



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

Is this the end?

March 17, 2024

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

Hymn Sing, Lunch & Palm Sunday: next week - March 24

LATTE: Lent Accountability Teams Towards Easter

Let Rev. Peter know if you'd like to join a group to share your daily readings with.

Zoom Prayer Group: Wednesday 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

March's Marvelous Meal & Movie: pizza at 6:30 pm

You can still join us for *The Chosen* and follow what's going on.
 RSVP with Peter appreciated

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



Stewart Blott

Good Friday: March 28 at 10:30

We will be having a Tenebrae style worship to help us journey with Jesus into Easter.

Easter Breakfast: March 31 from 9 am

St. Ansgar's (4020 Grand and NDG) has invited us to join them for an Easter Breakfast. They ask that you RSVP to SaintAnsgars@gmail.com or 514-984-7656 (call or text)

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: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca
 Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca
 514-773-4620
 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 worship (Psalm 95:6-7)

Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;
for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.



new life after a fire - Craig Hannah

🎵 Hymn: God, you alone know what you've planned.....pg 10

www.youtube.com/watch?v=44e9UB2cpbs

🧎 Prayer of Approach²

Dear Lord,
you have created a world
that is both amazing and terrifying.
We marvel at the changes that happen with the season,
both in the gardens, and in people.

We look forward to the season of Easter,
and the joy of that celebration.
We have seen some blooms,
but we are still in the season of Lent,
This is a season that remembers dark times
for Jesus
and for the world.

The dark can be scary
it can be a lonely place,
Jesus faced it with you
and so must we.
Help us not to be scared,
but us to trust in your promises,
Please forgive us when we turn away from you
to try and feel safe.
May we feel your love
so that the darkness will not overcome us.

Help us to be patient and to be calm,
give us courage to wait for the new life that is coming.
May your Holy Spirit guide us through the dark days,
steer us in the right direction
and remind us that you are with us always.
Amen.

² adapted from *Spill the Beans* # 18

✦ Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news:

Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;
that shows God's love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Amen.³



Listening to God

✦ Children's Time⁴

Every Sunday we say or sing the Lord's Prayer. This is based on a prayer that Jesus taught the people who followed him to learn - his students. There are two lines that talk about Kingdom.

One is "*your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" Here we ask that people will live the way God wants.

prayer:

When countries go to war - May your Kingdom come.

When we are trying to make a hard decision

- May your Kingdom come.

When we decide what to buy and what is best for the environment

- May your Kingdom come.

Amen

The other line is at the end. "*for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.*" This reminds us that God has the final say in what goes on.

Prayer:

Even when kids are mean - the power and glory are yours.

Even when I feel afraid - the power and glory are yours.

Even when the world is going crazy - the power and glory are yours.

Amen.

Let's say the whole of 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.



mealttime prayer - von Uhde

³ adapted from *Worship Sourcebook* 2.4.40

⁴ idea from worshippingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2015/10/year-b-proper-28-33rd-sunday-in.html

♪ Hymn: My Lord, what a morning.....pg 11
www.youtube.com/watch?v=LT6LOCAZqU (Harry Bellafonte)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ljdjQC2EMs (faster)

🙏 Prayer for Illumination

Lord, open our hearts and minds
through the power of your Holy Spirit,
so that we be filled with hope.
Amen.

✦ Intro to the readings

Jesus and the disciples have been staying in Bethany (now called al-Eizariya) and hanging out at the Temple for several days.

Tension has been mounting as Jesus embarrasses the religious leadership - though not all of them. The crowds have celebrated him, but may also not appreciate his challenging the system. The way Jesus emphasizes love sounds nice, but he seems to place the institutions (religious and family), rules, and even honour as secondary. This visit to the centre of Jewish life isn't all shiny.

If you're wondering about the commute from Bethany to the Temple, it's shorter than walking from here to McGill, but takes about the same amount of time because of the hills. It would have been spectacular to approach, especially with a pause on the Mount of Olives (which was along the way). The Temple would have stood out because of its great white stone wall - and the size of its front: 150 feet wide and 150 feet tall. A building this size would have been impressive to anyone coming from a small town, or even a city (like Capernaum) of several hundred. Walking from the west, as the disciples would have been, the front of the Temple would have shown like the sun with all the silver and gold decorations. Imagine the most glorious building you've ever seen... and this would be more so. Even if they made the pilgrimage every year. How would you feel in the presence of this

glorious centre for your life? Try and feel that as our gospel passage starts.

