



Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge
9th Sunday after Pentecost, July 26, 2026
Worship at Home

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We come before God, not trusting in our strength, status, or achievements.

P: We come as God's beloved children, equal in grace and precious in God's sight.

L: Christ calls us away from comparison and division, into the freedom of humility and love.

P: Teach us, O God, to see ourselves and one another through the wisdom of the cross.

L: "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:31)

All: Let us worship God, our wisdom, our strength, and our hope.

Hymn 435 **All things bright and beautiful**

Prayers of Approach and Confession

God of grace and compassionate love,
 we come before you as your people. We gather not because we are wise, powerful, or important
 by the world's standards, but because you have called us through Jesus Christ.

We praise you because our worth is not measured by our achievements, our wealth, appearance,
 strength, or by what others think of us. Our worth is found in your faithful love. You have made
 us in your image and called us your beloved children.

Yet, gracious God, we confess that we often follow the values of the world. We compare
 ourselves with others. We compete for attention and approval. We judge people by their abilities,
 status, appearance, or achievements.

Forgive us for trusting in human wisdom instead of your truth, and for forgetting that in Christ
 we are one body, united by grace. Hear us, O God, as now we confess our personal sins, fears,
 and insecurities in silence. (pause)

Merciful God, hear our prayers. Surround us with your forgiveness and remind us that we are
 known, loved, and precious in your sight. By your Holy Spirit, renew our hearts. Free us from
 pride, fear, and comparison. Teach us to see ourselves and others through the compassionate eyes
 of Christ.

Make us one in heart and purpose, so that your grace may be revealed through our life together.
 We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our wisdom, strength, and hope, 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.

Passing the Peace of Jesus Christ

Hymn 256 (R) **The old rugged cross**

Prayer for Understanding

God of wisdom,

open our hearts to your Word. Help us see our true worth in your love and recognize the value of every person through Jesus Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Responsive Psalm 62: 5-12

1 Corinthians 1: 10-31

Sermon

How God Measures Us

How do we usually measure a person's worth? By how smart they are, or how much education they have? By what position they hold, or how much money they've made? By how strong or healthy they are, or how many people know and respect them?

These are not questions we usually ask in church. But they are questions that shape the way people are measured in the world. We are judged by our education, career, income, appearance, health, and achievements. We are judged by how productive we are, how independent we are, and how well we seem to fit in.

Because of this, many of us begin to measure ourselves the same way. We feel good about ourselves when people praise us, need us, or notice what we have done. But when we feel overlooked, forgotten, or unable to do what we once did, we begin to question our worth.

This can become a kind of spiritual prison. It has no iron bars. It is built from comparison, fear, insecurity, and the need for approval. And it keeps us from seeing ourselves and others as God sees us.

This question becomes especially important as we grow older. What happens when our health changes? What happens when we can no longer work, drive, volunteer, or care for others as we once did? Does our value become smaller because our abilities become limited?

The answer of Scripture is clear: No. Our value does not decrease when our strength decreases. Our worth does not disappear when our independence changes. We remain beloved children of God.

So today, let us ask an important question: how do we measure our value and worth? The answer shapes how we see ourselves. It shapes our peace, our joy, and our relationships. It also shapes how we see and treat other people. But before we can answer well, we need to look at what gets in the way.

In our reading, Paul writes to the church in Corinth. Corinth was a large and diverse city. People from many cultures, occupations, and social classes had become part of that church. They were different in many ways, but they were united by one confession: Jesus Christ is Lord.

Yet a serious problem had developed. The Corinthians had split into groups. Some said, "I belong to Paul." Others said, "I belong to Apollos." Still others said, "I belong to Cephas," meaning Peter. Paul had heard of these divisions from members of Chloe's household, and he responds sharply: "Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

The answer is obvious. Christ is not divided. The church does not belong to Paul, or Apollos, or Peter, or any human leader. It belongs to Jesus Christ. But the Corinthians had brought the values of their society into the church. They were competing with one another, each group trying to prove it was wiser or more important than the others.

Paul calls them back to the way of Jesus. Although the church lives in the world and is called to love the world, we must not bring the world's spirit of competition and division inside it. We must not measure one another by money, education, power, appearance, age, or ability. These things describe parts of our lives, but they do not determine our worth before God.

Some people have more education than others. Some have greater wealth, stronger health, or more influence. But before God, every person is of equal and immeasurable value. Our abilities may differ, but God's love for us does not. Our achievements may differ, but God's grace is offered to all. Our circumstances may differ, but each of us bears the image of God.

This is how Jesus calls the church to live: seeing every person as someone God loves deeply. When the church lives this way, it shows the world a better way to measure a human life — one not built on money, status, or appearance, but on the dignity God has given to every person.

Paul does not stop with the problem of division. He asks the Corinthians to look deeper, at why people feel such a need to prove they are better than others. He writes, "Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth."

Many Christians in Corinth were not considered important by the standards of their day. Perhaps they had often been overlooked. So once inside the church, some of them tried to gain the importance they had been denied outside it. This can happen to us too. Why do we sometimes crave status, attention, or control? Why do we compare ourselves to others, or feel we must

prove ourselves? Often, beneath those desires, there is a deep insecurity. Deep inside, we wonder: Am I good enough? Do I still matter? Will people remember me? Am I loved?

The more deeply we trust that we are fully loved by God, the less we need to prove that we are better than anyone else. We could live with greater peace. And we would become more gracious toward others — wanting them to know the same love and peace God has given us. Much of the pride and judgment in our world grows from this kind of fear and insecurity.

