



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

God's representatives in the world

September 10, 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).



Yoyogi Park, Tokyo

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

BBQ: today after church. Please join us.

Students for Dinner: Friends for Dinner is a Christian organization looking for people to host international students for holiday meals. If you are interested, please visit friendsfordinner.ca

Family Food & Film Fiestas: Fridays at 6:30

Last week we had quite a number of children - so the movie this week is still TBA. Still, this is a good opportunity to invite someone. Please let Peter know so we have enough food.

Pizza Night: Antoinette is planning a pizza night Sept 22.

Good Grief: Sept 23-25

Mary Ellen MacDonald is organizing a series of events to support those who are grieving from various issues, and increase awareness. While she's still working out of Halifax, you can participate through many online (remember to take an hour off all times). www.goodgriefnovascotia.ca/schedule

Zoom Prayer Group: Thursday at 6:30 a.m.

You may use the worship login details
[us04web.zoom.us/j/773730107?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/773730107?pwd=eUo2M09YMEw5dkZvdm9uQmpHNIURUT09)
[pwd=eUo2M09YMEw5dkZvdm9uQmpHNIURUT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/773730107?pwd=eUo2M09YMEw5dkZvdm9uQmpHNIURUT09)

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

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

Drop Box: Food donations are welcome for the local Food Pantry, and diapers for young mothers through Head & Hands.

New Hope Boutique: is grateful for your donations and want you to know that they are making people happy. Thank you. If you wish to donate something, please let Rev. Peter or New Hope know.



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

The world belongs to the Lord,
The earth and all its people.

How good it is, how wonderful
to live together in unity.

Love and faith come together,
justice and peace join hands.

If the Lord's disciples keep silent,
these stones will should aloud.

Open our lips O God

and our mouths shall proclaim your praise.²



Miriam's Song - Laura James

² Wee Worship Book 4th ed. pg 48

♪ Hymn: Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us.....pg 10 (647)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGsvbqErM2A



Prayer of Approach

Because God is good,
and has intended us to share that goodness,
we open ourselves
to nothing less than transformation
as together we say:

**Holy God,
Holy and mighty,
Holy and immortal
Have mercy on us.**


You are the Word behind all words,
the calm at the core of the storm,
the energy that sustains creation.

You are present
in the pain behind the tears,
the laughter in the eyes,
the yearning in the heart.
All these you share,
yet your gift to us is much more.

So, open us up, Lord,
we whose lives are locked,
whose thoughts are well rehearsed,
whose prayer is predictable.
Open us up to depths we have not explored,
truths we have avoided,
paths we have not followed,
beauty we have yet to admire.
And open us up to Jesus,

in whom all things are held together for God
and for our good.³

Lord, we thank you for your forgiveness of when we have turned
away. Help us to live into your forgiveness and life.
Open us through this time of worship,
and through the prayer you teach us.
Let sing together the Lord's prayer...

 The Lord's Prayer (please use a version you are comfortable with)

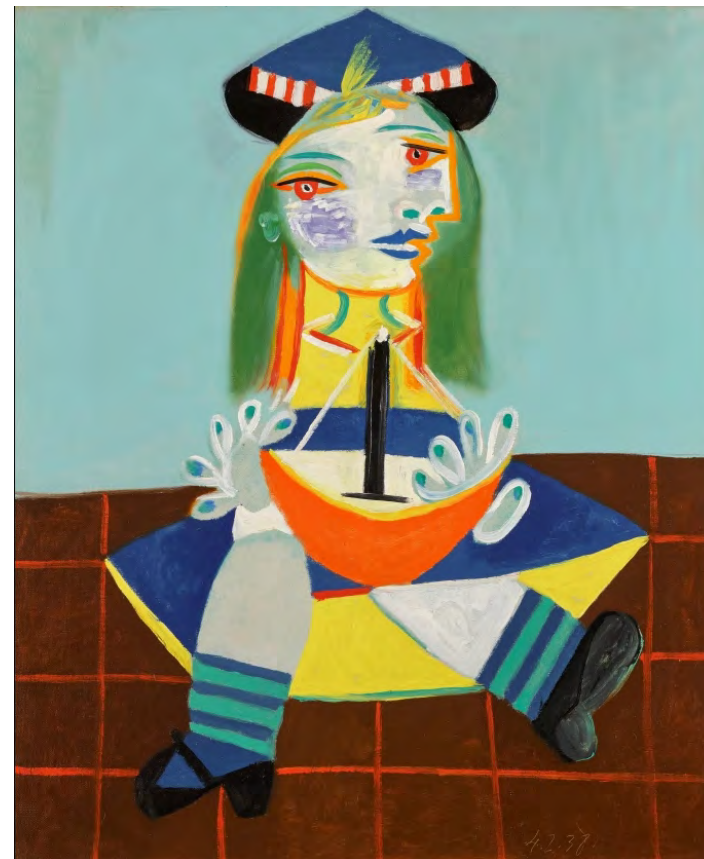
**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours Amen.**



