



Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Pentecost 11 **August 24, 2025**

Prayer of the Day

O God, mighty and immortal, you know that as fragile creatures surrounded by great dangers, we cannot by ourselves stand upright. Give us strength of mind and body, so that even when we suffer because of human sin, we may rise victorious through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

The Holy Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you O Lord.

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day." But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ.

Homily

I greet you in the name of Jesus, our risen Saviour. Amen.

Reflecting on my formative years, Sundays were special in my life; for it meant church, family and food and in that order.

Found in the closet, front and centre were my going to church clothes. The freshly ironed white shirt – gentlemen, you remember the one I am speaking of: the one that you could never do up the top button because the collar was so stiff. Next to the shirt hung the grey woollen pants caressed by the blue blazer. In the drawer of the dresser was my choice of either a tie or checkered bow tie – both clip ons! Finally came the Sunday shoes; the brown oxfords. The ones that never wore out! I out grew them before the backs of the shoes were broken in – oh those hurting blisters!!

The afternoon was quite serious. There was no strapping on the Sunshine roller skates – they just made too much noise. I had to think twice about asking to see if I could play with my friends Ronnie and David and if I was able, it was because they had no company.

Later in the afternoon we would gather into the old Ford and travel the one and a quarter mile journey to Grandma and Grandpa's. There we would be welcomed with the aroma of a roast beef dinner; the sound of potatoes boiling on the stove and the sight of a graham wafer pie holding a place of honour on the kitchen counter.

I'm guessing that your families had similar ways of spending Sundays, and that they involved church, family, and food, too.

Customs; ancient or new, originated from people's ideas about how to obey the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy." From the time this commandment was given by God to Moses, there has been disagreement about why we should honor the Sabbath and how we keep it holy. The Sabbath was meant to be a gift, a time of rest and restoration, a time to worship God. But quickly that gift turned into Law, and all sorts of rules grew up about what was work and what wasn't, what it was permissible to do on the Sabbath and what was not. Keeping the Sabbath holy also meant reserving that day for worship of God, and, as you might guess, people had various ideas about what constituted worship and, therefore, exactly what kept the Sabbath holy.

Jesus and his disciples seemed to be no different. They were constantly getting into trouble with the religious authorities for not properly observing the Sabbath. One might go as far to say, Jesus and the disciples were stretching the boundaries of knowledge and understanding. Do you know what I mean? It is like Liane playing jazz and doing modern and I mean modern improvising within the structure of the traditional Lutheran worship service.

You see, there is a delicate dance between tradition and innovation, because innovation is not always welcomed. One can be so entrenched or entombed in a tradition that innovation and flexibility and newness are smothered. We learn to live within the dance and so did Jesus.

We find Jesus in a dance; he is innovative while working within a tradition. To be in a synagogue on the Sabbath was at the heart of Judaism. Jesus does not tell Judaism, including the religious law, to "hit the road, Jack, and don't you come back no more."

Rather, he embodies a both-and, not an either-or posture. One could say that Jesus embodies an example of "traditioned innovation." However, it is the perceived innovation that gets him in trouble.

Here is a woman unnamed – only known as the crippled woman, because she was bent over and could not stand up straight. Her body said it all – not only bent over and imprisoned by her physical ailment but bent and burdened by an interpretation of a religious law that quarantine certain days for healing. The synagogue leader was only trying to defend a law that was the heart of the Exodus covenant with God. He wasn't saying, "don't heal!" He was rather saying,

there are six days on which to heal. Why not heal on one of those days and respect this core aspect of faith. More than that, possibly this synagogue leader had a deep respect not only for tradition but for law and order. If one starts breaking the Sabbath law, after all, what will go next? Law helps to protect us, offers the possibility of creating order, and at its best provides stability, all of which are essential for human flourishing. And so, this leader of the synagogue may have been trying to stick up for the principle of law and order with which most of us, truth be told, would support.

But whether it is respect for tradition, the value of rest, or the principle of law and order that is at stake, Jesus places this woman's health and well-being above all of them. Jesus is person-driven.

Jesus, who operates well within the tradition, will not allow the tradition to exclude people from access to the community, healing and even joy. He does not break the Sabbath but restores its life-giving possibilities. He comes to restore the tradition to wholeness and restore the joy of tradition through innovation, because tradition loses its joy when it has amnesia and forgets humanity and its needs.

My friends in Christ. The story of the bent women is not only about healing; it is also about irruption of the disruption of business as usual, plans as usual, life as usual. The status quo can be comfortable and familiar, but it can be stagnant

Jesus disrupts the numb through his innovation within the tradition. He prepares us to be surprised. To be ready for something to irrupt.

God has planned something great for St. Timothy's. It may mean to leave the status quo. It may not be a comfortable journey. There will be some bumps and even potholes in the road. Things may not always go as planned, yet may we bear in mind that oysters who can form pearls (not all do) because they are irritated by a grain of sand. They are uncomfortable.

Be always open to be surprised through the innovative ministry of Jesus. For when the woman's back was straightened out, Jesus was straightening out the broken tradition at the same time.

Amen.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit let us pray as Jesus taught us.....

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

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STTLC Communiqué

In Our Prayers Today.....

Sheila Zadow-Purdy, Danny Schultz, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Bobby Keuhl, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori, and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

Crisis in the Holy Land...the ELCIC National Office and Eastern Synod are launching an appeal to support the ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). Our goal is to raise \$50,000 to assist in supporting this vital work that embodies faith, resilience and hope of a just peace. More information can be found on the "Our World" bulletin board or at <https://elcic.ca/holy-land/>. Donations can be made through your offering envelope or virtual number by noting ELCJHL Appeal on it. Thank you for supporting our friends.

Ministerial Acts

Funeral – Committal Service

Ronald Bezanson, August 16, 2025. Age 86 years.



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and began praising God"*