

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay
<http://standrewspres-tbay.ca> - Minister: Rev. Joyce Yanishewski
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost - September 21, 2025

Call to Worship

Praise the name of the Lord.

Blessed be the name of the Lord!

From the rising of the sun to its setting, praise God.

We will bless God's holy name now and evermore.

The glory of the Lord is high above the heavens,
but God raises up the poor and needy on the earth.

So we will sing God's praise.

Let us worship God.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Worship Planner. Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost. September 21, 2025. Year C.

Prayer of Adoration and Confession

God our Creator,

You sustain your creation as the source of life for every precious thing.

You have given us more than we could ever earn or deserve,
and so we offer you our love and loyalty, for without you, we would not be.

Receive our worship this day, O God.

Speak to us in the sounds and silence of this hour,
and amaze us with your promise of new life revealed in Jesus Christ,
and your power at work in us and among us through the Spirit. Amen.

Generous God,

**You have enriched us with life worth living,
but we confess we often squander your good gifts.**

**We have wasted our time and energy,
but held tightly to things we think we need.**

**Forgive our foolish priorities
and those times we overlooked the needs of others.**

**Inspire us to live more generously,
trusting your goodness to sustain us always. Amen.**

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Assurance of Forgiveness

Hear the Good News:

We have not been faithful in all things.

But our God still welcomes us with patience and kindness.

Therefore, as people of God's promise, let us receive forgiveness,
embrace hope, and faithfully respond, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Glory to God! We are forgiven. We have hope. We will respond. Amen.

~ posted on the **Pacific Pilgrim** website. <https://pacificpilgrim.com/>

Scripture Reading 1 Timothy 2:1-7

¹⁻³ The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live.

⁴⁻⁷ He wants not only us but *everyone* saved, you know, everyone to get to know the truth we've learned: that there's one God and only one, and one Priest-Mediator between God and us—Jesus, who offered himself in exchange for everyone held captive by sin, to set them all free. Eventually the news is going to get out. This and this only has been my appointed work: getting this news to those who have never heard of God, and explaining how it works by simple faith and plain truth.

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Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. **Thanks be to God.**

Message Pray every way you know how

I do not have to tell you that we live in tumultuous times. World events have us shaking our heads and maybe even shaking in our boots. There seems to be little middle ground for any conversations whether they be around politics, education, health care, environmental issues, science or religious views. There are wars, upheavals of entire groups of people, natural disasters, assassinations, threats of worker strikes, and fear of governments that seems to be moving from democracies to other forms of governance.

Throughout the world there are challenges that accompany the displacement of people, influx of refugees, changing cultures because of the diversity that everyone around the world is experiencing, and homelessness. It all seems too much.

Closer to home and as today in worship at St. Andrew's we celebrate with our children and teachers a blessing of back packs, we think of children and teachers, students and professors headed back into the school or academic year and there are a lot of pressures. Even for support staff things and situations can be filled with joy and tension. For all teachers and staff there are the demands made of time and energy and they desire to be doing the best for the students. Here in Thunder Bay, we have seen the strike action at the college and in Alberta teachers are looking at possible strike action on October 6th should negotiations with the government fail.

Then there are the children. Their worlds may not know the extent to which people around them are finding things challenging, but the children also come with their own concerns. For some they come from families that can afford little to no extras. They may be arriving at school with an empty stomach and no lunch. Some children have a hard time fitting in and others have a hard time learning to care about those who are more vulnerable. There are many things to juggle as they learn about themselves and about how their actions impact those around them.

So, what is one to do?

Well, if we look to this first letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy we can find wisdom. It may be helpful to know that Timothy was one who worked closely with Paul, and when they were apart Timothy was trusted with much leadership of the followers of Christ that he would find himself spending time with. Paul also viewed Timothy as a beloved son. This letter is one of instruction meant to help Timothy provide leadership.

I will say that if one were to read all of the letter there would be much to unpack as there are some difficult passages that grate against our current understandings, including the fact that I am a woman in a pulpit, but those conversations are for another time. Today we are looking at this particular passage from chapter two and it starts with “The first thing I want you to do is pray.” “The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know.”¹

Now if that wasn’t a tall order. For starters, most of us feel like doers rather than prayers so we want to get things done. And I would suggest that it may be part of our challenge in the world, because if we continue with this passage, we see that Paul has more to say. “Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live.” This is Paul’s hope for the Christian community.

Going back to the beginning where I spoke about the many challenges our world is facing, these words are as important now as they were when they were written. We often think that we are living in some of the worst of times, but in Paul’s time Christians were being persecuted, they did not live in safety, they were scattered and government did not look at all like a democracy. Paul wouldn’t have even understood what a democracy was. But in our time, as it was in Paul’s, there are always rulers and governments to rule, so we pray for them.

