



Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge
Sunday August 7, 2022
Worship at Home

Email: northpelham.rockwaypc@gmail.com Website: <https://northpelhamrockwaypresbyterian.ca>

Our sincere thanks to **Reverend Pearl**
for leading us in worship today.

CALL TO WORSHIP

L. The sacrifice that honours God is thankful heart.

P. We lift up our hearts with gratitude , and our voices with praise for all that God has done.

L. Wait upon the Lord who is our help and shield.

P. We trust in god's holy name and so we come to worship.

Let us worship God.

HYMN : Lord of all being, throned afar

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PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

Almighty God, God of promise and purpose. Through Jesus Christ, you have called us to be your people and given us a purpose for our lives each day. We gather in worship today to be renewed to live out your purpose in the weak ahead. We seek your wisdom and guidance to lead us through the choices we face and the challenges that surround us. You are our God and we offer you loyalty and praise, so the world will see that we belong to you as we follow in the footsteps of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Faithful God we confess that our choices do not always reflect your purposes for our lives. Faithfulness to you is sometimes the last thing in our minds. We often choose the easiest way or what suits our interests, not yours. Forgive us, O God, when we fail to remember what you required of us. Renew a right spirit within us by your grace. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON. Dear friends, while it is true that we have all sinned, it is a greater truth that we are forgiven through God's love in Jesus Christ. Praise be to God. Amen.

CHILDREN OF GOD MOMENT

HYMN : I heard the voice of Jesus say

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PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

O Lord, speak to us again through the teaching of Scripture. Challenge us and comfort us with the presence of your Holy Spirit, so that we are assured of your love and inspired to follow Jesus, your Living Word. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

R.R. Psalm 50 : 1-8; 22-23

O.T. Isaiah 1 :1; 10-20

N.T. Luke 12: 32-40

SERMON Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Here we are again, a little over 15 years ago I came here first and what a journey those 15 years have been. If somebody would've told me then the ups and downs I will have to go through, I would not believe a word I heard.

I remember when I came to look at the church the basement was fully packed for the upcoming yard sale and I was amazed seeing the amount of treasures you were going to sell. And then I remember the last service before my retirement in North Pelham, hardly believing that 10 years of service already went by.

Now, here we worship together again and lots and lots of memories keep flooding my mind. It takes 70+ years to see God's work in you and loving hand holding you.

The other day as I was watching my granddaughter sleeping on her tummy for the first time, I remembered how much luxury of time I have now compared to the time my children grew up. At that time I had minutes to see that they are all asleep to continue my jobs that kept multiplying instead of getting done. Now I have hours to watch every move, facial expression and almost daily changes in her life. God is an awesome God and every day as a gift I am getting is so wonderful.

Why this long introduction to my sermon and the read passages , you ask ?

R.R. The psalm is about God speaking :

“ He summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets.” The summon happens for God to judge his people. The cause for this summon is about the covenant : I am your God, you are my people. That sounds simple enough, we think, and yet it is more complicated than that. Remember out of the 10 commandment how we managed to make 613 pieces of law. The sacrifices that were suppose to be simple and honest all of a sudden became more complicated and superficial. People's faith grew shallow because they presented a sacrifice and all else was forgotten. I think we are a little bit like that today. Occasionally we show up in the church, there are many who are still attached to the Zoom services. Then we give our offering and go home. We don't have daily prayer or Bible reading discipline any more (and if you do I am not speaking about you), we don't make the needs of the world personal or relevant any more. WMS s , the heart and soul of mission work, are folding right left and centre. We don't teach our children or grandchildren stories about Jesus any more, SS s are gone to the wayside. Should I continue or you got the picture. I am not nostalgic about those I am just merely remarking that while those things are gone we don't have anything new in their place. The baby is thrown out with the bathwater sort of speaking. Yet God summons us today to remind us of the covenant. How can we answer His question ?

O.T. The common theme of the Psalm and Isaiah is around the sacrifices: presenting them, the meaning of it, the importance and priority of it.