Listening to God

Children's Time

Have you ever made a picture of somebody? How did you do
it? What was it like? The picture below was painted by Pablo
Picasso of his daughter. Do you think that's what she looked like?
Perhaps it reveals more of what she was like than just her looks?



Fillette au bateau (Maya) - Picasso

Soon we'll hear a passage about how God created people in
God's image. Does that mean God looks just like me? No, of
course not. It does mean that we can be like God. What is that
like? [*loving, humble, powerful, a servant, prayerful...*]

Let's try and live like that.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for being kind and loving.

Please help us to feel your love inside us, and to share it.

Amen

³ adapted from Wee Worship Book 5th ed. pg 27


♪ Hymn: Here I am Lord.....pg 11 (592)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgLwH5RdtPk

Prayer for Illumination

Lord, open our hearts and minds
through the power of your Holy Spirit,
that today we may feel your hope and grace.
Amen.⁴

Intro to the readings

- What catches your attention?

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

[Genesis 1](#): 26-27

[Exodus 20](#): 1-6

[Genesis 12](#): 1-3

[2 Corinthians 5](#): 17-21

[Philippians 2](#): 1-11

[Psalm 67](#)

Sermon: God's representatives in the world.....Rijke Rombeek **Greetings**

It is good to be back at Kensington. I have not shared here much, but I know that some of you remember when I shared here previously. At that time I encouraged you to pray for peace. I think prayer is essential to everything we do as servants of God and is part of what changes our actions from good works to ministry.

With that said, let us pray.

Living God, our Creator, our Redeemer and the one who sustains us,

⁴ adapted from Worship Sourcebook 3.1.10 & 23

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

we come before you. We pray your blessing upon this time of teaching, challenge our hearts as they need to be challenged and affirm in us where need to continue to stand strong. We are your people Lord, use us that we may see your blessing in the lives of those around us. In the name of your precious son we pray. Amen.

Today I want to encourage you as a faith community in your work as ambassadors of Christ and servants of the living God. I will share from scripture and from my own ministry in Japan.

Because I have become used to 35 minute sermons, I am going to jump right in. 15 to 20 minutes does not feel like enough time to communicate anything anymore.

Being in the image of God

[Genesis 1](#):26-27

We read this earlier, so I won't read it again, but it should be on the PowerPoint to refresh your memory.

I have heard so many theories about the image of God that seem so outlandish and crazy they make my head spin. I have found one explanation recently that is so deceptively simple it is almost unbelievable.

What is an image? An image is an object that calls others to the remembrance of the original. Right near my home in Japan there is huge statue of a Kanon or a bodhisattva, people come every day to offer up prayers. Places of worship will typically have something to remind the people that this space belongs to the one they are there to worship. In Japan there are many statues of gods and Buddhas and animals all over the place to which people bring their prayers. In Canadian churches we have a symbol of the cross as a kind of image to say that in this space we remember God and come together as a community of God.

When God made the earth God included an image to remind people of their creator. To act as the creator God's reminders, or representatives, to all the earth. That image is us, humans are the ones who are God's image on earth.

