



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

Mess and Growth

October 22, 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).

Announcements

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

Antoinette has decided to step down as Director of Family Ministries at Kensington. She writes, "I want to start by saying how appreciative I am of everyone's support the past several years. I have many fond memories with you all and the kids. They made my job exciting and I enjoyed working with them and have gained meaningful connections." Her last Sunday will be October 29th.

Concordia Winter Clothes: Thank you for everything already donated. I'll be dropping them off later this week (if you want to add something more). Talk with Rev. Peter for more details.

Calendars & Cards Celebration: Howie raised \$160 with Calendars, and Barbie raised \$55 with her cards (so far, more of both are available on request). The money will support the St. Andrew's Home Foundation.

¹ note: that the footnotes are not as thorough as an academic paper.



Zoom Workshop: Fraud & Seniors - Oct 24, 1-3pm
 St. Andrew's Foundation & SPVM. register with this link
form.jotform.com/standrewspresbyterianhomes/fraud

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

Family Food & Film Fiestas: Fridays at 6:30 for pizza
Monsters University. This is a good opportunity to invite someone. Please let Peter know so we have enough food.

New Hope Harvest Festival: October 27 at 5:30
 Enjoy a delicious meal celebrating their vegetable garden, a silent auction & a fundraiser! Tickets are \$50 (with a tax-receipt for \$25) and are available from New Hope or newhopedg.eventbrite.com

Cookie, snacks request: Saturday, Oct 28th
 We are hosting a workshop for Presbytery (and anyone else interested) on hard conversations and facilitating meetings. To help people feel at home we would appreciate donations of home baking. Please let Rev. Peter know if you can help.

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

Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559info@Kensingtonchurch.ca
 Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca
 514-773-4620
 Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca
 Zoé Dupont-Foisy (music director).....zoedupontfoisy@hotmail.com



Approaching God



Lighting of the Christ Candle

Jésus Christ est la lumière du monde.
Jesus Christ is the light of the world.



Call to worship²

May the light of God's love push back the darkness.

**We come to the light from the four corners of the earth,
from the north, from the south,
from the east, and from the west.**

But we are all one in Jesus Christ.

We come from many nations and many cultures.

But we are all one in Jesus Christ.

We come seeking the light that guides us to life.

But we are all one in Jesus Christ.

**Let us lift up our many voices
and praise the God of all people.**



Hymn: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty.....pg 9 (321)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCnQNwQG5GI



Prayer of Approach³

Giver of life,
Nourisher,
Nurturer,
for the good things you provide,
for the opportunities you offer,
for the guidance you grant us
we praise you.

Living Word,
Encourager,
Sustainer,
for the relationships you cultivate,
for the friendships you foster,
for the faith you show in us
we praise you.

Protector,
Defender,
Guardian,
for the promises you keep,
for the hope you embody,
for the love you lavish on us
we praise you.

Lord God,
all these things and more
you are to us,
you will for us,
you dream for us,
yet all too often your words fall
on the stony ground of our selfishness;
our good intentions wither in the glare of greed;
our labours are half-hearted and unproductive;
self-interest winds its way into our hearts
and we leave ourselves open to attack.

Forgive us, Lord, our poor yield
in the face of your generosity;
refresh us and replant within us
a yearning for you and a hunger for your world
that justice and fairness might grow and flourish.



² Worship Sourcebook F.1.2.10

³ Spill the Beans #16



Listening to God

Restorer,
Renewer,
Healer,
may we leave here blessed,
may we go forth in peace,
may we serve you in humility
that our lives may praise you.
Amen.

✦ Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news
*Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;
that proves God's love toward us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
Glory 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.**

🗨 Children's time

Last week in the Children's program they talked about Psalm 80, or first psalm this week, and made a video. It shows how God can bless, but bad things can also happen. It ends with asking for help.

If somebody asked you how God helps, what would you say?



prayer
*Dear God, Thank you that your Spirit speaks to us through the Bible,
prayers, and other people. Help us to notice that help comes from you.
Amen*

♪ Hymn: Make me a channel of your peace.....pg 10 (740)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=daGWdbrSGBM


Prayer for Illumination

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

Intro to the readings

As we go through the Narrative Lectionary we've heard about celebrations and the joy of living out God's plans or dreams - and or how things get messy when people don't. Today we will hear from the prophet Isaiah. Scholars believe this part was written before the exile - ie. while Judea and Israel were not respecting God, and how this was not going to be good. Isaiah uses the image of a grape vine, which works well for gardeners. Can you think of another image?

The psalms echo this theme.

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

[Psalm 80](#): 8-19

[Isaiah 5](#): 1-7

[Isaiah 11](#): 1-5

[Psalm 72](#)

Sermon: What kind of God?

