Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge
22nd Sunday after Pentecost, October 25, 2026
Worship at Home

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We come with thankful hearts and painful memories, with today's concerns and tomorrow's questions.
P: We come to worship God, whose faithful love holds us through every season.
L: We remember those who listened, visited, and helped us carry our burdens.
P: For every kindness received and every burden shared, we give God thanks.
L: Whether we have much or little, Christ gives us strength for today. (Philippians 4:12–13)
P: We trust Christ to teach us contentment through his faithful love.
L: And the God who meets our needs today will be with us tomorrow. (Philippians 4:19)
All: With gratitude, contentment, and hope, we worship God. Amen.

Hymn 457 **Now thank we all our God**

Prayers of Approach and Confession
We are here, loving God.
We come with memories of yesterday, the needs of today, and questions about tomorrow. Through every season, your compassionate love holds us. We come to receive your love.

Awaken our hearts to your presence. Strengthen us where we are weary. Help us recognize where we need to change, and guide us in the choices before us. Teach us gratitude for the love that has carried us, contentment through Christ's strength today, and trust in your faithful care for tomorrow.

You know our grief, our worries, and our fears. Receive us with compassion, and quiet our hearts so that we may hear your voice. Hear us now, O God, as we open our hearts to you in silence. (silence)

Merciful God, forgive us for the times we overlook your gifts, let worry steal our peace, turn away from another person's need, or allow our frustration to become hurtful words and actions. Give us courage to take responsibility, humility to seek forgiveness, and grace to make things right where we can. Help us receive your forgiveness and share your compassionate love with others. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who walks beside us, and together we pray as he taught us, 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 746 **What a friend we have in Jesus**

Prayer for Illumination
Loving God,
open our hearts to your Word. By your Spirit, help us remember your love with gratitude, receive Christ's strength today, and trust your care for tomorrow. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
Responsive Psalm 103: 1-13
Philippians 4: 10-20, Romans 16: 1-16

Sermon **Held in Every Season**

When you look back over your life, what comes to mind? Perhaps you remember people who loved you, chances you were given, and moments that still make you smile. But there may also be painful memories: someone you miss, a choice you regret, or a loss that changed everything.

Then there is today, with its worries and its to-do lists. And beyond today lies tomorrow, with questions we cannot answer yet. So how do we find peace through all of it?

Our readings point to three gifts that grow in us through Christ: gratitude as we look back, contentment as we live today, and trust as we face tomorrow. And all three grow as we find that God's compassionate love holds us in every season.

Paul knew hard seasons. When he wrote to the church in Philippi, he was in prison. His freedom was gone, and his future was uncertain. He knew hunger and hardship. He knew what it was to depend on other people. Yet his letter is full of joy. How could that be? Paul tells us himself: Christ gave him strength, and people cared for him. His peace grew from that friendship with Christ and from the loving community around him.

First, we can look back with gratitude for the love that has carried us. Paul is glad that the Philippians have shown their concern for him again. He remembers that they helped him in the early days of his work, and more than once. He says, "You were kind to share my distress." What a lovely way to describe Christian care! We cannot always take away another person's pain. But we can help carry its weight.

Notice something else. Paul says he is not chasing the gift itself. What he treasures is what the gift says about the Philippians' hearts. He calls it a fragrant offering to God. In other words, a kindness given in love is never wasted. God receives it, and it blesses both the giver and the receiver.

Think of your own life. Who helped you when things were hard? Who listened without hurrying you? Who stood beside you when your strength was low? A visit, a hot meal, or a quiet talk can carry a person through a terrible week. Some of those people are gone now, and remembering them may bring thanks and tears together. God welcomes both.

Some memories are still too painful, and we may find it hard to see any good in them. Gratitude cannot be forced. So we can simply tell God, "Lord, this still hurts. Please hold me here." In time, we may notice a kindness we had almost forgotten, or a person who stayed. Then we begin to see that our story holds more than sorrow. It holds grace.

Second, we can receive Christ's strength for today. Remembering yesterday's care helps us face the present. Paul says he has learned to be content, whether he has plenty or very little. Notice the word "learned." Contentment did not come to him overnight. It grew slowly, as he received help from others and found that Christ stayed faithful when everything else changed.

Then Paul says the verse many of us know: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Paul is not promising that we can do anything we please. He is saying that Christ gives strength to live through times of plenty and times of need. That is a promise to hold close.

Some days, strength means finishing a big task. Other days, it means getting dressed, making a meal, getting to an appointment, or answering the phone. Sometimes it means asking for help. Christ meets us in those ordinary moments.

For many of us, life looks different than it once did. Our bodies tire sooner. Our homes are quieter. We miss the person who used to sit beside us, and we may wonder what we still have to give. Contentment does not ask us to pretend those losses are small. We can grieve them, and we can still ask questions, seek help, and work to make things better. Through it all, we can hold on to this truth: our worth rests in God's love. You are precious to God when you are busy and active. You are just as precious when you need rest or someone else's care.

