



Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge
Sunday, January 11, 2026 – 10:00 am
1st Sunday after Epiphany Baptism of our Lord
Worship at Home

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

We are called to serve in the name of Jesus, God's beloved Son,

God calls us by name because we are beloved.

God calls us to be a light to the nations.

We wait for God's teaching and to learn justice.

We are witnesses to God's goodness and grace who claims and loves us.

God's name be praised!

Hymn 115 Hail to the Lord's Anointed

PRAYERS OF APPROACH, CONFESSION and ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Creator God,

you formed the heavens and stretched them over us;

you spread out the earth and made it fruitful.

From your glory, you came to us in Jesus, your Son,

to touch the earth with healing and hope.

We praise you for all the gifts you have given us

in Christ and in creation.

In the strength of the Spirit, we come to renew our commitment to you,

to serve in the name of Christ Jesus,

who is one with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and always.

In order to begin again with you and one another, let us confess our sins:

Merciful God,

in baptism you promise us forgiveness and new life.

We confess that we often prefer our old ways.

We resist the new opportunities you set before us.

We cling to harmful habits and nurse grudges,

failing to forgive one another.

Have mercy upon us, O God,

and guide us to live with more grace and generosity through Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray together, saying

“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.

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, hear the good news of the gospel. Before the world was made, we were chosen in Christ to be part of God’s family. God calls us to new life in Christ, so trust in God’s forgiveness and grace. Turn and follow Jesus in repentance and joy.

Hymn 350

To God be the Glory

Children of God Moment

How do snowflakes form?

Two words: *supercool* and *supersaturated*. The air needs to be both to form snowflakes. It’s a delicate process and snowflakes can consist of one to 200 ice crystals.

Why does every snowflake look different?

Slight atmospheric changes in a snowflake’s journey from sky to ground impact how its six points take shape. And did you know that all snowflakes have six sides or points to them? Since no two fall the same way, and at the exact same temperature or humidity, all snowflakes develop uniquely.

Considering more than a septillion (a trillion *trillion*) snowflakes fall each year, it’s miraculous that no two are alike.

So, what’s the point of snowflakes, let’s continue our worship to find out

Prayer for Understanding

Your Word, O God, comes to us in the translation of ancient scripture. Send your Holy Spirit to open our minds with understanding and our hearts with wisdom in the name of Jesus Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Psalm 139: 1-16; Jeremiah 1: 4-7; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

SERMON

FLAKES

Prior to Christmas, I had the great pleasure to attend my son, Clayton’s, holiday presentation at his school. It was a lively play with quirky dialogue, lighthearted jokes and toe tapping musical

numbers that all the children in the school joyfully sang out at the top of their lungs. The play followed The Littlest Snowflake who struggled to understand her place in the world, after all she was just one very small snowflake in a big, overbearing world – what impact could she possibly have on anything? The presentation was called, Flakes, and it celebrated individuality and the beauty of being unique and reminded us that just like snowflakes, no two people are exactly alike – and that our differences are what makes us special.

And as I sat in the school gymnasium watching this silly little play, it occurred to me that we aren't all that different from snowflakes and that each and every one of us is unique and has a place in the world.

The Bible tells us many things about how we are all unique. It shows that each person is special and has been made in a wonderful way. Our responsive psalm today is a familiar one, and we are reminded in verse 13 and 14, *"For you created my inmost being you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well."* God intricately created each of us, emphasizing our unique design. We are reminded of the intentionality behind our creation, affirming our worth and the marvel of being individually crafted by God. God has created everyone with their own special qualities and gifts, making each one of us different from the others. Let's take a moment to consider what it means to be "fearfully and wonderfully made". And I will confess, I did have to do some research on this, so the thoughts are not solely mine.

Fearfully is a translation from the Hebrew word, *yārē*, but it isn't about being *scared* but rather about being in the presence of what is *sacred*. This type of "fear" is like the sense of awe or astonishment that overcomes us in a magnificent cathedral, staring out over a great range of mountains at sunrise or when holding a newborn. "Fearfully made" means there is mysterious awesomeness about calling an individual into being. Each of us is "crafted" by God in His image but also specially designed to be who we are, to fulfill the purpose God has planned for us. In Jeremiah 1:5, the prophet records a word that came to him from the Lord: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." The Lord had plans for Jeremiah before he was even born and so too for us as well.

This is also reinforced in verses 15-16 of Psalm 139, "My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came."

Even with the great medical advances of our modern times, the line between life and death is still a "fearful" mystery, and each birth remains a moment of awe. Someone, unlike anyone else has

entered or left this world. Being present in those moments means understanding the reverence and sanctity of being “fearfully” made.

“Wonderfully made,” is also translated from the Hebrew word, *pālā* and reinforces the notion of our individual craftsmanship and purpose. This phrase means we are created “distinct,” “set apart,” or “distinguished” from other creations. God’s Word from Genesis to Revelation is full of stories of people so different from each other and yet still seen, loved, and known by God. Even as we come to Christ and are being made like Him and built into the church, we don’t lose our individuality or distinction from one another. We simply learn to function in unity as one in Christ. “Wonderfully made,” indeed.

The phrase “fearfully and wonderfully made” highlights the intricate details of our creation. This means that each one of us has been crafted with purpose and care by the Creator. Nothing about our existence is random or coincidental. We are uniquely designed; every feature, trait, and characteristic was intentionally placed by God and we can take comfort in knowing that we are part of that marvelous creation. Understanding that we are beautifully made can fill us with confidence, knowing that we have inherent value and purpose.