...and consider how you feel about what Jesus is saying.

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

[Mark 13](#): 1-8, 24-37

[Psalm 102](#): 1-2, 11-17



Martyrs - Earth - Bill Viola

✦ Sermon:

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

How do you feel about Jesus' words?

Are they helpful?

What's the point?

They could be a checklist for how to predict the second coming. It does sound like a text about the end times. Jesus

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

mentions:

- temple destroyed, maybe all of Jerusalem
- people claiming to be Messiah
- wars, natural disasters, famine
- persecution of early Christians,
and family fights (we skipped that bit)
- sacrilege leading to going on the run
- and the sun going dark

You could make it a checklist, except there isn't enough detail to be helpful.

For example, this could apply to Mark's time. The Romans were likely to, or recently had, destroy the Temple and much of Jerusalem. There were leaders in the rebellion that people claimed were the Messiah. There was war, at least in the air if not in practice. Early Christians were being oppressed by Jews and Romans - at least to some extent. There was talk of sacrilege, such as Emperor Caligula's plan about 20 years earlier to put a statue of himself in the Temple to be worshipped (his assassination ended that plan). I'm not sure about eclipses, but that was known to happen.

This could be a checklist for Mark's time... or what was about to happen to Jesus. The Temple curtain would be torn, changing the role of the Temple ...destroying its role? Or it could be referring to Jesus' body as the Temple, and his death. There were false Messiah's around. Jesus was about to be persecuted & tortured. What's done to him could be called sacrilege. The timings mentioned: evening, midnight, cock-crow & dawn will connect with the last supper, being betrayed in the garden, Peter's betrayal, and being brought before Pilate. When Jesus is crucified, the sun will go dark. Perhaps this is about Jesus and the next couple of days ...or is it about now?

We have wars, including destruction around Jerusalem. There's natural disasters and famines. Christians are persecuted or ridiculed. The sacred is not respected. In a few of weeks the sun will go dark. ...Is this the end?



I don't know. The list isn't specific enough to be helpful - at least not like that. There's even confusion as a checklist. While wars, earthquakes & famine are mentioned, Jesus points out that they happen even if it's not the end. Jesus says that the Messiah will come, and that there will be people who seem to be the Messiah, but aren't. How are we to know? How is this helpful?

and Jesus isn't that helpful about the timing. He says that "when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near," ...and then goes on to say that no one, including himself, knows when it will happen.

Which raises a complicated point. How can Jesus not know what God is planning? Aren't they both the same? Isn't that a central fact of God? God is one: Father, Son & Holy Spirit. How is what Jesus is saying helpful?

There's no clear answer to how Jesus doesn't know, but I believe it has to do with Jesus being both fully divine and fully human. We are comfortable with thinking of Jesus in a human body, with what that means. Jesus would have to walk places and not fly. He gets tired and hungry. There's a few passages that show that Jesus can be impatient, or needs to be pushed a little to help non-Jews. He has some human emotions and prejudices. This comment that he doesn't know the hour and the day when Heaven and Earth will pass away... it could be that by limiting himself to being human he can't remember or know everything that God does. Yet, he still goes ahead.

Perhaps that's how this comment is helpful. Jesus shows faith that even when things are dark, divine goodness will come. Can we follow Jesus in this?

The vagueness and confusion of the checklist, and the assurance that nobody will know when supports one of Jesus' points.

Don't jump to conclusions.

We can read the signs, like snowdrops signifying the coming of spring, but even with snowdrops blooming there may still be a snowfall or drop in temperatures. Spring may not be here yet.

We shouldn't assume that the current wars and natural disasters signify the end of this age. Just because someone seems like the leader we want, doesn't make them the Messiah. But we should "keep alert". We should be like the servants who are always ready for the Master to arrive.

How do we do that? We remember the rest of the gospel. Stories such as

- Jesus healing the outsiders and the insiders. Can we help others to live well? Can we welcome people like us, and

those who are different?

