



**Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge**  
**Sunday February 21, 2021**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent Worship at Home**  
**Rev. Marian Raynard Phone: 905-892-4055**

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*Later in this service there will be communion. Not quite the same as when we have our service together where the liturgy is used. But during this service the act of communion has been provided based strictly on Scripture with the Biblical references provided in case you wish to look them up. If you feel comfortable in partaking, below is a list of items you will need. Please feel comfortable using substitutions as required. This is an opportunity to remember the journey we go on through the season of Lent, which will bring us to Good Friday and to the hope and promise of Easter.*

*Items you will need:                      A candle                      Bread or cracker                      juice or wine or a substitute*

*Through the season of Lent, we will be using the Presbyterian World Service and Development Lenten liturgies which have been adapted from the original written by The Rev. Mary Whitson, (who served this pastoral charge), and is currently retired.*

### **Call to Worship:                      First Sunday in Lent**

Lent is a journey with Jesus toward Jerusalem, toward the cross, toward resurrection and new life. We will be transformed and blessed on this journey.

**We are pilgrims on a journey. We are travelers on the road.**

We undertake the journey knowing we will not remain the same.

**We are pilgrims on a journey. We are travelers on the road.**

The journey will take time. We will feel the strain in our bodies and in our souls, yet love will urge us onward.

**We are pilgrims on a journey. We are travelers on the road.**

Let us start the journey with prayer:

**God of all times and places, as we begin the pilgrimage from life to death to new life, you will surprise us and nurture us. We put our trust in you, knowing you will guide and provide for us. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.**

### **Opening Prayer of Adoration and Confession: Let us pray:**

Creator God, all we have to do is to look around and we see the work of your hands in the snow that falls, in the bright sunlit winter's day, the bright moon and stars. In the summer we think of your promise when we see a rainbow after a storm. We praise you for the beauty of the created world, and for the hope of life with you now and always. We praise you for your faithfulness and loving kindness throughout all generations, for your promise of grace, for your compassion and redemption revealed to us in Christ Jesus.

And yet as we praise you, we also need to bring our faults and failings to you with truth and humility. God, you made a covenant with us in faithfulness, but we confess we are not always so faithful to you. We grow tired and restless when things don't go our way. We lose patience with others. We lack compassion for our neighbours in need, and even forget to express our love for those closest to us. Forgive us, gracious God. Lead us in the way we should go. Make us prisms of your love, making rainbows of your light, creating beauty and deepening hope wherever we go, for the sake of Christ, our Lord.

As we pray as he taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

### **Scripture Readings:**

**Genesis 9: 8 – 17:** Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.” So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

**Mark 1: 9 – 15:** At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

### **Reflection: Covenant – more than a promise**

Many years ago, I first made this promise: *“I promise to do my best, to be true to myself, my beliefs, and Canada. I will take action for a better world. And respect the Guiding Law.”* The words have been changed to represent the world in which we live, but the meaning of this promise continues to help shape the person that I have been, that I am, and that I will be.

Tomorrow, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, is Thinking Day – a day of recognition to commemorate the founders of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides around the world. February 22 is the joint birthday of Lord and Lady Baden Powell. When I was involved in guiding in Lucknow it was a time for all the units – Scouts and Guides to come together for a pot luck gathering and an outdoor campfire. This year, the day will be marked quite differently with virtual gatherings the world over.

Each member of Scouts or Guides make a promise to guide them in the call that they accept as they continue to be part of the organization and as a member of society. The promise, law and motto of each organization attempts to provide each member with a direction to live their lives, leading them through the hills and valleys of life, and for the people that they will meet. A challenge to do the best that you can, to live your life with integrity and do what you can to make the world a better place and celebrate life by following the law, the directive of the organization. Having lived my life doing my best to uphold the Guiding Law, to live the words of the promise

(as it evolved through the years) and to keep the Motto – Be Prepared, I feel that it has dovetailed with my call to serve the church.

Our scripture readings for today, and for the season of Lent, focuses on covenant. In the traditional ways of looking at covenant it is a formal binding agreement that defines a relationship and the responsibilities between two or more parties. Covenant was a treaty, a business contract, a pledge of friendship outlining the rights and responsibilities of each party. A Biblical covenant defines the relationship between God and God's people. In the reading from Genesis, we hear God's promise to Noah and to all people.

