into the safety of a chicken's wings. There's trees flourishing beside streams. And there's the way it all starts. As God creates various parts of the universe in Genesis chapter one, God declared "And God saw that it was good." or, as a

<sup>3</sup> Worship Sourcebook A.3.1.1

<sup>4</sup> 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

storyteller I heard put it, God exclaimed “Ohh, I like that!”

Sometimes nature is just beautiful. You may find this in a sunset, or a flower, or a person, or a piece of music. I say ‘just’ because you don’t go beyond that, but there’s nothing ‘just’ about it. The beauty fills you up.

Sometimes creation can fill you with wonder - perhaps because of the scale or complexity of it. I’ve never seen it, but the Grand Canyon might fall into this category. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus invites us to consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. They can ‘just’ be beautiful, but also amazing.

Birds (most of them) can fly! That’s a wonder.<sup>5</sup> Have you ever watched them and wondered what it would be like? Then there’s how different they are from us. They develop inside an egg. They have feathers, and no teeth or gums, and their brains are so small - yet they live so well... and there’s astounding variety.



5 In the Gospel According to John Jesus does do miracles - he does wonders.

and the lilies. They don’t have any brains at all. Their bodies are completely different from birds and us, but they are also complicated. They get water to defy gravity, and make food from sunlight. The flowers are intricately designed in a imaginative variety of ways to encourage insects to move pollen one to another.

Meister Eckhart said it nicely, “*Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God. Every creature is a word of God.*” I’m sure that John and Carol could take is even smaller than the creatures and tell us about amazing things that happen on a microscopic scale. Science helps reveal just how full of wonder God’s creation is.

Science, and the bible, remind us that not everything is animal and plant. Creation includes sand becoming diamonds, ... or glass for our buildings, or silicon for our computer circuits. Creation includes nature, farms and cities. There’s the animals that live in the cities, but also the buildings and communities of people.

Science, and the bible, remind us that we, people, are part of creation - part of the environment. Sometimes we forget this, or have difficulty with it. I remember teaching about the scientific classification of living things. One student (about 12 years old) just couldn’t accept that people were mammals, or even animals. We were special and different - and she wasn’t all wrong. We are special and different (and also part of nature with lots in common).

In Genesis, chapter one starts with God creating the Heavens and the Earth and ending with the Sabbath. The last thing before resting “*God created Adam (humankind) in his image, in the image of*

God he created them; male and female he created them.” This makes us different from the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. We are made in God’s image.

The second story of creation is even closer to the lesson my student needed to learn. Did you notice that all life is made from the same dirt as the first person? Chemists would be able with that inclusion as they’ve found that all life is based on the carbon atom. Person is made and invited to participate in a special way - giving the animals their names (essentially defining who they are). This creativity is part of how we are like God.

God takes this person and places them in the Garden “in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.” We can reshape creation; use creation - and look after it.

This is where things become problematic. Just before Jesus talks about the birds and lilies he warns that “no one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and wealth.” In the push to create more, people prioritized using creation over keeping it.



Sometimes it was obvious that we were damaging the ecosystem, but it was more important to get the minerals, or farm land, or energy. Sometimes we just thought the environment would clean itself - the water would get itself clean by the next city... and we didn't think about the animals. Sometimes the impact wasn't obvious. Plastic was an amazing invention, and there was no thought of the micro-plastics we now have in our soil and water, or the floating islands of plastic garbage in the ocean.<sup>6</sup>

Even when we realize the problems, acknowledge them, repent/regret them... it's hard to change our ways. Still, it's important to try. It's important for our health, and the health of future generations. It's important because God told us to, and we're just care takers. God is the landlord. As it says in Psalm 24 (and elsewhere), “The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.” Treating the world without this respect is, as Wendell Berry puts it, blasphemy. Our own health and not making God mad are good reasons to try, but there's more. There's love.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.”<sup>7</sup> God loves us and we are special, but God also loves The World. All of it is good... even mosquitoes & poison ivy. Accepting God's love for us, and the whole of creation, is a great reason to try and make a difference.