As I see it, we as humans are created to be God's image, to be the image reminding others of our creator and being God's representatives to the world around us. I would even go as far to say that it is the reason why God created us.

[Exodus 20:1-6](#)

There is one God, one God with whom we have relationship with, as the Israelites learned what God had done for them (v2-3). We are not to make images, both because we are not to try and represent God as we cannot do that in carved images. 2nd, because that takes away from what we are as humans, we are the image and representatives of God to the world around us. Everything else is a poor substitute at best or something that actually only succeeds in drawing us away from God to worship something other than God and define our identity and worth other than in God.

Called to represent God by being a blessing

[Genesis 12:1-3](#)

I often think of Genesis 1-11 as the introduction of the bible and Genesis 12 is actually chapter 1 of the real thing. 1-11 tells about creation, including the important role of humans, then in a breakdown of the God and human relationship the world descends into violence, people hurting people, chaos and division. I see God's call to Abraham, or Abram, as a restart and God saying "be my representatives in this earth, share my blessing among the people"(v2-3) God is calling Abram to be God's image among the people. God calls Abram to go to another land

and people, and Abram did. Some of us are called to go to different countries because there are people there who need God's blessing, such as Abram and even myself. But we are all called to leave ourselves behind so that we can represent God to the people to whom he has sent us.

Sadly, we do not need to look far to know that as humans we have not always been a blessing to others. Historically or even in the present. I know that I have not always been God's blessing to others. Humans have not well represented a loving God.

Ambassadors for Christ

[2 Corinthians 5:17-20](#).

Paul's says we are ambassadors for Christ (v.20) as the community of faith and individual members of it, reconciled to God through Christ and able to be ambassadors in order to reconcile people to God (v18). To bring others the blessings of God because we have received the blessings of God.

Christ, the ambassador to those who supposed to be ambassadors

[Philippians 2:1-11](#)

This is a beautiful passage I would love to go through in detail and I would encourage to prayerfully read it at home, even if you think you already know it.

First of all this passage tells us that Jesus came as an ambassador from God so we could see and be reconciled to God. We, the ambassadors, needed an ambassador to reconnect us with the one who made us to be ambassadors. An ambassador who is not connected to the one they are representing will not be a good representative.

Yet Paul goes farther, he tells us what representing God looks like through the life of Christ. A life that enters into human fragility and pain, even up to and including human death. That we might be reconciled to God. The blessing of that reconciliation is that we, in turn, might bless others and aid in their reconciliation.

God came in the likeness of humans so humans could go forth in the likeness of God. A God who understands pain, and not being afraid of it enters into the pain of others to bring healing and reconciliation with the one who made them, made them for the purpose of sharing God's blessing to others.

Ministry in Japan

In Japan my ministry is with the marginalized and the poor. Here is a picture of us as we meet. This group is called Sidewalk Chapel and meets in Yoyogi park in central Tokyo. We meet rain or shine, because we are meeting the homeless and they are outside in all weathers. It is part of meeting them where they are, in the struggles and pain that they have. This is not just true of Sidewalk chapel, it is true of all my ministries only Sunday church rents a room in a local civic centre for indoor meetings, though that is also for the homeless and poor.



People come to our ministries, first because they are hungry and we offer food. They need food and we have the ability to feed them. Yet, being given a meal only helps for a little while. Yes, they come back for more food, but it does not take long before they are coming back not just for the food but because we are offering community. They know we are a community of faith and since Japan is less than 1% Christian, it is unlikely they are coming from a Christian background. For the Japanese, community is identity, community is everything and the homeless have lost community and the identity that goes with it. It is one of those intangibles they need to survive, but if we focus too much on food we will miss the underlying need of human connection. They see us and would rather learn about a faith community than to not have a community at all. So they start coming for the possibility of community. Yet they stay because they have found the God who can transform their lives, the one is the centre of the community. They stay because of God, not us, and certainly not food.