We are also called to pray for all people and that all people would come to know God and Jesus. When reading this kind of writing we have to remember that Paul was writing to a follower of Christ, Timothy, who was leading a group of people who were trying their best to follow in the way they understood Christ and God would have them live. It was about the hope that all people could know and experience the transforming love of Christ.

So, when you hear, “[God] wants not only us but *everyone* saved, you know, everyone to get to know the truth *we’ve* learned: that there’s one God and only one, and one Priest-Mediator between God and us—Jesus, who offered himself in exchange for everyone held captive by sin, to set them all free.”, you have to hear it in the context of Christian community. It is not about forcing anyone to believe, but rather presenting the Good

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture references come from [The Message](#) (MSG). Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by [Eugene H. Peterson](#)

News of God's work in and through Christ to all people so that they too may choose to experience God's love, forgiveness, and grace.

As Paul continues to talk about his own life he writes, "Eventually the news is going to get out. This and this only has been my appointed work: getting this news to those who have never heard of God, and explaining how it works by simple faith and plain truth." This is our appointed work as well. Letting people know about the God who loves them.

For all the ways that the Christian faith has been used to justify wars and the harm it has caused to people, that was never the intention. Using the Christian faith as a weapon is so far from what Jesus intended. Jesus' message was about love. It was a message of hope and care for the most vulnerable in our midst and in the world. It was and is the desire that we come to have the knowledge that we are loved and valuable in God's sight. And that message is for everyone, not just the ones we think get it, or are worthy of it. This is about God not about our indictments or judgments.

Our first work is to pray, to pray for leaders and governments, and to pray for all people. Prayer is not our only work. We are also to live lives that bear witness to God's love and concern not just for some but for everyone. Prayer is a powerful thing, which is why I think Paul says, "first of all" ...first of all pray. Prayer puts God into the equation, not for God's sake but for our own. Prayer opens our hearts to forgiveness and love. It becomes more difficult to hate those we hold in prayers that speak of hope, desire for the best outcomes for all involved, forgiveness, and care.

Whatever you face today and, in the days to come, the joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, possibilities and challenges...pray. Pray for leaders, governments, the world and its people. Pray for the communities of faith that try to live out God's will in the best ways they know how. Pray for family and friends, and pray for yourself. Pray with the knowledge of God's love and concern for everyone, then be at peace. Work toward the good of all, and knowing that you may not see the fruit of your labours, be at peace. Go in peace. God in love. Go in faith. Amen

Prayers of the People

God in whom we live and move and have our being,
each week our prayers join with those of Christians around the world
to seek your healing grace for those in need
and to pray for justice and mercy in your fragile creation.

We thank you for the ways in which your Spirit can surprise us,
bringing healing and hope in situations which cause us to despair.
Encourage us when we feel overwhelmed.

God, speak to us a word of hope. Embrace us with your love.

We remember before you today people living face to face with war and violence,
and all those places where ancient hatreds burn.

God, speak to us a word of peace. Embrace us with your love.

We remember before you today people living with illness and suffering,
for those struggling with disability or waiting for treatment,
and for those who know grief or fear or loneliness.
God, speak to us a word of healing. Embrace us with your love.

We remember before you today people facing discrimination and social prejudice,
for those who are bullied at school, at work, or at home,
and for those who are made ashamed of who they are.
God, speak to us a word of dignity. Embrace us with your love.

We remember before you people caught up in economic uncertainty,
those worried for the future, or struggling to make ends meet.
God, speak to us a word of reassurance. Embrace us with your love.

We remember before you today your whole creation in its increasing vulnerability.
Teach us how to care for the rips and tears in the fabric of the world you love
so that all your creatures may live together in health and wholeness.
God, speak to us a word of wisdom. Embrace us with your love.

Receive all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, as we offer together the words Jesus
taught us ...

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Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

Invitation to the offering

In every generation, God calls us to participate in the world's healing and renewal.
The gifts we offer will help touch lives with God's renewing grace. Be generous as
God is generous.

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There are various ways that people give to this congregation for our work as God's
people, through signing up for a monthly donation, or sending an etransfer.

Check out the opportunities to support St. Andrew's ministry at our website,
[St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay, ON – Part of the PCCWeb network of churches](#)

Benediction

Go with confidence and commitment, to serve God
in ways large and small for the sake of Christ, our friend and Saviour.
And may God bless you and keep you;
may God's face shine upon you,
and bring you joy and peace, now and evermore. Amen.

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