One of the first things the Bible teaches us is that God knows us very well. He knows everything about us, even before we are born. This means that our uniqueness is part of His perfect plan. He made us exactly as He wanted, with our own looks, talents, and personalities. This shows how much He loves us and cares for us individually.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-31 talks about the unity and diversity of the body. Just like a body needs different parts to work well, our world needs different people to do different things. Everyone has their own role to play. So, being unique is very important. It allows us to work together and help each other in many ways.

Today is the first Sunday after Epiphany which is Baptism of our Lord Sunday marking Jesus’ baptism by John the Baptist as the start of His public ministry. Today is also a call for believers to remember our own baptisms and our commitments to live out our faith in a way that is pleasing to God. We recognize that all who believe, with all of our differences and uniqueness can be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are baptized in unity with God.

The Bible teaches us not to compare ourselves to others. It is easy to look at someone else and wish we were like them. But the Bible tells us to be happy with who we are. God made us just the way we are for a reason. When we understand this, we can start to appreciate our own unique qualities and use them to do good things.

We are encouraged to love others as they are. Since God made everyone unique, we should respect and love each person's differences. This means being kind and understanding to everyone, no matter how different they are from us. It is a way of showing God's love to others.

Being unique is a gift from God. He has made each one of us in a special way, with our own talents and qualities. We are part of His plan, and our differences help us work together and support one another. We should appreciate our own uniqueness and also love and respect the uniqueness of others. This way, we can live in harmony and show God's love to the world.

As we start a new year, on the calendar and within the church, let us remember our unique gifts and talents God has created us with, and recognize that together we are a community of faith that when we put our minds to it, we can accomplish great things in the name of our Lord.

Oh, and to come back to the school play, this quote was on the program for the play "snowflakes fall as silent reminders that even the smallest things can transform the world."

We are God's snowflakes with our individual talents and uniqueness. No two of us are the same and with our special personalities and gifts, together we can blanket the ground and transform the world. Amen.

Hymn 592

I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

Invitation to the Offering

God has commissioned us to spread the Good News that God is at work in the world and that we are loved and blessed in Jesus' name. We offer our gifts to God in thanksgiving for all this Good News.

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, we bring our gifts to you with grateful hearts. Use these gifts to spread your love in the world. And make us a blessing to all those whom we encounter, that the life of Christ lives in us. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Loving God,
you invite us to bring to God our doubts and fears,
our joys and concerns, our petitions and our praise.

We thank you that you are with us in every circumstance,
and that you walk with us through times of celebration and sorrow.
This day, we open our hearts to you,
knowing your Spirit prays in us with sighs too deep for words.

Where people are tired from work or weary with responsibility;
 where time and resources feel inadequate and costs overwhelming,
 send your Spirit with strength and renewal...

God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Where people are facing danger or living under duress;
 where people are persecuted for who they are or what they believe,
 send your Spirit with courage and comfort...

God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Where people have suffered the loss of love or purpose;
 and where love seems complicated and challenging,
 send your Spirit to bind up the brokenhearted...

God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Where people are ill and worry for their future;
 where people suffer pain or disability and long for healing;
 and where people face the limits to life and options have run out,
 send your Spirit with healing and hope...

God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Where people seek a reliable friend, a true comforter or wise adviser;
 where the lonely long for company to cheer them,
 and where isolation makes people doubt their value to others,
 send your Spirit of wisdom and companionship...

God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Where new life is beginning and hope dawns;
 where there is laughter and joy, healing and positive change,
 where there is good news to celebrate
 and opportunities open up for the year ahead,
 send your Spirit with rejoicing and gratitude...

God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

These things we pray in Jesus' name,

Amen

Benediction:

You are God's beloved.

Go in the assurance of this love, to engage the challenges God sets before us with confidence.

And may God who is the Creator, Christ and Spirit, go with you, and give you joy and peace, now and always.

And all God's people said, "Amen."

Sung Response: "Go Now In Peace"**Postlude**

The Life and Ministry of our Congregations, led by Rev. Jacob Lee:
Pastoral Charge of Rockway and First, North Pelham

<p>We acknowledge that we meet on the traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe</p>
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

***Next Sunday Service, January 18, 10:00 am at Rockway**

***Session meeting: Our joint session meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 7:00 pm at Rockway.**

Weekly activities:***Mondays - Tai Chi & Qigong Exercise**

Our Monday Tai Chi & Qigong classes continue each week, offering two options to support everyone's comfort and ability:

- **1:30–2:20 PM:** Mostly standing exercises
- **2:40–3:30 PM:** Mostly seated movements

Choose the group that suits you best. **All are welcome!**

If you have any questions, please speak with Joy or Rev. Jacob.

***Tuesdays – Quilting at North Pelham** - starting at 9:00 am

***Wednesdays - Bible Study:** Join us every Wednesday at 10:00 AM at North Pelham, led by our spiritual leader, Diane McMillan.

***Thursdays – Outreach Walking:** Join us for the Wellness Walk and Coffee Chat! We gather at 9:30 a.m. at Canada Games Park to start our walk together. After the walk, we meet at Rockway for a joyful chat over hot and fresh coffee at 10:45 am.

***Connect with your Minister Jacob for pastoral visits. Reach Jacob at jacoble0501@gmail.com or 289-213-2797.**