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

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

Fall is definitely here. We've got rain, cool temperatures, and less daylight. For those with gardens, it's time to think about prepping them for winter. There's different advice on how to prepare gardens for the future. Many people put bags of trimmings out for the city to disappear. One of my neighbours says to just leave it alone until spring. Others suggest cutting things back and putting the cuttings around the base of the plant to provide insulation and decompose. This cutting down and decomposing feels odd. We had the hope they would be beautiful and fruitful ... and then cutting those parts of the plant off. I imagine if I were the plant getting pruned - I'd probably feel like a failure.

Failures definitely happen. I can think of a number of things I've attempted that failed. I remember organizing a Lectio Divina (reflective) Bible Study that involved creating something artistic. It was wonderful - in theory, and flopped in practice. I was left wondering what I could have done differently. Why had it not worked as I'd dreamed?

I remember at the start of the pandemic looking for ways to nurture our community. I offered an online study group and a coffee time. This worked in other congregations - but here they failed. I was left wondering what I could have done differently. Why had it not worked as I'd dreamed?

As part of my work in the Presbytery I'm talking with congregations who are looking to sell their building to maintain their life. They are wondering if they are a failure. What could they have done differently? Why had it not worked as they'd dreamed?

We've all experienced failure. Some of us try to forget and push on, some get stuck in the failure and self-doubt, and some reflect and adapt. In all cases, failure is messy and hurts.

Last week we talked about how we feel anger - and so does God (or rather, God feels anger, and so do we). This week our passage reminds us that God's dreams can fail.

God has a hope - a dream - a plan. When God gave birth to creation, there was a dream of a wonderful life for all. This didn't work out. Then God had a plan to work with a group of people who would show everyone how amazing life can be if you just live the right way. Everyone would experience justice and rightness - if they just had the 'fear of the Lord' (ie. respected and followed God). Except this too failed.

God wonders what could have been done differently. Within the metaphor of gardening, God considers how everything was prepared so that they would have an easy life. The best people were chosen. Watchtowers, such as the ten commandments, were given so they could look out for dangerous ways. What grew? rotten grapes. (The Hebrew here is even stronger and suggests 'evil' - evil grapes.)

Why did this plan fail?
The grapes/people didn't look to God for their nutrients. They didn't follow the right way (the righteous way).

Why not?



Embodying Forgiveness - Bernard Racincot

Greed, selfishness & pride are some common reasons for the failure (all addressed in the Ten Commandments - as is being powerless).

I wonder if insecurity is underneath these reasons. Almost everybody was poor, and the income gap was huge. It can be easy to feel powerless to change things - which can kill hope and increase insecurity. They were living in unstable times. This brought news that the world is falling apart. Then there's more personal failures. We can try and forget it, or get stuck in this failure of goodness, or look to someone who appears successful for inspiration. In their case, the Egyptians and Assyrians were the successful people. In our case, there's intentional marketing of products & lifestyles; the peer pressure from comparing ourselves to our neighbour. Does this help bring love and hope to the world?

Feeling insecurity can lead to chasing after nice things, or status, or honour - rather than after God. The problem is that it's impossible to catch up for long - there's always more to chase.

Insecurity also saps hope from the future. We worry about what may hit us and squish things away. This isn't just like my grandmother keeping months of tinned food in the basement. This includes emotions. It is harder to share. It's tempting to hibernate so we don't get exposed to whatever is harsh outside our cave.

Sadly, insecurity leads to people not living true to who they were created to be. We can worry more about an important life than one that uses the talents/gifts that God gave them. We can bury ourselves instead of risking new opportunities. We try so much, except taking the hand of God who will help us into that dream of a wonderful life.

In our passage, God seems to be asking 'What could I have done differently?' and 'Why did this fail?' ...but this isn't the end.

It's easy to see the world is messed up. There's wars and suffering all over the news. Has God not learned yet how to make things right? Has God gone away and hid, or become stuck in the failure?

No.

I don't believe so. I think God has too much imagination, respect & hope for that.

This imagination allows God to look at the state of the world and see what it could grow into - what spring will be like. Pruning will be needed - which is painful, especially if what is cut grew well in the past. Decomposition is needed to provide nutrients for new life - and new life will come.

God will do this with respect.

An impact of God's respect is that we can make choices. Some of the choices will make God angry, but they will be respected. And, as we heard last week, God continues to love.

Choices aren't blind. We have watchtowers, like the Bible, with good and bad examples - hurtful behaviour and life giving love. People are sent to remind us - from the prophets of old to authors, leaders & friends now. And the Holy Spirit pokes and encourages us. God hopes that when the soil is right, these seeds will grow - that we will also make respectful choices.

There's hope. There are choices that can support the wonderful life God dreams of.