Masuda and Yoshino

This is a picture of Mr. Masuda reading scripture for Sidewalk Chapel. He is in his 60s and has been homeless for many, many years. He first came to Sidewalk Chapel, homeless, tired and hungry. In the Sidewalk Chapel he met a God who loved



him even when he was tired, hungry and without community. His life completely changed. These days, he is still homeless. Yet now he is homeless by a choice he did not have before. He could find a job, find a place to live, but all that continual effort would keep him too busy. As a homeless person he can be full time among the homeless offering the hope and strength of his saviour. It is a hard life. Yet without people like him, people like me would have a much more difficult time connecting with the homeless. He has taken on the identity as the representative of God and of Sidewalk Chapel.

This next picture is a picture of the volunteers of a ministry we have called Lazarus ministry. Where we connect with the homeless and poor outside of Ikebukuro station in Tokyo. One gentleman is named Mr. Yoshino. Middle row, grey haired gentleman next to the wall. He used to own and run a restaurant in Sendai. In 2011 the earthquake and tsunami brought great devastation to many areas including the city of Sendai. He lost his restaurant and his home. He found himself homeless, hungry and tired. He found Lazarus ministries and through Lazarus ministries to Nakayoshi Church through which he found a community and God.

He is now the cook for Lazarus ministries and Nakayoshi church. While it is not his personality he preaches from time to time, sharing his own story and how he see God in his life. He is one of the most recognized faces among Lazarus ministries and Nakayoshi church, while



he says little, his actions as God's representative are irreplaceable.

Conclusion

It is not our money that brings God's blessing to others, though we may use it to help. It is not our ability to provide material needs that brings God's blessing, for those only last a short time.

Yet, in prayer we can be very intentional about bringing God into the work we do. In prayer we connect with the one who sent us. In prayer we can intentionally connect with the one who redeemed us and has shown us how to be the true image of God. Through prayer we can be better at channelling God's love, hope, peace, strength and even God's transforming power. Because while we do not have the power ourselves, God can bring hope to those who are without hope, peace to those whose lives seem out of control, strength to those who are fragile, the strength of transformation. In prayer we can take the actions anyone can do to being something that connects people to God.

Do you remember the men I mentioned? There are many more people with similar stories. They and many others have found the transforming power of God. It did not make them rich. It did not give them a lot of material blessings. Yet the change was so deep that outer circumstances no longer matter and no longer hold them back. They can give hope and strength because through God's servants they came to know the transforming power of God. They met a God who descended into their pain and suffering and blessed them, changing them from tired and hungry, to people who could be God's representatives bringing blessing to those around them.

Let us pray.

God, our Creator, God our Redeemer, God our Sustainer in all things, we are your people, created in your image. Help us to represent you. Help us to connect people to you. Give us the strength to descend into the darkness of others that your light may shine. As your community of Kensington help us be your image in the NDG and beyond to reconcile people to the God who loves them and wants to bless them. In the name of Christ, crucified and risen we pray.

Amen.



Responding to God

🎵 Hymn: Will you come and follow mepg 12 (634)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6lUaIJ3sk

💡 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 memory of the homeless. How do those who are homeless made you feel?

Etching: What does it mean, for you, to be made in God's image? How does this knowledge affect your self-image? your attitude/actions?

Wonder: What would you like God to transform? Do you have the faith that your dream is possible? What is the root issue you want addressed?

Prayer: ...for help and opportunities to share God's love, hope and healing.



Offering

If you would like to donate to OMF to a general fund or

specifically the ministry that Rijke is involved in, please visit omf.org/ca/giving

You may also be interested in other projects through the Presbyterian Church in Canada.
presbyterian.ca/donate/gifts-of-change

For Kensington we have set up a donation option on our **website**: kensingtonchurch.ca. 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
May it not be long, Lord...

May it not be long before the world we pray for
and the world we live in are one.

May it not be long, Lord,
before the earth no longer suffers through human selfishness,
so that the valleys can sing again,
the meadows laugh
and barren places burst into bloom...
Lord
May it not be long.

May it not be long, Lord,
before healing comes to all those in need.
We pray for those who are suffering physically, mentally, or
spiritually. May they find healing. . .
Lord
May it not be long.

