



Kensington Presbyterian Church

Responding

April 16, 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.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)



Nunc Dimittis - Robyn Sand Anderson

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

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

Easter Baking: Friday, 21st at 5 pm

If you are interested in joining in for cookies, scones & cake-pops please contact Antoinette.

Pizza & Movie Nights: Fridays at 6:30

April 21: Nausicaä (anime with earth day theme)

April 28: TBA

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

Drop Box: We are now accepting food donations to help the St. Monica's Food Pantry.

Peggy's birthday: Peggy turns 100 tomorrow!

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 (based on 1 Peter 1: 3-5)

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has given us new life and hope.

He has raised Jesus from the dead.

God has claimed us as his own.

He has brought us out of darkness.

He has made us light to the world.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

♪ Hymn: Hallelujah! Sing to Jesus.....pg 10 (370)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJDWFYIkBns



Dance of Grace
Mark Keathley



Prayer of Approach

Thank you God for the fantastic news that nothing has more power than you - not leaders or societies, not illness or death. In you there is life, hope and a love that welcomes everyone.

It is surprising that you don't leave the sharing of this just to the professionals. You trust everyone to share the Good News that your love can cross any divide.

While we know it is special

to be invited to share the wonder of a relationship with you.

We admit that we don't do this as much as you would like.

It's not that we are trying to keep you to ourselves,
like a special treat,

but that we worry about being good enough,
or hurting others,

or being hurt if they reject you - and us,

or that we don't have enough people to succeed.

Sometimes we also lose sight of you,

and focus on other goals than your Kingdom

...sometimes we doubt.


Please help your story to infect us,

to change us

to focus us so that we may follow you

building relationships that can carry your peace and love.

In doing so, we come together and pray 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 Pardon²

Hear the good news:
Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;
this shows God's love towards us.
In the name of Jesus the Christ,
you are forgiven!

Amen.



Listening to God

 Children's story

There are four books in the Bible that tell about Jesus' life. They're called the gospels and are told from different points of view. In the Gospel According to John we hear about Thomas. After Jesus returned from the dead he visited his disciples. Thomas wasn't with them and found it hard to believe because he knew Jesus was dead. He had questions.

Do you ever have questions about God? or about what's going on? Are you ever confused? This is okay. Thomas did - and when he met Jesus he wasn't told he was being silly or to stop asking questions.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that we can bring questions to you.

Help us to hear when you answer through others, books, or prayers.

Amen.

♪ Hymn: Lord, Speak to Me.....pg 11 (767)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OQ4P7dXpYk (quiet)



Road to Emmaus - Michael Torevell

Prayer for Illumination

Sharing God,

We have much to learn,
and much to give.

May your Word
feed us
so that we have the strength
to share the Good News.

Amen.

Intro to the readings

We'll start with psalm 40. This ancient song praises God and tells of sharing God steadfast love. They have obviously experienced it. What are they experiencing now?

We all respond to what goes around us - especially when it affects us directly.

Leading into today's Gospel reading, Jesus had been killed. Considering the conspicuous absence of the disciples, this hit them hard. When the earth shook and the Temple curtain was torn like something breaking out - the priests must have been very disturbed. The soldiers failed to stop a dead body from leaving - which would lead to them wondering about their future. The women confirm that Jesus returned from the dead and were filled with fear and great joy. They, we assume, responded by telling the disciples.

Losing your mentor/leader, the rules with which you understand the world, and having your job/life being at risk... these are big things in people's lives.

How did people respond?



Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,³ or click on the name to be taken to an online version.

[Psalm 40](#)

[Matthew 28](#): 11-20



Sermon: Responding

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

In the section Mike read, we heard about some ways that people responded to the resurrection.

The establishment, as portrayed by the high priests, tried to get things back to normal. They hoped that by spending hush money they could make everything go back to the way it was. While I can't speak from experience, I don't think that's ever a good solution.

What's interesting about this is that it's included in the gospel. There's even the line that the story of Jesus' body being stolen "is still told among the Judeans to this day." It seems that at the time of writing (40+ years after Jesus' death) there were doubts in society that Jesus had returned from the dead.

Do you think that's still true?

I think there are still a lot of people who would dismiss the story of Jesus being alive again - though it's no longer because of what the guards were paid to say. Now it's the belief that it just couldn't happen... coupled with dismissing Jesus' resurrection as not something that affects them - and if it doesn't affect them, why respond.

Does Jesus' resurrection affect people now? affect you?