- We remember overturning expectations, but also being consistent with God's love for us. Do we look for God in unexpected events? and unexpected places? and even unexpected people?
- We remember Jesus & the scribe agreeing that the focus should be a loving God & each other with all your heart, soul, mind & strength. To do this, start by focusing on a specific relationship, and then add more. It's hard. Thankfully the Holy Spirit is both with us and provides others we can work with in this all consuming love.

Trying to be ready all the time is demanding.

How did you feel on hearing Jesus' words today? Did you just write it off as Bible talk, or did it scare you a little? Fear can be bad. If it goes on too long it wears down your body and soul. In fear, you can even respond with a reflexive action that hurts those around you. Fears can be used to manipulate people into doing things they wouldn't normally do. Fear can also be good - when it motivates you to change things for the better. How are these words helpful? Perhaps they can motivate you to live as if the end of the age could come tomorrow.

Encouraging us to live The Way of Jesus is one way these words can be helpful. Another is that they can bring hope.

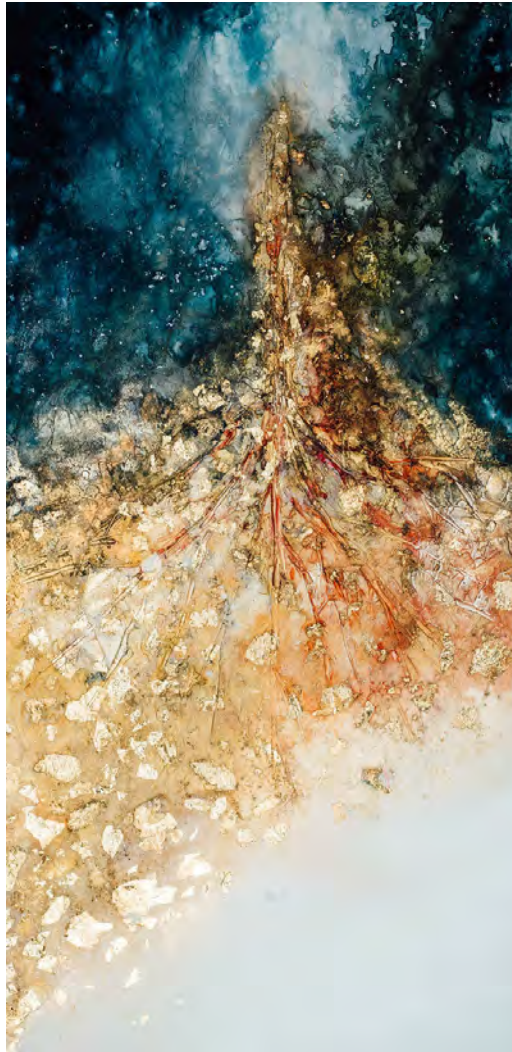
Think of the fig tree. Jesus reminds them that everyone knows, who lives there, that when they see the blossoms on the fig tree that summer is coming. Like our snowdrops, you may not be able to tell which day it will arrive on, but it is coming. If we don't get wrapped up in the timing we can take hope from the promise that the new is coming - and that this is a season of life. Jesus

doesn't talk about the leaves changing colours and falling, but buds and life.

A related source of hope in these words is acknowledging that there are tough times: large conflicts, personal ones, and disasters that shake our foundations. Christianity acknowledges that such things happen, AND there is hope. Beyond the tragedies is a divine blessing.

The coming of this blessing is something to live for, but I find the most hope in where Jesus is sitting while speaking these words. He's sitting on the hill and looking at the problems - both physically in front of him, and those coming in the next days. It seems like dark days. A way this passage shows this is when talking about the sun and the moon will go dark.

We might assume this means a darkness will cover the land... except when we remember Isaiah and Revelation. Both those books tell of how the sun and moon will no longer be needed as The Lord will be our everlasting light. This passage is about God coming again. It is about God bringing light into our darkness. Jesus is sitting in the darkness with his followers, and will walk



imperishable hope - Kelly Kruse

into an even deeper darkness, bringing light.

How do you feel about this passage now?

Is this passage helpful?

Do the scary parts motivate you to try and follow Jesus with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength?

