



Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge
Sunday September 11, 2022
Worship at Home

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

Our sincere thanks to **Kent Reynolds**
for leading us in worship today.

CALL TO WORSHIP

O God, you have searched us and known us.

You know when we sit down and when we rise up.

You discern our thoughts from far away.

Before a word is on our tongues, Lord, you know it completely.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, and so we humble ourselves in worship.

In this hour, search us and know our hearts, O God, and lead us in the way everlasting.

HYMN # 377 Come, Children join to sing

OPENING PRAYER OF ADORATION

Loving God,

we gather in your presence this day,
called by the stories of your people over the centuries.

You are the source of wisdom we seek,

Your mercy eases the troubles that stir our hearts.

And we come to praise you,

for your word has the power to challenge us and change us.

Draw near to us as we draw near to you this day.

Tell us the stories that will change our lives,

through the grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

We gather in Jesus' name,

to gain wisdom and to know your Spirit's guidance.

Yet we confess that pride prevents us from hearing the good news

and that we resist the power of your Word to change us.

Forgive what we have been,

help us amend who we are and

set us free to be who you have called us to be. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

St Paul asked, “Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ – and Christ died for us; Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us”.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free by God’s most generous grace.

HYMN # 773 Jesus Bids Us Shine

Prayer for Understanding

Dear God, send your Spirit to open our minds and hearts to hear your Word.

Challenge us, change us, and move us to follow Christ,

who speaks to us as a friend whose word we can value and trust. Amen

RESPONSIVE READING- Psalm 27

SCRIPTURE: **Isaiah 60: 1-5; 15-20**
 John 1: 4-9

SERMON: Be a Light

On September 11, 2001, the world experienced one of the worst examples of hate ever seen. Between 8:14 am and 10:03 am, four coordinated suicide attacks occurred in various parts of the United States forever changing the landscape and lives of thousands of people. 2996 people lost their lives that morning in senseless acts of hatred. Today is the 21st anniversary of 9/11 and I don’t want to bring everyone down by rehashing the details, but this single event for me left a mark that I will forever remember. I can tell you where I was and what I was doing when the news broke of what was going on not all that far from home. The images seen on television of the Twin towers collapsing and people devastated by these attacks left imprints in my mind that I couldn’t erase for a very long time. This day was a profound demonstration of hate in the world. But, hate is nothing new - we have seen acts of hatred over and over again and will continue to see them moving forward. Each generation has it’s own examples to recall, some of which may have marked defining moments in your lives. Hate seems inevitable and is driven by human emotions however, we have the answer to how best to deal with hate in the world. You may have picked up on a theme in today’s service. Was this intentional? I think so! The first verse of our responsive psalm says it all “ The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?” Believe and trust in this light - the light of our Lord, the beacon that leads the way and teaches how to deal with the hatred in the world. Verses 5 states “for in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling” . Out of darkness, comes light and we’ve seen this time and time again, where acts of hate or evil occur against others, this light is seen both figuratively and literally. We often see the sun shine through after dark times symbolizing the end to something 3 and a beginning of recovery. The