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

For the guards, it affected the likelihood of a bad posting... or worse. For the priests, it challenged the whole way they understood God and the universe. It's understandable that they would try to bury the news.

For the disciples - it was awesome. They respond by going back to the plan Jesus had given. They go back to where things had begun: Galilee.

This is a good reminder for us. When things become really unsettled, which they do every so often, it's good to return to the beginning. It's a way of getting grounded again.

Now, this doesn't make the disciples perfect in any way. When they get to meet the living Christ, "*they worshipped him, but some doubted.*" Can you believe it? Some doubted - though apparently that translation is a bit strong. Sometimes the translations say "hesitated" - but that's too weak. It's more accurate to think of them as 'conflicted inside'. Think of Peter walking on the water. He sees Jesus, and he sees the wind. Peter is conflicted on where to focus. The disciples see Jesus, and some are uncertain.

While not spelled out in this passage, we also know that the disciples are far from perfect. The most recent example would be them running away when things got tough, and Peter denying he knows Jesus. We also know from reading the Gospel that they frequently don't understand what Jesus is teaching. They aren't experts. And they are low in numbers. This scene starts by reminding us that there are only eleven out of the twelve Jesus had gathered.

In that collection of disciples that meet with Jesus, some aren't fully convinced, they have denied and abandoned him, they often

don't understand, and they are down numbers.

Can you imagine that?

Have you ever had doubts? Perhaps not in the existence of God, but asked 'why?' or 'what's going on?'⁴ Have you been distracted, not giving God your full attention? Have you ever felt like you don't know enough to tell others about God, or lead something at church? Have you worried about not having enough people? Have you ever felt not good enough?

I suspect so.

I suspect this happens when you're a disciple of Jesus. However, none of this seems to concern Jesus. This is reassuring. Jesus speaks to them all; Jesus speaks to us all.

What does Jesus say? First of all, a reminder of what the resurrection shows - nothing has power over God. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations.

We go because there is nothing more than God.



Sharon Helleman

⁴ I've recently heard about people being discouraged to question God. Questioning is not a sign of doubt, but of trying to understand. It's how God created us to learn. It's also in the Bible - people questioning God (check out the psalms).

And at times, and still in some parts of the world, this happens with gusto. Christianity is growing by leaps and bounds in the global south - where they now outnumber those of us in the north. One of the reasons is that they live out this passage - 'Go and make disciples.'

For us though, there is some colonial baggage. There's the tragic stories of Christians forcing others to be like them - even stealing their children. In Québec, there's the history of the church running everything and oppressing the population. These are not what Jesus was telling the disciples to do.

If we think back through the Gospel, Jesus always helped first. He never forced people to live his way - though he told scary stories of what would happen if you choose your own way. Jesus helped anyone who wanted it.

Jesus also made some interesting statements that help in interpreting how to 'go and tell'. When telling of the sheep and goats being divided, Jesus said that people may not know they are living God's way. And later he says that not everyone who is called will be chosen. These passages suggest that the church, and those in it, don't have a monopoly on God's truth. For example, I would suggest that while Gandhi wasn't a Christian, parts of his life are a good example for Christians.

Perhaps most important is how Jesus got his authority. It wasn't through the devil's offer of just taking it. He got it by meeting people, helping them, serving, being vulnerable, sacrificing... loving.

This is what Jesus taught us.

This week I heard about a translation of the newer testament done for, and with, Indigenous North Americans. They translate Jesus' instructions this way, "*You will initiate them into the life of beauty and harmony represented in the name of the Father, the Son, and*

the Holy Spirit. You will then teach them all the ways I have instructed you to walk in."⁵ I wonder how history would have played out if this understanding had been stronger? or the line from our own document *Living Faith*, "*We should not address others in a spirit of arrogance implying that we are better than they. But rather, in the spirit of humility, as beggars telling others where food is to be found, we point to life in Christ.*"

...which gets back to what Jesus was instructing us to do. To baptize people in the name of God (not a church), and tell them about God as revealed in Jesus - to "*point to life in Christ.*"

I know that some people balk at the idea of evangelism. It's hard to just do. It's not meant to be done out of context. It's best to do it like Jesus. Build up a relationship where you can be vulnerable and show love for the other. (note: not romantic love, but sacrificial caring love). When you show this and share what you are passionate about, then the person you are talking to will listen.

I'm reminded of two conversations this week. One was about attending a convent school and the obligation to pray and go to worship... and how that obligation just nurtured resentment. The other was a senior telling about how amazing Sunday School was when they were growing up - because the teachers were passionate about their relationship with God. In both cases, it's not what was done that mattered, it was the spirit behind it. We Christ forced through rules, or from the passion of someone who has to share where they have found food.