Does the vagueness help you not to focus on exactly when you need to do this, but instead to focus on 'simply' following Jesus now?

Can you find hope in the promise that things will become good?

...and that God isn't just in the end, but is also with us in the dark times.

To God be all the glory.

Amen.



Responding to God

♪ Hymn: How firm a foundation.....pg 12 (685)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=kA4bTqCjLQw

🗣️ FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies.

Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).

Value: How much do you think about "the end times"?

Wonder: If you were to make an apocalyptic movie out of this passage, what would it be like?
or, if you were to paint or draw it, what would that be like?

Wonder: How would you explain this passage to a non-Christian?

Values: Where does the servant's attention go while the Master is away? How do you/we not pay attention?

Actions: Share ideas on how you could be more attentive... and hold each other accountable.

Prayer: ...for people to find God's light in dark times.

✦ Spirit Sightings

This week I witnessed somebody who had seen a movie they really appreciated. With great excitement they told me about it. When someone else came along, they told them too. They weren't pushy about it, but they wanted to others to know what a positive experience it could be.

It got me wondering about sharing good news. When's the last time you had an experience that created such excitement that you couldn't not share it with everyone? Why did that touch your soul? Where was God in the experience?

In this case the movie was about a nun in New York about 130 years ago, and how she brought light through hard work to a dark time and place.⁶



What wonder turns into - Lisle Gerrity

⁶ The movie is called Cabrini

✦ 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

Lord,
Sometimes we call you the Alpha and Omega
the A to Z - the beginning to the end.
While we can name the beginning and end of the alphabet,
we can only imagine the beginning and end of this creation.

There are times when we feel that the end is nigh.
with wars, and famine, and disasters.
Help us not to make assumptions about the end. . .
Help us to focus on loving you
with all that we are
our emotions, mind, soul, and strength. . .

Holy Spirit,
we recognize that you are active in and through the world.
We pray for those who are living with conflict. . .
may they know peace.
We pray for those who know hunger. . .
may they be given a confident source of food.
We pray for those suffering from the environment,

For hundreds of years, roads have been providing important networks of connection and community. Not only in a physical sense, but by creating equal access to vital places like schools, churches and hospitals, and fostering a sense of community. With support from Presbyterians Sharing, the Life and Mission Agency and the Band Council on Mistawasis Plains Cree Reserve in Northern Saskatchewan are working together to create a road system through the reserve that will connect Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church with the rest of the community. In turn, it will open up the possibilities of new ministry opportunities by bringing together the community and creating a sense of hope and connectedness.



DAILY PRAYERS

Sunday, March 17 We give thanks for the beauty of God's creation, and pray that we cherish the earth and treat it wisely.

Monday, March 18 We pray for the Rev. Anderson Juma, the newly elected General Secretary of Blantyre Synod, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in Malawi.

Tuesday, March 19 We give thanks for the work of the General Assembly committees as they prepare this year's reports, and for the ministry and mission in which each of them is involved

Wednesday, March 20 We pray for Cedar Tree Ministries, an outreach ministry for Indigenous People on Vancouver Island, and the Rev. Yong Wan (Joey) Cho.

Thursday, March 21 (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) We give thanks for human rights defenders who work to protect the rights, safety and dignity of all people. We pray for the elimination of all forms of racial harm, violence and discrimination.

Friday, March 22 (World Water Day) We give thanks to God that families living in conflict situations are accessing clean water provided through PWS&D's water, sanitation and hygiene projects.

Saturday, March 23 We pray for all students enrolled in the church's theological colleges as they seek to learn and grow in their faith.

whether illness, or economic, or fear. . .
may they know healing.

We pray for those whose foundations are shaken. . .
may they find you to be their solid rock.
and Jesus, as you know, there are others who need your prayers.
We pray for people and situations who need to know you. . .
may they be made well.

Jesus,
may we experience times sitting with you on the hill side,
listening and being prepared for the future -
whatever comes with it.

and please give us patience as we wait
trusting in your time,
in your Kingdom Come.

In Jesus name
Amen.

♪ Hymn: Lord of Light, Whose Name and Splendor.....pg 13 (769)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVSSuWW4GSc

✦ Benediction (2 Corinthians 13:13)
*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with all of you.*
Amen.



