



Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge
Lent V, March 22, 2026
 Worship at Home

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Come, all who are searching, all who are tired, all who are thirsty.

P: We come, longing for living water.

L: Jesus says, "...the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14)

P: Lord, give us this living water.

L: Come just as you are—fully known and deeply loved.

P: We come to worship in spirit and in truth.

L: God is near to us and welcomes us.

P: We open our hearts to God's love.

L: Let us worship God.

P: Let us worship together.

Hymn 338

Let all things now living

PRAYERS OF APPROACH, CONFESSION and The Lord's Prayer

We are here, O God.

We have come just as we are. We come as people who think and feel and speak; people who laugh and hope; and also people who carry fear and uncertainty.

We come as people who sometimes feel ashamed or anxious; people who have felt judged or not good enough; people who have hurt others and ourselves at times.

And yet, we come because you know us fully, and you love us deeply. In this quiet moment, O God, help us to open our hearts to you. In the silence, hear our prayers, the words we cannot say out loud, and the feelings we carry within. (silence)

Hold us, O God. Awaken us, and gently restore us. Forgive us, and give us courage: courage to seek forgiveness, and courage to forgive others.

Fill us with your love: a love that heals, a love that frees, a love that stays with us always. We pray this in the name of Jesus, who teaches us to pray together, saying:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

Sharing The Peace of Jesus Christ

Hymn 700 **Praise our Maker, peoples of one family**

Children of God's Moment

Prayer for Understanding

Loving God,
 as we hear your Word, open our hearts to your voice. Help us to know that we are fully known
 and deeply loved by you. Let your truth become living water within us, renewing our minds and
 guiding our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Responsive Psalm 95:1-7

John 4: 5-42

SERMON

Fully Known and Deeply Loved

We are social beings. We live in connection with others, and because of that, we are profoundly
 influenced by what others think of us. When people affirm us, appreciate us, and accept us, we
 feel encouraged and lifted up. We feel that we belong. But when we are judged, misunderstood,
 or rejected—especially by those close to us—we can feel discouraged, lonely, and even ashamed.

Sometimes, without even noticing it, we begin to measure our worth by the opinions of others.
 We compare ourselves. We wonder if we are enough. And when we feel that we are not enough,
 our hearts grow tired. In those moments, we long for something deeper—a place of acceptance
 that does not change, a source of strength that does not depend on others.

This longing helps us understand the Samaritan woman in today's gospel story. She lived in a
 world where people were constantly judged and ranked. In Jesus' time, society was shaped by
 strong boundaries—religious, cultural, and moral. People were labelled as clean or unclean,
 worthy or unworthy, accepted or rejected.

There was also a deep and painful division between Jews and Samaritans. For many generations,
 they had lived with suspicion, resentment, and even hatred toward one another. They worshiped
 differently. They saw each other as wrong. And so, they avoided each other.

On top of this, the Samaritan woman carried her own personal burden. Her life story made her
 vulnerable to judgment. She had been married many times, and now she was living with a man
 who was not her husband. In her society, this would have brought shame and isolation. We can

imagine that she had learned to live carefully—avoiding people, avoiding conversations, protecting herself from more hurt.

And yet, one day, she comes to the well—and meets Jesus. This meeting is surprising in many ways. Jesus, a Jewish man, speaks to a Samaritan woman. Jesus, a teacher, speaks to someone considered morally questionable. Jesus crosses every boundary that people had built.

But what is even more surprising is how he speaks to her. He does not judge her. He does not avoid her. He does not define her by her past. Instead, he begins a conversation. He asks her for water. In that simple request, something begins to change. A door opens.

As they speak, Jesus tells her about “living water”—water that truly satisfies, water that becomes a spring of life within a person. And then he says these words: “The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth... God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

What does this mean? It means that God is not looking at us through human categories. God is not measuring us by our past. God is not comparing us with others. God is seeking a real relationship with us—a living, spiritual connection that comes from the heart. To worship in spirit and truth is to come to God as we are. Not pretending. Not hiding. Not trying to prove ourselves. It is to trust that God sees us fully—and still loves us completely.

Jesus sees something in this woman that she may not even see in herself. He sees her dignity. He sees her longing. He sees her capacity for life and faith. And gently, patiently, he draws it out of her. The woman responds. She does not turn away. She stays in the conversation. She asks questions. She listens. She wonders. She engages with Jesus.

And through that engagement, something begins to change within her. She receives the living water. Her shame no longer defines her. Her past no longer controls her. Her fear begins to loosen its hold. And then something beautiful happens. She leaves her water jar behind, goes back to her town, and begins to speak to others: “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done!”

This is the same woman who once avoided people. Now she is reaching out to them. This is the same woman who once lived under judgment. Now she is sharing good news. She becomes a witness. And through her, others come to Jesus. They begin to see for themselves. They begin to believe. They too begin to receive this living water. What a transformation.

What does this mean for us today? First, it reminds us that we are invited to engage with God. Sometimes we carry our worries, our regrets, and our questions quietly inside us. We may feel unsure about bringing them to God. We may feel that we are not ready, or not worthy.

But this story reminds us: God is already seeking us. Like Jesus at the well, God meets us where we are. But for that meeting to become life-giving, we need to stay in the conversation. We need

to open our hearts, speak honestly, and listen. Even a simple prayer can be a beginning: “God, here I am. Please meet me.”