There's one more aspect of this response to the resurrection we are encouraged to have. In the translation Mike read it says

5 <https://www.ivpress.com/first-nations-version#:~:text=The%20FNV%20is%20a%20dynamic,original%20language%20of%20the%20Bible.>



Responding to God

‘command’, but this passage is known as ‘The Great Commission’. This is a better way to think about it. With a command you are told what to do and expected to go do it. With a commission you are equipped to do the task. Jesus knows that we can have doubts, lack knowledge and wisdom, lack the numbers we’d like, and feel not good enough. This is not unusual. Jesus also teaches us - through the Bible, through prayer, through hymns, through mentors (alive and dead), ...that we are not alone.

How does Matthew choose to end the Gospel? *“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

We hear in today’s passage how the establishment responded to the resurrection. We see the start of how the women and the disciples respond - and we know that they did go and tell, because the Good News spread out of Galilee to the ends of the earth.

How will you respond?

*To God be all the glory
Amen.*



♪ Hymn: Lord of all Power.....pg 11 (626)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKUteQEmp4M
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ylAntiPiwJs (organ, no voice)

- ☞ FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies. Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).
Values: What does the resurrection mean to you? (there are many possible aspects to this)
- Wonder: A Rabbi once asked Rev. Richard Topping why Christians don’t say more about Jesus - commenting that if he thought Jesus was the Messiah he’d be shouting it everywhere. Dream together of what it might look like if we were more like the women earlier in Matthew 28 who are filled with “*fear and great joy*”.
- Wonder: How can we share the “*beauty and harmony represented in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.... then teach them all the ways I have instructed you to walk in*”?
How could Kensington support you in this?
- Actions: Pick a neighbour (maybe more) and conscientiously work on building your relationship from names, to pleasantries, to news, to allowing service and vulnerability, to sharing why you believe. This takes time.
To help this happen, tell your conversation partner who you will be try to grow in (neighbourly) love with.

Prayer: Regardless of your health or capabilities, you can always pray. If you doubt this, then that's a good place to start.
...pray that more people will come to know God's love, hope & healing.

✦ Spirit Sightings

Some ways that I saw the Holy Spirit working this week was through the volunteer at New Hope who now consistently comes by my office to with questions about God. Another person is starting to share the struggles in their life. Another reached out this week to expand their community. At Jesus and Java we continue to share our experiences of God and faith.

These are all ways that the Spirit is working in our community.

✦ 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

God of outstanding promises,
you said you would be with us to the end of the age!
Not just the end of the day,
or to help us get through the week,
but now and forever.
Jesus, help us to share your faithfulness.

You promised you would be a friend:
a friend who would be with us
in our troubles and in our sorrows,
in the joys of our life,
and a friend for those in our community with no friends.
Jesus, help us to be a friend
to those who need to know they are valued, and gifted.

You promised to open the eyes of the blind
and teach people to see:
not just their own needs,
but the needs of others,
May your Spirit help us to see the world through your eyes,
and share this vision.

You promised to make us peacemakers
and with so many wars and acts of terror,
the world needs peacemakers.
While we may not be able to stop wars,
please show us how to speak out
about justice, fairness and equality.

You promised to send us out in your name
to teach the world the Good News,
you weren't thinking of how to build a church,
but to share your love, hope and healing
with those near and far.
May your Spirit give us the strength and courage
to share your story - and our story.
in the places you have put us,
and in ways that help hearts and minds
to be open to you.

We thank you that we do not do this alone,
but that you are with us now, and until the end of the age.

Amen.

♪ Hymn: Sent Forth by your Blessing.....pg 12 (775)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixolD8fJt9M

✦ Benediction

Today and tomorrow,
Today and tomorrow,
Lo, I am with you always,
When we try to do your will,
I am with you always,
when we go where we do not know,
I am with you always,
when we meet one we do not recognize,
I am with you always,
where faith ends and doubt begins,
I am with you always,
and should we forget you, ...
I am with you always,
today and tomorrow,
today and tomorrow,
you are with us always
to the end of the world.
Amen.⁶



⁶ Stages on the way. Wild Goose Worship Group. pg 218

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.