Today, we begin our journey through Lent and take a closer look at the way that we walk in the world as Christians. The first reading from Mark speaks of Jesus spending an extended time of temptation in the wilderness. While he was in the wilderness or the desert he was cared for by the wild animals and the angels. For many Lent is a time to give up something, to deny yourself of something that you would truly cherish. I believe that it is an opportunity to further explore what is the nature of the promised Kingdom of God on earth that we long for, and try to discern.

#### What to Give up ...

Give up complaining	focus on Gratitude
Give up pessimism	become an Optimist
Give up worry	trust Divine Providence
Give up bitterness	turn to Forgiveness
Give up hatred	return Good for evil
Give up negativism	be Positive
Give up anger	be More Patient
Give up pettiness	become Mature
Give up gloom	enjoy the Beauty all around you
Give up jealousy	pray for Trust
Give up gossiping	control your tongue
Give up sin	turn to virtue
Give up giving up	Hang in there!

(source unknown)

Over the next forty days (of Lent), take the opportunity to examine your life and what area you will focus on. Is there something that you've been thinking about, or that has been challenging you? Maybe you've been wondering how you can help others cope with the challenges and realities of life in a global pandemic. Life is in constant transition and needs us to be active participants. When we become complacent, and believe that things can stay as they are this is when we start to take things for granted.

When we make a covenant or a promise, we are called to honour the time, treasure and talents of the gifts that we have been given, by those who have gone before us. A covenant can be sustained for generations, when we continue to plant, nurture and celebrate the work that we share as individuals and as a faith community.

In my life of being involved in Girl Guides of Canada, I have seen the words of the promise change four times. For the most part I can recite the words of the first promise that I learned, but I still have a promise to follow and guide me.

In a few moments you will be invited to participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion and to be reminded of the covenant that Christ made with his followers, and with us. As you partake in the meal, remember that Christ promised that he would take away the sin of the world.

God sees us in the rainbow of light of his own love and mercy, rather than in the dark cloud of our flawed ways. During this day, in the week ahead, and during the season of Lent, take the

time to assess. What are you focused on? What is guiding you? To whom are you in a covenant with? What can you do to better yourself and your community? If you give up something, be intentional about the focus of your decision. May God be your focus and guide. Amen.

**Sung Response: “Standing on the Promises” # 69 Hymns for the Family of God**

Standing on the promises of Christ my King, through eternal ages let His praises ring,  
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing, Standing on the promises of God.

Refrain:

Standing, standing, Standing on the promises of God my Savior;  
Standing, standing, I'm standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises I cannot fall, listening every moment to the Spirit's call  
Resting in my Savior as my all in all, Standing on the promises of God.

**Our Offerings:**

You are able to make your offering by sending a **cheque or using the PAR** (pre-authorized remittance). For Rockway contact Bonnie Roland (905-685-3985), 213 Rykert Street, St. Catharines, ON L2S 2B5 and for North Pelham contact Janice Aulph (905-892-5244) or mail 602 Metler Rd, Fenwick L0S 1C0 or drop them in the mailbox.

**Prayer of Dedication      Let us pray:**

God of courage and compassion, we bring our gifts to you in Jesus' name. This year we need both his courage and compassion for ourselves. Receive our thanks with these our gifts and bless them that they may bring hope to others in these challenging times. Amen.

**PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION**

Let us pray:

As we begin this season of Lent, God we give you thanks for your promise of new life that sustains us, especially as these months of pandemic stretch on.

We thank you: for tiny signs of hope, even in a bleak landscape or on challenging day;  
For glimpses of beauty in a smile or a ray of sunshine; for scientific achievements that ease suffering in this time of pandemic; for the people who support and serve others in times of weakness or loss; for the chance to recover from mistakes, to begin again. Lord of life, sustain us with your presence and give us patience and perseverance as we await the future with you.

Trusting your promise of new life, it is with hope that we pray:

For anyone we have hurt by harsh words or careless deeds;

For those known to us who are carrying heavy burdens;

For those we work with;

For all who are seeking employment or worry about their businesses;

For teachers, students and school administrators managing so many challenges this year;

For troubled places in our world and those who work for reconciliation and understanding;

For our congregation and all churches seeking new ways to minister in these months of distancing from each other;

For ourselves and those lives closely connected to ours;

Renew our health and hope for the future you will bring us through the courage and compassion of Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### **Communion Liturgy**

Jesus said: “I am the bread of life. Those who come to me will never be hungry, and those who believe in me will never be thirsty. No one who comes to me will I drive away (John 6: 35, 37). Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread (1 Cor. 10:17). So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31)”

This service, the act of communion has been provided based strictly on Scripture with the Biblical references provided in case you wish to look them up. If you feel comfortable in partaking, below is a list of items you will need. Please feel comfortable using substitutions as required.