So perhaps we can begin each morning with a short prayer: "Jesus, help me receive your love and the strength I need today." Then we can look for small gifts close at hand: a familiar voice, a warm cup of tea, a bit of sunshine, a neighbour's kindness. These will not fix every problem. But they remind us that Christ is with us in the life we are living now.

Third, we can face tomorrow with trust in God's care. Paul writes, "My God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." He does not say this lightly. He has been hungry himself. His confidence rests on God's goodness, and he places his friends in the hands of the God whose care they have already helped him know.

We have questions about tomorrow too. What will happen to my health? Will I have enough to live on? Who will care for me? What lies ahead for my family? What will become of our church? God receives these worries with compassion. And trust can grow even while we are afraid. We

can pray, make wise plans, accept help, and take the next step without seeing the whole road. The God who meets us today will be there tomorrow.

And often, God's care reaches us through other people. Throughout his ministry, Paul received care from many people, and Romans 16 gives us a glimpse of that loving community. At first, we may wonder what this long list of names has to say to us. But behind each name is someone Paul remembers with love. He thanks Phoebe for her help to so many. He thanks Prisca and Aquila, who risked their lives for him. He remembers Mary, who worked so hard. And he speaks warmly of the mother of Rufus, who had been like a mother to him too.

Our own churches have names and faces behind every act of care: people who cook, make phone calls, offer rides, look after the building, lead our music, pray quietly, and notice when someone is missing. Through these simple acts, we become the heart, hands, and feet of Jesus.

So what can we do this week? Here is one simple thing. Think of one person who helped you through a hard time. Then call them or write them a note, and say thank you. If that person has died, say thank you in prayer, and perhaps share their story with a family member or a friend. After all, one purpose of Paul's letter to the Philippians was to thank them for their loving support. This is how gratitude grows. And it lets someone else know that they are remembered and loved.

Perhaps today you are carrying a painful memory, a hard present, or a worry about tomorrow. Christ welcomes you with compassion, just as you are. Bring him your thanks and your sorrow, your hopes and your questions.

Looking back, may we see the love that has carried us. Living today, may we receive the strength Christ gives. Looking ahead, may we trust that God will meet us there. Whatever this week brings, you are precious to God. Christ walks beside you, and the Spirit will help you take the next step.

May God's faithful love give us thankful hearts, strength for today, and hope for tomorrow. Amen.

Hymn 102 (R) **Day By Day**

Invitation to the Offering
Doxology
Prayer of Dedication
Loving God,
with gratitude for your faithful care, we offer these gifts and ourselves. Use us as the hands and feet of Christ, to share his love, ease the burdens of others, and bring hope for tomorrow. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and for the People

As we remember the past, hold our grief with tenderness, and help us recognize the love that has carried us. We thank you for the people who have cared for us, who listened, visited, and stood beside us.

As we live today, receive our struggles with compassion. Teach us contentment through Christ's sustaining strength.

As we face tomorrow, we place our hopes and worries in your care. Help us trust that you will meet us there. Thank you for the peace and hope that grow through your faithful love. Open our hearts to those who are hurting. Help us walk beside them, share their tears, and ease their burdens, just as you have cared for us.

Held in your love, we bring before you the needs of your world. We pray for all suffering from war, violence, and abuse. Protect those in danger, bring an end to cruelty, and lead those in power toward justice and peace.

Be near those affected by the explosion and fire at a Canadian Forces base in Alberta, and those whose livelihoods are threatened by tariffs. Support all struggling to afford food, housing, or the care they need.

We pray for those living with mental health challenges, those caring for loved ones, and those facing a difficult diagnosis or nearing life's end. Meet them in their fear with compassion, and provide strength through caring people and practical help.

Hold close those who grieve, especially Pat and Tim, Janice and Jessica, Arden, and Susan. As they adjust to life without their loved ones beside them, comfort them with cherished memories and the assurance of your everlasting love. Strengthen Don Hallett as he recovers from surgery and works on walking again. Grant him patience, steady progress, and peace throughout his recovery.

In silence, we bring you the people and concerns we carry in our hearts. (silence)

Faithful God, give us strength for today and hope for tomorrow. Help us receive your care and share it by easing one another's burdens. Through Jesus Christ, and in the comforting presence of your Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Hymn 324 Great is thy faithfulness

BENEDICTION
May God's love fill you with gratitude, Christ's presence give you strength for today, and the Holy Spirit lead you into tomorrow with hope. 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, November 1, 10:00 am at North Pleham**

***Mitten Tree Ministry** – Sharing Warmth and Love:
Our Mitten Tree will be up at Rockway from November 8 to December 6! Everyone is warmly invited to donate mittens, hats, scarves, and socks for Community Care of West Niagara. Your generous gifts will help bring warmth, comfort, and hope to neighbours in need this winter. Thank you for sharing God's love through these simple acts of kindness!

***Tai Chi – Every Monday:** Tai Chi classes continue every Monday as part of our church's community outreach ministry. Classes begin at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

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

***Outreach - Thursday 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 needs prayer or pastoral care, please contact your elder or Rev. Jacob at 289-213-2797 or jacoblee0501@gmail.com.