Hallelujah! sing to Jesus

HYFRYDOL 8787D

F C F Gm/F C7/E F C Dm C

1. Hal - le - lu - jah! sing to Je - sus!
his the tri - umph,
2. Hal - le - lu - jah! not as or - phans
he is near us,
3. Hal - le - lu - jah! King e - ter - nal,
born of Ma - ry,

F C7/G F Gm Dm C F

his the scep - tre, his the throne;
his the vic - to - ry a - lone.
are we left in sor - row now;
faith be - lieves, nor ques - tions how.
thee the Lord of lords we own:
earth thy foot - stool, heaven thy throne.

Am Dm7 Gm7 C7 Dm7 C7

Hark! the songs of peace - ful Zi - on
Though the cloud from sight re - ceived him
Thou with - in the veil hast en - tered,

F /E Dm Am Gmsus4-3 Bbmaj7 Csus4 - 3

thun - der like a might - y flood;
when the for - ty days were o'er,
robed in flesh, our great High Priest,

F/A (F6) Gm/F (/E) C7/E F /E Dm6 C Bb/D C7/E

Je - sus out of eve - ry na - tion
shall our hearts for - get - his prom - ise,
thou on earth both priest and vic - tim

F F7/A Bb F/A Bb F/C C7 F

has re - deemed us by his blood.
"I am with you ev - er - more"?
in the eu - cha - ris - tic feast.

Words: William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898) Music: Rowland Hugh Pritchard (1812-1887);
harmony, Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) CCLI #4440603

Words: public domain Music: arrangement, copyright © Oxford University Press

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Lord, speak to me

1. Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in liv - ing
 2. Oh lead me, Lord, that I may lead the wan - dering
 3. Oh teach me, Lord, that I may teach the pre - cious
 4. Oh fill me with your full - ness, Lord, un - til my
 5. Oh use me, Lord, use e - ven me just as you

ech - oes of your tone; as you have sought, so
 and the wa - vering feet; oh feed me, Lord, that
 truths that you im - part, and wing my words, that
 heart shall o - ver - flow in kin - dling thought and
 will, and when, and where, un - til at last your

let me seek your err - ing chil - dren lost and lone.
 I may feed your hun - gery ones with man - na sweet.
 they may reach the hid - den depths of man - na heart.
 glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.
 face I see, your rest, your joy, your glo - ry share.

Words: Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879) Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

Rev. Peter Rombeek
Kensington Presbyterian Church

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Lord of all power

SLANE 10 11 11 11

1. Lord of all power, I give you my will,
 2. Lord of all wis - dom, I give you my mind,
 3. Lord of all boun - ty, I give you my heart;
 4. Lord of all be - ing, I give you my all.

in joy - ful o - be - dience your tasks to ful - fil.
 rich truth that sur - pass - es our know - ledge to find.
 I praise and a - dore you for all you im - part:
 If e'er I dis - own you, I stum - ble and fall,

Your bond - age is free - dom, your serv - ice is song,
 What eye has not seen and what ear has not heard
 your love to in - spire me, your coun - sel to guide,
 but, sworn in glad serv - ice your word to o - bey,

and, held in your keep - ing, my weak - ness is strong.
 is taught by your Spir - it and shines from your word.
 your pres - ence to cheer me, what - ev - er be - tide.
 I walk in your free - dom to the end of the way.

Words: Jack C. Winslow (1882-1974) Music: Irish traditional; harmony, Erik Routley (1917-1982)

Words: copyright © Mrs. J. Tyrrell Music: harmony, copyright © 1975 Hope Publishing Co.
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Sent forth by your blessing

ASHGROVE 12 11 12 11 D

(C/E) F C/E F Dm Gm /Bb C (Dm7) (C/E)

1. Sent forth by your blessing, our true faith con - fess - ing, your
The sup - per is end - ed: oh now be ex - tend - ed the

2. With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er - liv - ing the
our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing, em -

F /A Bb (/D) F /C C7 F

peo - ple, O God, from your ta - ble take leave.
fruits of your ser - vice in all who be - lieve.
task of our eve - ry - day life we will face,
brac - ing as neigh - bours all those of each race.

F/A (F) C7/E F C7/G (/E) /G

The seed of your teach - ing, our hun - gry souls
One feast that has fed us, one light that has

F C F C#dim Dm C/G G

reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for all hu - man -
led us, u - nite us as one in your life that we

C /E F C/E F Dm Gm/Bb (Gm) C (Dm7)

kind. Your grace shall in - cite us, your love shall u - nite us
share. Then may all the liv - ing, with praise and thanks - giv - ing,

C/E F /A Bb (/D) F/C C7 F

to work for your king - dom, your pur - pose to find.
give hon - our to Christ and his name that we bear.

Words: Omer Westendorf (1916-) Music: Welsh traditional

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