Thinking of the churches that are wondering if they are failures and need to close, I reached out to various experts. One person I was connected with is a minister in Hamilton.⁶ He told



me about a congregation that asked the Presbytery to be dissolved. Instead, the Presbytery suggested that a new congregation be started in their midst. They were able to continue to be looked after, and this new congregation was able to grow in a safe space. The new congregation has changed things, and is once again connecting with the neighbourhood and ministering with families. A seed was planted in a place that felt dead - but had the nutrients for new life.

Thinking of here, I can see community and relationships growing. What else can we do? Session is looking at how well we are living out our mission statement - and how we can be better at living as “a Christian community committed to growing in faith and sharing God's gifts of love, hope, and healing.”⁷ What seeds has God planted that are ready for growing in our soil?

The Bible is full of God being hopeful and reaching out. There are times when the people don't get it and it looks like God's dream has failed - and there are times when people celebrate the light and experience a wonderful life.

I am confident that God is still hopeful - and that God's way will become the way of the word. This will include times when it feels like everything is growing wild. There will be pruning and decay. But God's seeds will grow and bring a wonderful life to all.

*To God be all the glory
Amen.*

⁶ www.familychurch.life/familychurch/home.jsp

⁷ kensingtonchurch.ca/about/mission-statement/



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: Spirit, spirit of gentleness.....pg 11 (399)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijThMo90Lhg

🗨️ 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: What dream lives in me?

Wonder: Where do you see the Holy Spirit breathing love, hope & healing?

Values: Identify a Christian value. What is one (small) way that you can help it grow? How could Kensington help it grow? How could Montreal, or Québec, or Canada help it grow?

Etching: While it can be hard, share one of your plans or dreams that failed.

Wonder: What do you think of the idea of God prioritizing respect for us over fulfilling God's dreams?

Actions: Take your idea of how we can help God's kingdom to grow through the church or government, and share it with those in leadership roles.

Prayer: ...that we will see God's hope in the world, and join in its growth.

✦ Spirit Sightings

The week I heard that a prayer group has started at St. Patrick's Square. This is marvellous. Prayer is one of the basic ways we align ourselves with God - join God's wavelength. If you have friends or neighbours who go to other churches, perhaps you can pray with them?

I also heard about someone who wanted to pray regularly every

day... but was having difficulty. They asked their Muslim neighbours and received good advice (plan your activities so that they stop 15 minutes before you want to pray). Sometimes we can share how we know God - and sometimes we can listen.


✦ Offering

Financially, 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 also 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

Today Sybil will be leading us in prayer. If you like, you may use the following prayer from *Spill the Beans* (issue 16).

Kingdom building is hard work, Lord.
You should know.
Digging and planting,
watering and weeding,
feeding and nurturing
all come at a cost—
and you have paid it time and time again
so that we might know growth and goodness.

Sometimes the world is hard work.
And we should know.
Hunger and injustice,
destruction and violence,
greed and exploitation
mean many pay dearly, day in, day out.
And each moment your people suffer
we too are damaged and diminished.

And so we turn to you in prayer
for, though it is not always easy,
we trust that you gather our words
as you would fresh seeds, ripe for planting,
to water them with your tears
and watch them blossom into something beautiful.


Bless those who live in barren places
where there is little to eat and drink
that they may feed on the kindness of others.
Bless those who put up barriers

against colour, creed and lifestyle
that they may come to understand acceptance.
Bless those who feel uncared for and abandoned
that they may be drawn into loving relationship.
Bless those who feel overrun by responsibility
that they may know peace and respite.
Bless those injured by the actions of others
that they may be granted justice.

And bless us, Lord, your servants,
charged with your work in a world
not always ready for planting or ripe for reaping
so we may trust in your promises
that one day justice and truth will spread
throughout the earth.

In Jesus name
Amen.

♪ Hymn: Immortal Invisible.....pg 12 (290)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfu1dqKCGd8

 **Benediction:**
May God be with you - and within you,
May Christ be behind you - and before you,
May the Spirit comfort and restore you.
Amen.



World hunger is a more pressing global challenge than ever. An increasing number of people around the world suffer from worsening and chronic food insecurity and malnutrition. Climate change, conflict, and poverty exacerbated by global inflation are key factors worsening this crisis. Hunger threatens physical and mental well-being and hinders social and economic development. Through its partners, PWS&D is responding to the hunger crisis in East Africa, where millions of people are suffering from increased food insecurity. Conflicts, such as those in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, are forcing hundreds of thousands of families from their homes. Furthermore, extreme climate weather events across the Horn of Africa have created high hunger levels. Through PWS&D, we are helping to provide emergency support to people affected by the food crisis.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, October 22 We give thanks and pray for congregations and ministries that provide hot meals, and offer warmth, friendship and nourishment to those in need.

Monday, October 23 We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan.

Tuesday, October 24 We pray for the safety and well-being of LGBTQI+ people seeking sanctuary and for congregations, community groups and organizations that sponsor LGBTQI+ refugees.