And there's hope.

I heard a scientist remembering back to the fears of acid rain in the 80s. Climate change deniers will use acid rain as an example of how scientists scare everyone with predictions that never come true. This scientist showed the opposite. That when

6 The largest is 3 times the size of France and weighs about 100 000 tonnes.  
<https://theoceancleanup.com/great-pacific-garbage-patch/>

7 [John 3: 16](#)

societies and their governments take action, we can bring healing. A more recent example of change is the start of COVID. Pollution in the atmosphere noticeably declined when people stopped driving to work. We can make a difference and take care of creation.

We're also not alone. Nature is designed to clean itself - though the demands are too high. Above that are reminders in the Bible, such as in Colossians (1:19-20) where Jesus is described, "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross." Jesus is not just helping us, but all of creation.

So, we need to remember that we are made from the same basic dirt that everything else is. We can remember Wendell Berry's words that "We are holy creatures living among other holy creatures in a world that is holy."

We also need to remember that we are special. We can work together in small ways, and advocate for large changes, that will help us both till (use) and keep creation. We can pray to be able to help Jesus bring healing and love to the world.

To God be all the glory  
Amen.



## Responding to God

♪ Hymn: Pray for the wilderness.....pg 11 (716)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgwb51n2ozo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgwb51n2ozo)

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

Etching: What is something creation or creative whose beauty filled you to overflowing?

Memories: What is something about creation (from micro to universal) that you found amazing?

Values: Share something you have done (or tried to do) in the last year to help the environment?

Wonder: Wonder together why others don't agree with your point of view on environmental issues (pollution, recycling, development, farming, etc)?

Actions: Do a little research into current issues by visiting the UN website, an interest group, or government website.

Actions: What would you like to do this year to help look after nature? change something at home? work? write to a government to encourage changes to law or city planning? Support each other in trying to make things better.

Prayer: ...that God will include us in bringing healing to the world.

✦ Spirit Sightings

Because is Earth Day weekend, I went looking for Climate related Spirit sightings.

St. Luke's in Annapolis was on long 5 acres of land leading to the river. They decided to convert the parts that didn't have buildings on it (about 4 acres) back to it's natural marshiness. This helps in a variety of ways. It is better at absorbing Carbon Dioxide. It helped filter the water before it got to the river - and to absorb water from the river when it floods (which it does a lot more than it used to).



St. Paul's is nestled feet from the Pamlico River in Aurora, N.C. The town has been hit by two major floods in the last decade - cause a number of people to leave, and reducing the congregation to 6 people. That isn't stopping them from trying to bring healing to the world. In this case it's through creating opportunities for conversations about climate change to happen, and finding resources to help their neighbours.

### ✦ 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](mailto:info@kensingtonchurch.ca).

Mailing a cheque or signing up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (**PAR**) are also good options.

### 🧎 Prayers of the people

Lord of all creation,  
what you have done  
is amazing  
astounding  
beyond words.

The variety in creation really shows how you can do infinitely more than we can imagine.  
Give us the curiosity to continue to explore what you've enabled, to appreciate diversity when we are challenged by it, and to help our society appreciate diversity...

There are aspects of nature we like,  
and others we're not so keen on.  
We love blooming flowers,  
but not all the insects that pollinate them.  
Help us to accept all you've created as good...

We have learned to create amazing things too,  
our cities, and all the things we fill them with.  
They can bring joy, and suffering.  
Your creation can also fill our souls with peace,  
and challenge us to change.  
even to reconsider how we live  
and whose kingdom we are trying to live in.  
Help us to chose your way...

Currently we are giving computers more and more power,  
and possibly even creativity.



Grant us wisdom in the development of Artificial Intelligence...

The news, especially this week, is full of stories about how nature is broken. We remember that we are a part of this - made from the same dirt.