148 God, you alone know what you've planned

1. God, you a - lone know what you've planned For
 2. O Christ, you taught us, "Watch the trees As
 3. Though heav'n and earth will pass a - way, Your
 4. So by your Spir - it may we share The

When things we trust in shift and shake And
 May we look round this chang - ing earth And
 For at the close of hist - or - y When
 For there's a new day com - ing near With

earth and sky and sea. Cre - a - tion waits your
 sea - sons change each year, For when they bud and
 word will still be true. O Son of Man, on
 life you're bring - ing forth: May we seek just - ice,

sor - rows mul - ti - ply, We hear you call - ing,
 see with faith - filled eyes Your signs of new - ness,
 all that's past shall end, The one who judg - es
 no more death or pain; Till then, we'll seek to

lov - ing hand To bring in what will be.
 grow new leaves You know that sum - mer's near."
 that great day, We'll be se - cure in you.
 end desp - air, And work to heal the earth.

"Keep a - wake! Re - demp - tion is close by!"
 life and birth That wit - ness to the wise,
 us will be No stran - ger, but a friend.
 serve you here And wel - come in your reign.

Music: Richard Storrs Willis (1819-1900) Text: Copyright © 2009 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

My Lord, What a Morning

438

Refrain

My Lord, what a morn-ing; my Lord, what a morn-ing; oh,

my Lord, what a morn-ing, when the stars be-gin to fall.

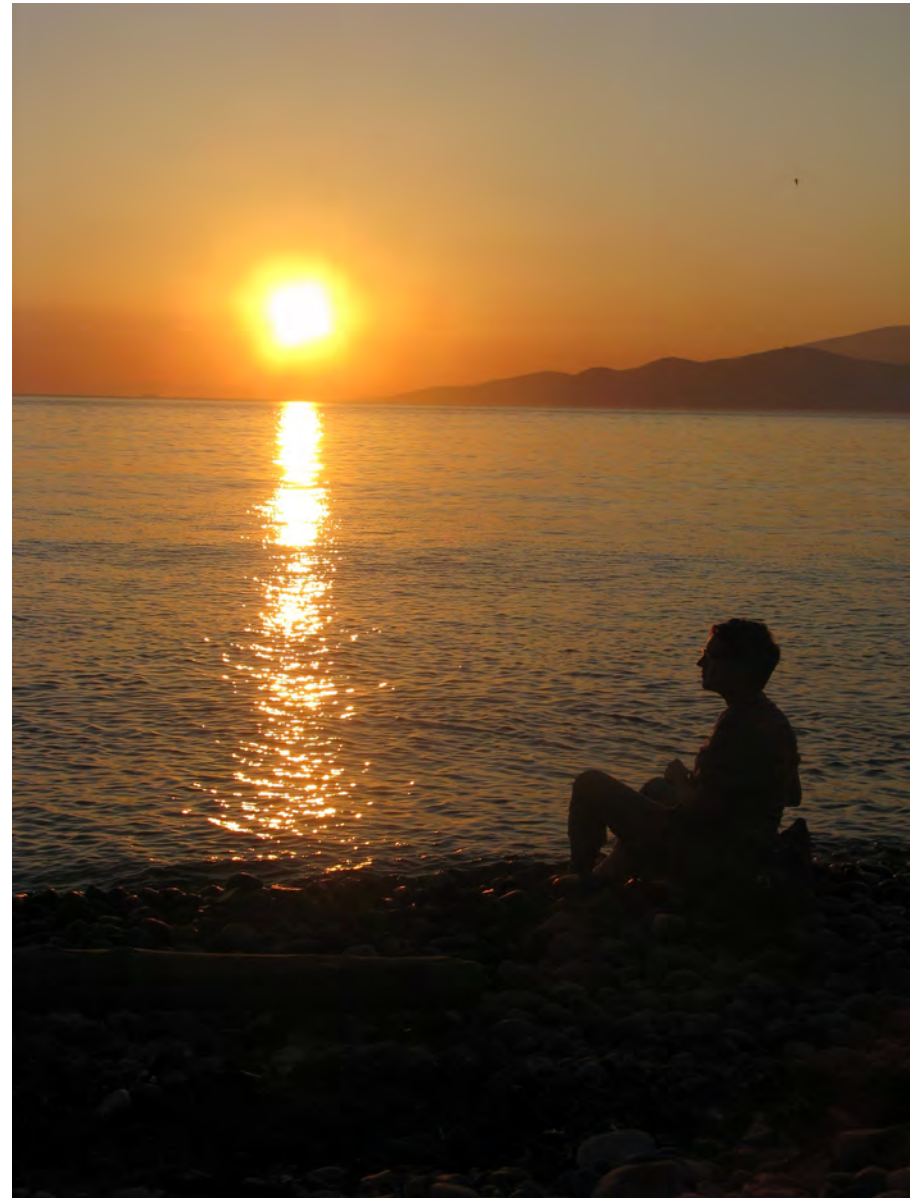
1 You will hear the trum-pet sound,
2 You will hear the sin-ner cry, to wake the na-tions un-der - ground,
3 You will hear the Chris-tian shout,