Second, this story invites us to be open to new possibilities. Sometimes we become used to living within certain limits—old patterns, old fears, old ways of thinking. We may feel stuck. But Jesus opens new doors. The Samaritan woman could have walked away. She could have stayed within the boundaries she knew. But instead, she stepped into something new. And in doing so, she discovered a deeper life than she had imagined.

There may be new doors opening in our lives as well—small ones, quiet ones, unexpected ones. A new way of thinking. A new relationship. A new step of faith. When we trust God, even a small step can lead us into something greater.

Finally, this story calls us to reach out to others. There are many people around us who feel alone, judged, or tired. Some carry burdens that no one sees. The Samaritan woman took a risk. She went to people who may not have treated her kindly. She shared her experience openly. And through her courage, others found hope.

We may not always have perfect words. But we can share kindness. We can listen. We can be present. Sometimes, simply saying, “Come and see,” through our actions and our love, is enough. So, let us ask ourselves gently: Where might I be feeling stuck? Where is God inviting me into something new? Who might need a word of kindness or hope from me?

And as we reflect, let us hold onto this truth: God’s love for us does not change. Not because of what others think. Not because of what we have done. Not because of where we feel we stand. God’s love is steady. God’s love is deep. God’s love is always reaching toward us.

Like a well that never runs dry, God’s grace is always there for us. When we are thirsty—when we feel empty, tired, or unsure—we are invited to return to that well. To receive again. To be renewed again. And from that place, we are sent out—not as perfect people, but as people who have been met by love.

May God help us discover this living water in our own lives. May we drink deeply. And may we share that life with others. Amen.

Special music

Air on the G String (J.S. Bach)

Joy Joung

Hymn 682

Just as I am, without one plea

Invitation to the Offering

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Loving God,

you know us fully and love us deeply. Receive these gifts and our very lives. Let them become living water—bringing hope, healing, and love to others. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and for the People

Great and loving God, gentle and healing God, the One who awakens us and quenches our thirst, we pause to thank you. Thank you for reaching out to us, even when we are not looking for you. Thank you for knowing us completely and inside out, and still loving us deeply.

You are near to us, above us, beside us, and within us. You speak to us, guide us, and gently restore us. You give us peace, even in uncertain times. When we forget you, do not give up on us. Keep calling us back to the living water that gives us life.

With grateful hearts, we now pray for your world, our world.

We pray for a world in conflict, especially in the Middle East. We pray for the people of Iran and for those living in fear and uncertainty, and for those who carry worry for loved ones far away. We pray for Lebanon and for all places facing violence and loss. Bring your peace, O God: a peace rooted in justice, a peace that quiets anger and heals division.

We pray for a world where hatred still grows. We remember those facing racism, antisemitism, and exclusion. We pray for immigrants and refugees, and for all who feel unwelcome or unsafe. Soften hearts, O God. Open minds. Help us to see one another with compassion, not judgment.

We pray for those who struggle financially and feel they are not enough. Remind them of their worth in your eyes. Open doors and provide what they need. We pray for those who are sick, grieving, or tired. We continue to pray for Linda, Jason, and Christine as they mourn the loss of Jean. Strengthen Linda in her weariness. Bring comfort, peace, and hope to their hearts.

We also remember all who suffer quietly, known to you fully. In silence now, we name before you those we carry in our hearts. (silence)

Loving God, you know each of us fully, and you love us deeply. Let your peace rest upon us, and let your living water renew us. For peace we pray. For hope we pray. For your grace and mercy, we pray. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, who meets us, restores us, and sends us in love. Amen.

Hymn 651

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer

BENEDICTION

Go now, fully known and deeply loved by God. May the grace of Jesus Christ renew you, the love of God hold you, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit guide you to live with courage, to love with compassion, and to share living water with others. And all God's people said, "Amen."

Sung Response- Go Now In Peace
Postlude

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***Next Sunday Worship on March 29, 2026, at Rockway**

***Good Friday Walk & Service – April 3:** Join us for a meaningful Good Friday as we reflect on the Seven Last Words of Jesus on the Cross: Walk at Rotary Park (meet at Rockway) – 10:00 AM; Worship Service – 11:00 AM; and Fellowship to follow – pizza and vegetables will be provided. Please bring a dessert to share. All are welcome—walk, worship, and fellowship with us!

***Easter Breakfast & Service, April 5:** Join us for Easter Sunday at North Pelham! We'll begin with a delicious Eggs Benedict breakfast at 9:00 AM (Freewill offering to benefit Rose City Kids, supporting children and youth in Welland). Our Easter Worship Service follows at 10:00 AM. All are welcome! Please invite your family members and friends to celebrate Easter together.

***Monday Tai Chi & Qigong Continues!**

Join us on Mondays at North Pelham for our uplifting Tai Chi & Qigong classes! **1:30 PM** – Standing-focused group, **2:40 PM** – Seated-focused group. No experience needed—just come as you are and enjoy gentle movement, peaceful breathing, and joyful community. Everyone is welcome! Questions? Please speak to Joy.

***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.

***Steve Bell Concert – April 12:**

Knox Presbyterian Church (St. Catharines) will host Canadian singer-songwriter Steve Bell in concert on Sunday, April 12 at 7:00 PM (53 Church St.). Tickets: \$25 through the Knox church office (905-641-8868) or \$26 online at SteveBell.com. All are welcome.

***Prayer Requests and Pastoral Care:**

If you or someone you know is facing illness, grief, or any need, please contact your elder or Rev. Jacob: **Phone: 289-213-2797; Email: jacoblee0501@gmail.com** We are here to pray and care for one another. “Carry one another’s burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)