#### **Items you will need:**

A Candle

Bread or cracker

Juice or wine or a substitute

#### **Invitation to the Lord’s Table:**

We gather in our homes, some of us are alone, others of us have a loved one with us. We gather together in the name of the Triune God – Creator, Son and Holy Spirit; around this table to remember the love, care and sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Let us pray:

Creator of heaven and earth, your spoke and order emerged from chaos, creation from the formless void, and light from the darkness. You formed us in your image and called us to be your people. You spoke words of truth and law and created us a community. Through the prophets, you called us to justice and peace. In the fullness of time, your word became flesh and lived among us, and in Jesus we saw your full glory. He shared our human nature; he lived and died as one of us. He taught those who sought to follow his way; he healed the sick, ate and drank with outcasts, cured the blind, and proclaimed the good news of your kingdom.

We give you thanks for Christ, for the gift of your love and grace. Pour out your Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine, that they may become the body and blood of Christ and that we, nourished by them, may become the body of Christ in the world. Amen.

#### **Scripture Reading: Matthew 26: 26 – 28 – The Last Supper (NIV)**

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

#### **Communion: 1 Corinthians 11: 23 – 26 (NIV)**

The Apostle Paul wrote, “The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you, do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” Amen.

*Now is the time to eat this bread, and to drink of this cup.*

#### **Prayer after Communion:**

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## CLOSING BLESSING

May the God of covenant faithfulness enfold you; The beloved Son encourage you;  
And the Holy Spirit descend upon you in blessing; This day and until we meet again.

### Sung Response: Go Now in Peace

Go now in peace. Never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of every day.  
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see.  
God will be there, watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.  
Amen. Amen. Amen. Don Besig & Nancy Price © 1988

**We acknowledge that we meet on the traditional  
territory of the Haudensaunee and Anishnaabee**

## With the current lock down situation, Worship and activities have been suspended at both churches.

### Mission Moment – Certainty in the Midst of Change

We live in a world that is constantly changing. The past year brought unprecedented change, and we had to learn to adapt in our lives, jobs and congregations. In the midst of so much change, Presbyterians Sharing has continued to support the mission and ministry we do together—often in new and adaptive ways. What hasn't changed is our commitment to one another, discerning together, moving forward together, being in community together, sharing God's message together, confronting injustice together and caring for vulnerable people together. That's what Presbyterians Sharing is all about. As we put our gifts into God's hands, God is doing remarkable things.

### Upcoming worship services:

**Feb 28<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent**

**Items for the Spring Newsletter are due to Bonnie Roland or Nancy Miller by the 28<sup>th</sup> of Feb.**

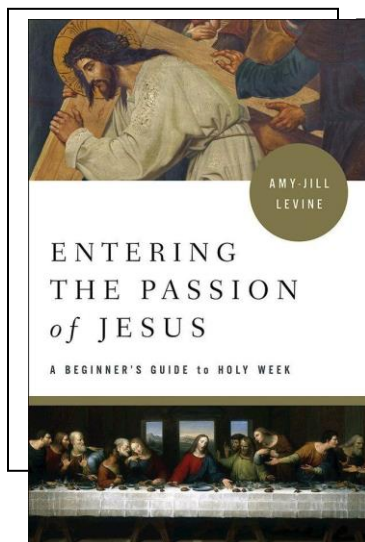
### The Spring Newsletter & Congregational Annual Reports

**will be available for pick up at each church on Saturday March 6<sup>th</sup>.**

**Rockway Presbyterian Church – front entrance 1:30 – 2:30 pm.**

**First Presbyterian Church, North Pelham – ramp door entrance 1:30 – 2:30 pm.**

## Presbyterians Read for Lent



*Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week*  
Written by Amy-Jill Levine

For the season of Lent 2021, you are welcome to join with other Presbyterians from across the country to study Amy Jill Levine's "Entering the Passion of Jesus".

Diane McMillan is preparing for the weekly study and will be drawing from the resources available through the Communications department of the PCC and from Ms. Levine's book. For more information please contact Diane or Rev. Marian