Wednesday, October 25 We pray that God gives the gift of perseverance to theological students preparing for service to the gospel that they may finish well.

Thursday, October 26 We pray for Winnipeg Inner City Missions, a place of reconciliation and healing that provides a safe space for people in Winnipeg's North End and inner city to grow and learn.

Friday, October 27 We pray for the members of the International Affairs Committee.

Saturday, October 28 We give thanks for the ecumenical connections that we have nationally and internationally through ministries and councils, and pray for the many Presbyterians who serve the church in ecumenical endeavours.

321 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

1. Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, who rules all cre -
 2. Praise to the Lord, who in all things so won - drous - ly
 3. Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work, who de -
 4. Praise to the Lord, and with all that is in me a -

a - tion: my soul, praise God who a - lone is your
 reign - ing hides you with shel - ter - ing wings, ev - er
 fend - you; sure - ly God's mer - ci - ful good - ness here
 dor - ing, all who have life and breath, come with glad

health and sal - va - tion. Come, all who hear, sis - ters and
 gen - tly sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen how your heart's
 dai - ly at - tends you; pon - der a - new what the Al -
 prais - es out - pour - ing! Let the a - men sound from God's

bro - thers draw near, join - ing in glad a - dor - a - tion.
 wish - es have been grant - ed through God's kind or - dain - ing?
 migh - ty can do, when in great love God be - friends you.
 peo - ple a - gain, now and for - e - ver a - dor - ing!

Make me a channel of your peace

MAKE ME A CHANNEL 8 10 10 8

D

Make me a chan-nel of your peace:

1. where there is ha-tred,
2. where there's des-pair in
4. it is in par-don-

Make me a chan-nel of your peace:

A7

let me bring your love; where there is in-jur-y, your heal-ing
life let me bring hope; where there is dark-ness, on-ly
ing that we are par-doned, in giv-ing to all that we re-

where there is ha-tred let me bring your love, your heal-ing
where there's des-pair in life let me bring hope; on-ly
it is in par-don-ing that we are par-doned, that we re-

D A7 D Fine

power, and where there's doubt, true faith in you.
light, and where there's sad-ness, ev-er joy.
ceive, and in dy-ing that we're born to e-ter-nal life.

power, and where there's doubt, true faith in you.
light, and where there's sad-ness, ev-er joy.
ceive, and in dy-ing that we're born to e-ter-nal life.

(D7) G D Em

3. O Spir-it, grant that I may nev-er seek so much to be con-
soled as to con-sole, to be un-der-stood as to un-der-
stand, to be loved as to love with all my soul.

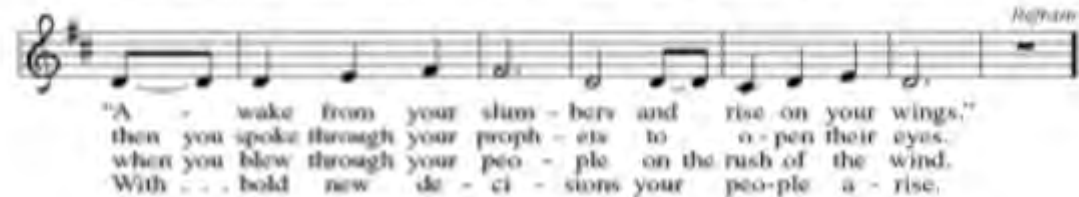
A7 D A7 D (7) G

D Bm E A D.C. al Fine

Words: Saint Patrick of Ireland (372-466) Music: Sebastian Temple (1928-);
arrangement, the compilers of Praise Ways

Words: public domain Music: copyright © Franciscan Communications Centre, 1968

Spirit of Gentleness



Immortal, invisible, God only wise

ST. DENIO 11 11 11 11

Ab Db Bb Eb Fm Ab/Eb Eb 7 Ab

1. Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2. Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing and si - lent as light,
 3. To all life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
 4. Great Fa - ther of glo - ry, pure Fa - ther of light,

Ab Db Bbm Eb Fm Ab/Eb Eb7 Ab

in light in - ac - cess - i - ble hid from our eyes;
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
 in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
 thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;

Ab Eb/G Ab /C Ab Fm Ab/C Eb

most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
 we blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,
 all laud we would ren - der: oh help us to see

C Fm Bbm Eb Fm Ab/Eb Eb 7 Ab

al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.
 thy clouds, which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 and wi - ther, and per - ish; but naught chang - eth thee.
 'tis on - ly the splen - dour of light hid - eth thee.

Words: Walter Chalmers Smith (1824-1908) Music: Welsh folk song from Caniadau y Cyssegr 1839;
 arrangement, John Roberts (1822-1877); descant, C.S. Lang (1891-1971)

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