May it not be long before the domination of
wealth over want,
white over black,
man over woman,
the privileged over the poor
are facts of history,
not facts of life...
Lord
May it not be long.

May it not be long, Lord,
before the countries which the West once evangelized
show us the larger Christ we have yet to meet...
Lord
May it not be long.

May it not be long, Lord,
before we leave the safe refuges of pessimism and cynicism,
and find wells of hope deeper than shallow pools of optimism.
Lord
May it not be long.

May it not be long, Lord,
before we feel ourselves directly addressed by your voice
and you raise up in us that holy restlessness
to get your work done...
Lord
May it not be long.⁶

in Jesus' name.
Amen.

♪ Hymn: Bless and keep is, God.....pg 10
musiklus.com/product/bless-and-keep-us-god

✦ Benediction: Ephesians 3: 20-21
*Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish
abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in
the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.*
Amen.



⁶ adapted from Wee Worship Book 5th ed. pg 35

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

MANNHEIM 878787

E♭ B♭/D E♭ A♭ B♭ A♭/C(D) E♭ Cm A♭ E♭/G Cm E♭/G B♭7 E♭

1. Lead us, heaven-ly Fath-er, lead us o'er the world's tem - pest-uous sea;
 2. Sav-iour, breathe for-give-ness o'er us, all our weak-ness thou dost know;
 3. Spir-it of our God de-scend-ing, fill our hearts with heaven-ly joy,

A♭/E♭ E♭ E♭7/G A♭ /E♭ E♭ B♭/D B♭ E♭ Cm B♭/D(E♭)F 7 B♭

guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us, for we have no help but thee,
 thou didst tread this earth be - fore us, thou didst feel its keen - est woe;
 love with eve - ry pas-sion blend-ing, pleas-ure that can nev - er cloy;

E♭/G E♭ B♭/DE♭ A♭ B♭ A♭/C(D) E♭ Cm Fm B♭/DE♭ /B♭ B♭7 E♭

yet pos-sess-ing eve - ry bless-ing if our God our guide shall be.
 lone and drea-ry, faint and wea - ry through the des-ert thou didst go.
 thus pro-vid-ed, par-doned, guid-ed noth - ing can our peace de-stroy.

Words: James Edmeston (1791-1867) Music: Friedrich Filitz (1804-1876)

Words: public domain Music: public domain

BLESS AND KEEP US, GOD

Original German Text by DIETER TRAUTWEIN
English Translation by FRED KAAANMusic by
RON KLUSMEIER

1. Bless and keep us, God, in your love u -
 2. Bless - ing shriv - els up when your child - ren
 3. Fill your world with peace, such as you in -

ni - ted, from your fam - i - ly nev - er sep - a -
 hoard it; help us, God, to share, for we can af -
 tend - ed. Help us prize the earth, love, re - plen - ish,

ra - ted. You make all things new
 ford it. Bless - ing on - ly grows
 tend it. Lord, up - lift, ful - fill

as we fol - low af - ter; wheth - er tears or
 in the act of shar - ing, in a life of
 all who sow in sad - ness: Let them reap with

laugh - ter, we be - long to you.
 car - ing, love that heals and glows.
 glad - ness, by your har - vest thrilled.

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I, the Lord of sea and sky

HERE I AM, LORD 14 11 14 11 with refrain (8 9 8 9)

G Am G C/G G D/F#

* 1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo-ple cry.
 2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo-ple's pain.
 3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.

G Em Am7 /B C /B Am F#m/G D D/C

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
 I have wept for love of them: they turn a - way.
 I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.

G Am/G G C/G G D/F#

I who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
 I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
 Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.

G Em7 Am7/B Am/C/B Am G/B Am7/C Dsus4-3

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
 I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
 I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain /F# G Gsus G /B (Am7) G C/E /D G

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have

Cmaj7/G Am G/B Am/C Dsus /F# D7

heard you call-ing in the night; I will

G Gsus G C/E /D G

go, Lord, if you lead me. I will

C/G G Am7 C/D D G C/G D.C. G Fine

hold your peo - ple in my heart.