Refrain

look-ing to my God's right hand, when the stars be-gin to fall.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: African American spiritual

BURLEIGH
6 8 7 7 and refrain



How firm a foundation

ST. DENIO 11 11 11 11

G C Am D Em G/D D 7 G

1. How firm a foun - da - tion, ye saints of the Lord,
 2. "Fear not, I am with thee; oh be not dis - mayed!
 3. "When through the deep wa - ters I call thee to go,
 4. "When through fi - ery tri - als thy path - way shall lie,
 5. "The soul that on Je - sus hath leaned for re - pose

C Am D Em G/D D 7 G

is laid for your faith in God's ex - cel - lent word!
 For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
 the riv - ers of woe shall not thee o - ver - flow,
 my grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup - ply;
 I will not - I will not - de - sert to his foes;

D/F# G (/B) G Em G/B D

What more can God say than to you hath been said,
 I'll strength-en thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand
 for I will be with thee, thy trou - bles to bless,
 the flames shall not hurt thee; I on - ly de - sign
 that soul, though all hell should en - deav - our to shake,

B Em Am D Em G/D D 7 G

to you that for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
 up - held by my right - eous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
 and sanc - ti - fy to thee thy deep - est dis - tress.
 thy dross to con - sume and thy gold to re - fine.
 I'll nev - er - no, nev - er - no, nev - er for - sake!"

Words: K in Rippon's Selection of Hymns 1787 Music: Welsh hymn

Words: public domain Music: public domain

769 Lord of light, whose name and splendour

BETHANY (SMART) 8 7 8 7 D

Eb Ab Eb/G Bb6 Cm Ab Eb/Bb Bb /Ab Eb/G Eb

1. Lord of light, whose name and splendour far out-shine the
 2. By the faith-ful-ness of work-ers serv-ing you in
 3. Grant that know-ledge, still in-creas-ing, at your feet might
 4. By pray-ers of faith-ful watch-ers, nev-er si-lent

Eb/G Ab6 Bb Eb Cm Bb/D Bb6 Cm F7 Bbsus4-3

suns of space, deign to make us your co-work-ers
 eve-ry field; by the cour-age where the ra-diance
 hum-bly kneel; with your grace our tri-umphs hal-low,
 day or night; by the cross of Je-sus bring-ing

Bb/Ab Eb/G Ab/C Eb/Bb Bb7 Eb Bb /D Fsus4-3

in the king-dom of your grace; use us to ful-
 of the cross is still re-vealed; by the vic-to-
 with your char-i-ty our zeal; lift all na-tions
 peace to all, and heal-ing light; by the love that

Eb/G Cm/A Eb/Bb Bb /D Bb7 Eb6 Bb/F F7 Bb

fil your pur- pose in the gift of Christ your Son:
 ries of meek-ness, through re-proach and suf-fering won:
 from the shad-ows to the glad-ness of the sun:
 pass-es know-ledge, mak-ing all your chil-dren one:

Bb /Ab Eb/G Eb Ab/C Bb7/D Ebsus4-3 Ab C7 Fm Eb/G Ab6 Bb7 Eb

Ab-ba, as in high-est heav-en so on earth your will be done.

Words: Howell Elvet Lewis (1860-1953), alt Music: Henry T. Smart (1813-1879)
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