We ask for healing for our global village...

We also ask for healing for those living in it.

This week we pray for those in Sudan & Ukraine that they may find peace.

and we pray for people who need healing of their bodies... or their minds...

May we all find your love, hope and healing. Through Jesus, the Christ Amen.

♪ Hymn: All things bright and beautiful.....pg 11 (435) [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErYNkr5eG7o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErYNkr5eG7o)

✦ Benediction

May God, the creator who made heaven and earth, bless you with creativity and wonder.

May Jesus, who walked through fields and cities, bless you with kind hands and listening ears.

May the Holy Spirit, who is around us and within us, bless you with the courage to be caring and just.

Amen.<sup>8</sup>



8 Iona Abbey Worship Book 170

In Malawi, poor, overused soil and low rainfall have made it difficult for Elena to farm her fields. As a single mother, Elena is the breadwinner of her family. A healthy crop yield is essential to her livelihood and being able to provide for them, so **Elena decided to participate in a Presbyterian**



**World Service & Development-supported project, which taught farmers conservation agriculture techniques to conserve and improve their soil and better retain moisture.** "My yields improved immediately in the second season. I plan to extend the cultivation area with the manure application and hope to have a good crop stand. This will increase access to food for my family and to financial resources to cater to other basic household needs," said Elena. Today, she teaches fellow farmers in her community about the benefits of conservation agriculture.

DAILY PRAYERS

**Sunday, April 23** We give thanks for Presbyterian World Service & Development-supported farming projects that help farmers and communities in Malawi achieve better food security.

**Monday, April 24** We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Ottawa in Ontario.

**Tuesday, April 25** We pray for Women's Missionary Society synodicals as members prepare and gather for their annual meetings.

**Wednesday, April 26** We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Kingston in Ontario.

**Thursday, April 27** We pray for the people who gather and serve at Edmonton Urban Native Ministry in Alberta, and we give thanks for their ministry.

**Friday, April 28** We give thanks for the Rev. Watan Yawi, the Rev. Dr. Paul McLean and the Tayal translation team of the Bible Society in Taiwan as they celebrate the publication of the Tayal Bible.

**Saturday, April 29** We pray for the Rev. Jim Biggs, clerk for the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda.

## 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 6. C

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 F. Schalk (1929–) CCLI #4440603

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# Pray for the Wilderness

18

*Unison*  
Eb Cm Ab Bb Eb

1. Pray for the wil - der - ness, van - ish - ing fast,  
 2. Learn from the el - e - phant, ea - gle and whale,  
 3. Work for the jus - tice cre - a - ted things need,  
 4. Trust that God's Christ o - ver - came nails and wood,  
 5. Pray for the at - mos - phere, pray for the sea,

Fm Eb/G Abmaj7 Bb

pray for the rain for - est, o - pen and vast;  
 learn from the drag - on - fly, spi - der and snail;  
 work for the health of each plant and its seed;  
 trust that earth's peo - ple will turn to the good;  
 learn from the riv - er, the rock and the tree;

Abmaj7 Eb Gm Ab Bb

pray for the peo - ple who live in the trees,  
 learn from the peo - ple in neigh - bor - ing lands,  
 work for the crea - tures a - buse has be - trayed,  
 trust that cre - a - tion for - ev - er will grow,  
 work till Sha - lom in full har - mo - ny rings,

Eb Cm Fm7 Fm7/Bb Eb

pray for the plan - et brought down by de - grees.  
 learn from the chil - dren who play in their sands.  
 work for the gar - den God's wis - dom once made.  
 trust that God's good - ness to us o - ver - flows.  
 trust the con - nec - tion of all liv - ing things.

WORDS: Daniel Charles Damon  
 MUSIC: Traditional Irish melody; arr. Daniel Charles Damon  
 Words and Music © 1991 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream IL 6018. All rights reserved.

SLANE  
 10.10.10.10.

11/11

435

# 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

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