So what should we do? We begin by honestly bringing our insecurity to God, without hiding it or pretending it isn't there. Jesus invites us to bring our fears, our wounds, and our doubts into his compassionate love. And Paul tells us that this healing begins at the cross.

Paul writes, "The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." To the world, Jesus on the cross looked weak and defeated. He had no army, no office, no wealth. He did not use power to escape the cross or answer violence with violence. By the world's measuring stick, the cross looked like failure.

But God's wisdom is different from the world's wisdom. On the cross, Jesus showed the strength of self-giving love. He refused to answer hatred with hatred. He did not abandon the way of love, even as others rejected and wounded him. And that is why the cross teaches us to measure things differently:

True power is not the power to control others — it is the courage to love. True wisdom is not proving we are better than others — it is making room for others. True wealth is not holding tightly to what we have — it is sharing our bread with the hungry. True greatness is not receiving praise — it is serving with humility and kindness.

Following Jesus does not mean seeking suffering, or silently accepting injustice. It means choosing truth, courage, and love, even when that path is hard. And our worth does not come from how well we manage to follow him. It comes from God's generous, never-ending love. Because we are loved, we are free to love. Because we are forgiven, we are free to forgive. Because our worth is secure in God, we do not need to push anyone else down in order to lift ourselves up.

Paul ends this chapter by saying, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." Our confidence is not in our own goodness, strength, or achievements — it is in God. Every gift we have comes from God. Even our weaknesses can be brought to him and transformed into wisdom and compassion.

As we grow older, we may do less than we once did. Our bodies grow weaker. Our memories change. We may need to receive help after years of helping others. But none of this makes us less valuable. God does not love us because of what we produce, or because we are independent, or because we are strong. God loves us because love is God's very nature. At every age, in every condition of life, we belong to God.

So let us stop measuring ourselves by the standards of the world. Let us stop comparing our lives to the lives of others. Let us receive our worth as a gift from God — and let us see every person, the strong and the weak, the young and the old, the familiar and the stranger, as precious in God's sight.

Jesus Christ is our wisdom, our strength, and our hope. May we follow his way, trust his love, and show the world a better way to measure a human life. Amen.

Hymn 231 **When I survey the wondrous cross**

Invitation to the Offering

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God,
receive these gifts as signs of our love and gratitude. Help us use them to honour the worth of every person and share your compassionate love. Ame

Prayer of Thanksgiving and for the People

Thank you, O God. You have given us life and created us from the abundance of your love. You have made us in your image and called us your beloved children.

The world often measures people by wealth, status, appearance, strength, achievement, or success. But you do not measure us this way. Our worth is beyond measure in your sight. You love us faithfully and compassionately, whatever our circumstances, and whatever others may think of us. For your gracious and unconditional love, we thank you.

Loving God, the whole world belongs to you, and every life is precious in your sight. We pray for those who struggle to recognize their value because they have suffered abuse, neglect, rejection, discrimination, or loneliness. Surround them with people who will listen, protect, encourage, and care for them. Remind them that they are not forgotten, and that their lives matter deeply to you.

We pray for all who suffer in our world today: those who have lost homes and loved ones to disaster or to war. We cry out to you for mercy, comfort, and peace, and we ask you to strengthen all who bring help, healing, and hope to those in need.

We pray for those struggling with anxiety, loneliness, or depression, and for those exhausted from caring for others.

We pray for older adults who feel the weight of changing health, a weakening body, or a loss of independence. Remind them that their value does not decrease when their strength decreases. Assure them that they remain known, loved, and precious in your sight.

We pray for young people searching for purpose and belonging, and for all who seek new meaning in this season of their lives.

The needs are many, O God, and each of us carries burdens that others may not see. Renew us by your grace. Remind us that we are loved as we are. Help us receive care with humility, and offer care with compassion.

We now take a moment of silence to place before you the people and situations we carry most deeply in our hearts today. (silence)

Merciful God, hear our silent prayers. We pray for Don Hallett, recovering from surgery and now facing further tests tomorrow after a concerning finding on his liver. Calm his fears, and give him courage for what lies ahead. We also lift up his wife, Marilyn, and their daughter, who carry their own struggles at this time. Watch over this whole family, and surround them with your abiding presence.

We pray for Barbara Setford as she lives with declining eyesight and the worries that come with it. Fill her heart with peace, and help us surround her with tender care.

We also pray for Robert Lampman as he continues his medical treatments. Ease his pain, renew his courage, and surround him with your abiding presence.

O God, bring healing where there is illness, comfort where there is grief, courage where there is fear, and hope where life feels uncertain. Teach us to recognize the worth of every person we meet.

May our words bring encouragement, our actions show compassion, and our life together reveal that every person is precious in your sight. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our wisdom, our strength, and our hope. Amen.

Hymn 626 **Lord of all power**

BENEDICTION

May the love of God remind you of your worth, the grace of Jesus Christ guide you in love, and the Holy Spirit unite you in peace. 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 Service, August 2, at 10:00 am at Rockway**

***Tai Chi & Qigong – Summer Break:** Tai Chi & Qigong classes are now on summer break for July and August. Classes will resume on Monday, September 7, at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

***Wednesday Bible Study – Summer Break:** Wednesday Bible Study is now on summer break and will resume on Wednesday, September 9, at 10:00 a.m. at North Pelham. Thank you to Diane and all who shared in this time of study and fellowship.

***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.

***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)