light is also seen in people coming together to help and to try to restore some belief that humanity can be good. The compassion of people is the light shining through. The compassion of people is what is needed to overcome and to be an example of what is right with the world. Verse 13 of the Psalm reinforces this by saying, “I am confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” If we look at the readings from Isaiah 60, again we see the power of this light. The power of the light of the Lord shows us that God is good and God is the way. The first 3 verses state, “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn.” The light of the Lord casts an inviting glow which draws us near and imparts on us to be good followers of our Lord. Those who walk in the light are disciples of Jesus Christ. The light is our hope and our strength to cope and to deal with hatred and other types of stress in the world we face on an almost daily basis. And the nice thing about this light is that even if and when darkness falls on us, the light will always shine through and you can again seek the brightness and forgiveness of our Lord and Saviour. The light of the Lord never burns out and shines eternally for us. In our short passage from John, we read that “In him was life and that life was the light of men” Jesus was born of God the Father to be our light - to emulate for us a life of truth and meaning and to show us what it means to be good disciples. For fun, I Googled “Commentary of John 1: 4-9” and found these key takeaways of the passage - 1. An abundant life consists of both physical and spiritual life 2. Darkness of the world cannot overcome the light of God 3. Following Christ gives us abundant full life, leads us out of darkness and makes us light ourselves 4. With life and light, we can move boldly through the darkness of this world as a witness for the one who is the source of light. While this world may seem rather dark sometimes, the power of the light comes from the source that created all things. There is no power of darkness that is greater than the power of the light. Jesus said that whoever does choose Him will gain the light of life. “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life” John 8:12. You know, it’s ironic how this message came about. I stumbled upon a song, called, “Be a Light”. Country singer Thomas Rhett, who I really don’t know much about, collaborated with other artists such as Reba McEntyre and Keith Urban among others to record and release this song as a means of encouragement during the COVID pandemic but I feel the words are so applicable for us all to consider on our faith journeys and to consider what it means for us to be a light to others. The words of the chorus are especially meaningful and go like this, In a world of hate, be a light When you do somebody wrong, make it right Don’t hide in the dark, you were born to shine In a world full of hate, be a light. 4 Think about the third line - Don’t hide in the dark, you were born to shine - we were all born to shine. The darkness can consume us, but Jesus wants us to shine - and to spread this light, HIS light to others. So, in a world of hate, I challenge you all to be a light! Amen! Of course, in my true fashion, I’d like to share the music video with you now. The words appear on the screen as well, so enjoy! <https://youtu.be/8JcwNJj-pWY>

HYMN # 765 We’ve a story to tell to the nations

PRAYER OF DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

Lord God, receive our gifts offered in a spirit of generosity and humility. Bless and use them for the work that you long to do in the world in Jesus name. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND FOR THE PEOPLE

Ever seeking God,
 we come before you in prayer,
 for you have sought us out and claimed us as your own.
 Thank you showing us how we are precious to you
 through the life and love of Jesus Christ.
 In our prayers we name before you other precious souls and situations.
 With your Spirit, seek them out:
 God of mercy,
Draw near to all who need you.

We pray for those who feel lost in life:
 those who are frightened or anxious,
 those who are struggling with addiction or mental illness,
 and those who are lonely or despairing:

May your reassurance and comfort find them.
 God of mercy,
Draw near to all who need you.

We pray for those who have wandered away:
 for those separated from their families by conflict or distance;
 for those whose relationship with the church is broken or forgotten;
 and for those who have given up on the future in despair.

May your healing and mercy find them.
 God of mercy,
Draw near to all who need you.

We pray for those who feel forgotten:
 for those who think that they are worthless or unloved;
 for those who believe that their sins are too great to forgive;
 and for those who are convinced that not even God can love them.

May your love and grace find them.
 God of mercy,
Draw near to all who need you.

We pray for those who have lost loved ones.

We pray for the Royal family as they mourn the loss of a Queen, a mother, a grandmother and a great grandmother.

And we thank you for a life well lived in duty and grace.

May your love and gentle hand bring comfort and peace to all who need it
God of mercy,

Draw near to all who need you.

Ever watchful God,
you keep seeking out wandering sheep and lost coins,
lives of all who are precious to you.
Thank you for your attentive love
and your patient compassion for us all.
May we rejoice with you when any lost soul is embraced,
and never substitute our judgment of them for yours.
Make us servants of the mercy we meet in Jesus Christ
Who taught us to pray together:
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, the power, and the glory,
forever.

Amen.

I'd like to take just a couple of moments to observe Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II

Please watch

<https://youtu.be/qVbv9gShP0c>

HYMN # 376 Lord, the light of your love is shining

BENEDICTION

Go in joy, knowing God rejoices over you;
 And care for others, knowing God rejoices over them, too!
 May the blessing of the God who made us,
 the Christ who mends us,
 and the Spirit who gives us life
 be with you now and always. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE- Go Now In Peace

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

Why we have a land acknowledgement in our bulletin

We do land acknowledgements to show our respect for the land, a tradition that dates back centuries for Indigenous people. Land acknowledgements have been adopted as a common practice in civic and community spaces across Canada—a small but important step towards reconciliation.

Next Sunday worship will be at Rockway at 10:00 am with Rev. Paul Shobridge leading the service

Wednesday September 14 – Session meeting at Rockway

7:00 pm North Pelham will meet

7:30 pm Rockway will join