* Verses may be sung by a soloist

Words: Daniel L. Schutte (1947-) Music: Daniel L. Schutte (1947-);
 harmony, Michael Pope, John Weissrock

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 Music: copyright © Daniel L. Schutte and New Dawn Music, 1983. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

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Will you come and follow me

KELVINGROVE 7676776

Unison F C7 Dm Gm7 Csus4 - 3

1. Will you come and fol - low me
2. Will you leave your-self be - hind
3. Will you let the blind-ed see if I but call your name?
4. Will you love the "you" you hide
5. Lord, your sum-mons ech - oes true when you but call my name.

Gm7 Bb Am7 Bb6 Csus4 - 3

Will you let my love be shown; will you let my name be known;
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare should your life at - tract or scare?
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as this un - seen,
 Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the world a - round,
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and foot-steps show.

F C7 Dm Gm7 (C11) F

Will you go where you don't know
 Will you care for cruel and kind
 Will you set the pris-oners free and nev - er be the same?
 Will you quell the fear in - side
 Let me turn and fol - low you and nev - er be the same.

F C7 Dm Gm7 C11 F

will you let my life be grown
 Will you let me an - swer prayer
 and ad - mit to what I mean in you and you in me?
 through my sight and touch and sound
 Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

Words: Iona Community (Scotland) Music: Scottish traditional; arrangement John L. Bell (1949-)

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Vaccine Equity

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of equitable access to vaccines and medicines for all. Unfortunately, COVID-19 vaccine distribution has been unequal, with more than 75% of COVID-19 vaccine doses having been administered in just 10 countries, while underserved low-income countries have been left vulnerable to new COVID-19 variants. The World Health Organization warns that vaccine inequity threatens our ability to end pandemics and poses a risk to global health security.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has supported equitable access to vaccines and essential medicines for years, including the Towards a World Without AIDS campaign and advocating for the reform of patent laws that prevent fair and equitable access to vaccines and essential medicines.

It is essential that wealthier countries address the underlying factors contributing to inequitable access to medicines and vaccines, such as systemic racism and economic inequality. To begin, we can support the COVAX initiative, which aims to distribute vaccines fairly to all countries by providing funding to organizations to increase vaccine access for all. We can also advocate that Canada develop vaccine production capacities domestically and set a percentage of all vaccines to go to low-income countries that cannot afford to pay market rates for vaccines and essential medicines.

What can you do?

- Write to your elected representatives to express your support for vaccine equity and urge them to take action. Template letters are online at presbyterian.ca/justice/advocacy.

Pakistan is the world's third-largest refugee host country, accommodating over a million Afghans who fled their homes due to war, internal conflict, insecurity and persecution. The poorest refugees lack sufficient access to necessities such as food, shelter, clothing and health care. Another need expressed by Afghan refugees is for their children to be able to access schooling. PWS&D is responding to this need by providing a digital learning facility where Afghan refugee children and young women can access virtual education in place of traditional schools. The Digital Learning Center is one way of supporting those who have already lost so much. It is planting the seeds for current and future success for children and young women who would otherwise be entirely out of school.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, September 10 We give thanks for the professors and staff at our three theological colleges. May they teach with wisdom, enthusiasm and love for the students.

Monday, September 11 We pray for musicians as they help lead the church in praise.

Tuesday, September 12 We pray for all those who are struggling with addiction and related mental health issues, and for their families and loved ones. May they find the support, care and resources they need to heal and recover.

Wednesday, September 13 We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of East Toronto.

Thursday, September 14 We pray for the congregation of St. Andrew's (Ancaster) as they work through the PCC's New Beginnings Renewal Program to discern their next steps in ministry.

Friday, September 15 We pray for all of the students attending the church's theological colleges. May God grant them strength, clarity of mind and the ability to balance all aspects of their busy lives.

Saturday, September 16 We pray for Edmonton Urban Native Ministries, which runs a drop-in centre out of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, and the people it serves.