In verse 13 it says : “ Stop bringing meaningless offerings .” Isaiah sees increasingly clearly that the vast gulf between religious life and political and social behaviour.

You see worship in Isaiah's time was a public observance in the temple. It was very different from worship in Christian churches in our day, or is it ? Worship in our culture has become a private action done for private reasons.

In ancient Israel, the Temple building was the centre of the nation's life. Those days in our churches are long gone.

In our read passage the people of ancient Israel are receiving a correction, a warning, a condition. They were not being told that sacrifice was wrong, but it was not enough.

Something was missing !

“ Cease to do evil, learn to do good. “ Sacrifice and worship cannot remain detached from behaviour and action ! Isaiah clearly spells it out :

“ Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphans, plead for the widow. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land. “

Relevance ! Isaiah is speaking very clearly to our own time. We are seeing the new market economy transform our society. We know that this transformation is extraordinarily costly, especially for those who are most vulnerable. But the market economy is not prepared to take this human factor into its calculations. Would there be consequences for this ? We already see more than one sign !

N.T. Be ready ! said Jesus.

If our ultimate goal is self-gratification and self-development – a modern tendency- then our heart becomes buried in the self and essentially dies.

You see during our life journey our priority lists are changing several times. There is nothing wrong with that as long as we have the covenant with God at the very top. Jesus is cautioning us, and pointing out that we worry about things beyond our control. Not to worry, well it is easier said than done, and we all know it. To have equality between our outward things and inward peace, that is also hard to accomplish. The focus seems to be about what we eat and wear. Nurturing and nourishing our faith goes way down on our priority list.

Even skeptical doctors do notice more and more lately how the power of prayer can and is helping patience they give up on. Yet we are hesitant to do it or even mention it at all.

“ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” should be taken very seriously.

First of all we have to clarify what our treasure is. Are our worldly possessions more important than our relationship with God ?

I am so glad I was very ill when I had to downsize my possessions, especially my books. Let me tell you in 4 + years I hardly miss anything or if I do I learn rapidly how to live without it. What I really treasure is my time with God in prayer, Bible readings, or admiring God's great creation. I can clean my place from corner to corner in a half a day and that frees me to do other things, to rearrange my priority list. So listen to Jesus. He is constantly asking for our allegiance, our response, our obedience. If we live for Christ, we will find life immeasurably enlarged. We need to acknowledge that there is someone (Jesus) who comes into our lives, in unexpected ways and at unexpected times, and calls us to respond to a will and desire beyond our own wills and desires. That's exactly what should we be ready for at all times. Let us pray.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit call us, love us, guide us. Give us grace and peace in Jesus' name Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Blessed are you, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Bless what we offer for your purposes. Give us courage to offer ourselves more fully to you, so that our lives bring you honour and glory through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Almighty God, God of wisdom, righteousness and grace, we are overcome by the benefits you have bestowed upon us. We need not fear since, since in Christ you endowed us with eternal life. You craft our talents and implant them within us; we live by your grace. Dying to sin and rising in the victory of Christ's atoning sacrifice, we can walk upright, thanks to your love.

Keep the lamp of your goodness burning brightly within us, as a sign of our welcome when Christ comes and knocks. If the candle of faith has grown dim and no longer leads us to obedience, trim our wicks and ignite us anew. As doubt and depression make our worship halfhearted, startle us with your grace so that we regain the sense of wonder. When our confession becomes casual and we have little intention of changing our ways, call us to account and purify our motives.

As Abraham stepped out with assurance, not knowing where he was to go, may we likewise venture forth by the light of your promise. Deliver us from the excessive need to control our own destinies, and restore our trust in your infinite goodness. By your power Sarah conceived, even when she was passed the age. Help us to bear within us the hope that in Christ all things are possible. With faith rekindled, we set forth on our journey in the certain knowledge that we are ever at home with you. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN : We praise you, O God

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BENEDICTION

Go Now In Peace

**We acknowledge that we meet on the traditional
Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe**

Next Sunday worship will be at North Pelham at 10:00 am with Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi