



Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge
2nd Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, June 7, 2026
Worship at Home

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Rejoice in God's goodness, people of God!

P: We will sing praises to our God.

L: God loves righteousness and justice;

P: We will serve God faithfully.

L: The earth is full of God's steadfast love.

All: We come to worship and offer our love and loyalty

Hymn 324

Great is Thy Faithfulness

PRAYERS OF APPROACH, CONFESSION and The Lord's Prayer

Creator, Christ and Spirit,
 you are overflowing with love,
 infinite in kindness, incomparable in glory
 and the source of all wisdom and knowledge.
 In you, all things work together for good and are redeemed.
 Your presence breaks into our lives in transformative ways
 and you touch us with wonder.
 In response to your goodness and glory,
 we offer you thanks with our prayers,
 praise with our hearts,
 and honour with our lives,
 this day and every day, now and always.

In confidence of your grace and kindness, O God,
 and out of a desire to begin again
 with you and one another, we confess to you our sins:

God of mercy,
 whose loving kindness endures forever:
 we confess that often we have failed
 to receive and give love;
 to care for others as we care for ourselves;
 to pardon and to accept pardon.
 We remember good intentions that were not put into actions;
 harsh words said in anger; selfish purposes that caused pain and

persistent pride that would not yield.
Hear us, O Lord, as in this silence, we make our confession to you...

Fill us again with your Holy Spirit, so that our worship may be sincere, our faith may be active, and our lives may become signs of your healing love in the world. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught 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.

God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
Know that you are forgiven and be at peace with God, with yourself and with one another.

Sharing The Peace of Jesus Christ

Hymn 685 **How Firm a Foundation**

Children of God's Moment

Prayer for Understanding

God of wisdom, by your Holy Spirit, open our minds, that as the Scriptures are read and your Word is proclaimed, we may be led into your truth, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Psalm 23
Isaiah 43:2-7; James 1:2-12; Romans 5: 1-8

SERMON Hard Fought Hallelujahs

It seems like when I am asked to prepare a worship service, I hear a song that sparks an idea and today is no exception. But I feel somewhat affirmed in my decision because last week Rev. Martin Wehrmann referred to “music as something that can't be seen or touched – but it can express what's inside us!” Music is full of movement and meaning, and powerful messages and can have the ability to heal and give perspective to life's situations. Grammy awarding winning Christian artist, Brandon Lake, recorded a song called, Hard Fought Hallelujah which candidly expresses the struggles and doubts that accompany a genuine spiritual journey, highlighting the idea that true faith is often forged in adversity. If you get the worship at home resource emailed, I've included a YouTube link for you to listen to it sometime.

<https://youtu.be/72DWAaggLh4w?si=Q3nyF7P911mbfHQ>

There's a phrase I've heard many people say when they look back on their lives: *"I didn't understand it then... but now I see why I had to go through it."*

Maybe you've said that yourself. Maybe you're still waiting to say it. Because sometimes the road we walk feels confusing, painful, or uncertain. And yet, when we look back, we can often see how God was quietly, faithfully guiding us — through the things we never would have chosen willingly for ourselves, but God is the master of curve balls - of putting us in situations that force us to confront challenges and in many cases to grow in our faith.

Scripture doesn't hide this reality and is full of this truth.

The familiar Psalm 23 reminds us:

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me." Not *if* we walk through the valley — but *when*. Valleys are part of life. But so is the Shepherd who walks beside us and we never walk alone.

Isaiah 43 says:

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you... when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned." Notice again — *when*, not *if*. God never promises a life free from deep waters or fire. He promises His presence in the middle of them.

James 1 tells us:

"Consider it joy when you face trials... because the testing of your faith produces perseverance." Trials don't just happen to us — God uses them to shape us and our faith is not living, if it isn't growing.

And Paul says in Romans 5 that

"Suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope." God is forming something in us that could not be formed any other way. We don't see it in the moment, but in time, the lesson becomes apparent and it is this hope that we can share with others along the way.

These passages aren't telling us to pretend hardship is easy. They're telling us that God is doing something in us *through* the hardship.

Brandon Lake captures this beautifully in his song *Hard Fought Hallelujah*.

There's a line that says:

"Faith isn't proven like gold till it's been through the fire."

That's not just poetry — that's Scripture. Gold is refined by heat. Faith is refined by hardship. Not because God delights in our struggle, but because He delights in who we become through it. Life brings seasons that test us, stretch us, and sometimes break us open. And yet, somehow, God uses those very seasons to shape us into people of deeper faith, deeper compassion, and deeper hope. Each of us here today, is stronger and farther in our faith journeys than we were 20 years

ago, 10 years ago, 5 years ago or maybe just last week. We struggle, we overcome and we grow to become better equipped to do God's work.

Later in the song Lake sings:

“God, You’ve been gracious, faithful whatever I’m feeling or facing.”

That’s the testimony of every believer who has walked with God long enough to look back and say, *“I didn’t see it then... but I see it now.”*

Steve Harvey, the well-known entertainer and host of *Family Feud*, once reflected on his life story. He talked about the years of homelessness, rejection, and hardship he endured before success ever came. And he said something profound:

“Everything in my life had to happen in the order it did for me to get to where I am today.”

He wasn’t celebrating the pain — he was recognizing the purpose. He could see how each chapter, even the difficult ones, shaped him into the man he became.

Sometimes you go through what you go through in order to get where you are today. Think about the people you admire most — the ones with wisdom, gentleness, or courage. Almost always, their character was shaped by something difficult.

In society we see this all the time.

- A recovering addict becomes a mentor to others because they know the road firsthand.
- A widow starts a support group because she remembers what loneliness felt like.
- A young person who struggled with mental health becomes an advocate for others who feel unseen.

These people didn’t choose their hardships. But God used their stories to bring healing, compassion, and strength — not just to themselves, but to others.

Your story is no different. There are chapters you would never have written for yourself. But God has been writing redemption into them all along.

God doesn’t waste anything. Not a tear. Not a season. Not a struggle.

I am a Library Technician at Niagara College, and throughout the year, I work with many college students. Often, I have found myself being a voice of encouragement to someone struggling to succeed, sometimes unknowingly – I was told one time, that because of something I said, a student who was contemplating dropping out of college, decided not to. I have no idea what I said or who the student was, but at that moment, whatever that student needed I apparently said. Now, I don’t know if I was doing God’s work or not – perhaps - but what I do know is that God put me in a time and place to do something meaningful for that person.

If you look back on your own life, you may see moments that didn’t make sense at the time — but now you can trace the fingerprints of God.

And if you’re in a season right now where you *can’t* see it yet... If you’re in the valley... If you’re in the deep waters... If you’re in the fire...

Then hear this clearly:

God is with you. God is for you. God is carrying you. And God is shaping you into someone stronger, deeper, and more faithful than you were before.

You may not understand the “why” today. But one day, like Steve Harvey, like so many saints before you, you may look back and say:

“Everything had to happen in the order it did... because God was leading me somewhere.”

Think of the disciples in the storm. Jesus didn’t prevent the storm — He joined them in the boat. Think of Daniel in the lions’ den. God didn’t keep him out of the den — He shut the lions’ mouths inside it. Think of the Israelites in the wilderness. God didn’t teleport them to the Promised Land — He walked with them day by day.

A “hard fought hallelujah” is not a cheerful, easy praise. It’s the kind of praise that comes from someone who has wrestled, questioned, endured, and still chooses to trust God.

It’s the hallelujah of someone who says: “I didn’t want this season, but God met me in it.” “I didn’t understand the journey, but God carried me through.” “I’m not the same person I was — and that’s grace.”

Your hallelujah today might be quiet. It might be trembling. It might be offered through tears. But it is precious to God.

Because it’s real. Because it’s honest. Because it’s been fought for.

Sometimes we’re so focused on what we’ve lost, what we’ve endured, or what we regret that we miss the new thing God is growing right under our feet.

Maybe the new thing is healing. Maybe it’s courage. Maybe it’s a softened heart. Maybe it’s a new calling. Maybe it’s simply the realization that God never left you.

Whatever it is, God is not finished with you. Your story is still unfolding. And the God who carried you this far will carry you the rest of the way.

God’s faithfulness is not proven by the absence of trouble. It’s proven by His presence in the middle of it.

Psalm 23 doesn’t end in the valley. Isaiah 43 doesn’t end in the fire. James doesn’t end in the trial. Romans 5 doesn’t end in suffering.

They all end in **hope**.

Because the God who walks with you is also the God who leads you forward.

So today, whatever you’re facing, may you hold onto this truth:

God has been gracious. God has been faithful. — He is with you each step of the way.

And may your own “hard fought hallelujah” rise — not because life is easy, but because God is good and God loves you!

Amen.

Hymn 330

O God, our help in ages past

Invitation to the Offering

God offers us a future in Christ Jesus, sometimes through comfort and sometimes through challenge. We present our gifts to God in gratitude for God’s faithfulness to us in every situation.

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

God of healing and hope, you offer us what we need in Christ Jesus, not always what we want. Bless our gifts and use them to meet needs in lives touched by the outreach of our church. Give each of us courage to reach out in Jesus’ name whenever you call. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and for the People

God of our past and our future, we come with grateful hearts, trusting that you walk with us through all the seasons of our lives.

You create a future for us, calling each of us to use our individual abilities and opportunities to make a difference.

Thank you that we all have a place and a purpose in your world.

Hear us now as we pray for the world in its deep and diverse needs:

We pray today for those who face danger and despair in these times:

We remember before you those living with hunger, and all those caught up in unrest and violence beyond their control.

We pray for all those working to relieve suffering in these lives and bring justice and peace. And we pray for all those who work to bring healing and comfort and agencies that offer support and care to those who suffer.

We pray for all those facing fear or frustration, wrestling with sorrow or discouragement in any area of their lives

We pray for your church in this place, and around the world.

Guide it so that it is clear in its proclamation, gracious in its service, bold in its advocacy and humble in its discernment.

Especially, we pray for the General Assembly that begins its deliberations today.

Give its moderator, commissioners and all who serve the Assembly a strong sense of your guidance.

Finally, within our church families, we remember those who are sick or weak, those in hospitals, long-term care, or at home, and those who can no longer worship with us in person. May they know that they are loved, remembered, and held in your compassionate care.

We pray especially for the Aulph and Stewart families, as they grieve the loss of a husband, father and grandfather. Give them strength, comfort, and peace and help them to feel your healing presence.

In a moment of silence, we remember those whose names and needs we carry personally in our hearts. (silence)

Holy Spirit of Jesus,
may our prayers become love in action. Send us out to comfort the grieving, encourage the weary, care for the lonely, and build bridges where there is division. Fill our lives with the deep and steady love of Christ, so that others may see your grace and hope through us. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, we pray. Amen.

Hymn 651

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer

BENEDICTION

And now, beloved in Christ, as you go into the week ahead, may you know the God who walks beside you, the Christ who carries you, and the Spirit who strengthens you. May the One who has brought you through every valley continue to guide your steps and offer you hope. 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 Service, June 14, at 10:00 am at North Pelham**

*** A cleaning bee** will take place at Rockway on Tuesday, June 16 from 9AM - 12. Everyone welcome.

***North Pelham Cemetery Board is looking for new board members** - if interested, please contact Asa Hansler for more information 905-892-2098 – The North Pelham Cemetery is not affiliated with North Pelham Church, so community members are also welcome.

***Magazine Donations:** Thank you for all the donations, the amount received will help us out for a while and have already been used for some recent projects! At this time, no more magazines are needed. *“Thank you again from myself, and our mental health program!” Kristen Young*

***Monday Tai Chi & Qigong:** Tai Chi & Qigong classes are held every Monday at North Pelham. The first class begins at 1:30 p.m. and the second class at 2:30 p.m. Everyone is warmly welcome to join for gentle movement, peaceful breathing, and joyful fellowship. There is no fee to attend, as Rockway and North Pelham are pleased to support this caring ministry for both our church members and the wider community.

***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.

***North Pelham Hall Open House, June 28:**

The North Pelham Youth Association welcomes our community to an open house at North Pelham Hall on Sunday, June 28th from 12-5 p.m. Drop in after church for a BBQ to celebrate another step in their accessibility renovations. All are welcome!

***Celebrating with Christine & Jason:** We are delighted to share that Christine Stewart and Jason Hannigan will be married on August 1, 2026, in Hamilton, Ontario. As they prepare for this joyful day, they warmly invite our church family to join them for their Stag & Doe on Saturday, June 20 at 7:00 PM at the Wellandport Community Centre. Let us keep Christine and Jason in our prayers as they begin this new chapter of life together, and may God bless them with love, joy, and peace.

***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)