



Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Pentecost 14 **August 30, 2026**

Prayer of the Day

O God, we thank you for your Son, who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow your commands, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

First Lesson: Jeremiah 15:15-21

O Lord, you know; remember me and visit me, and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance do not take me away; know that on your account I suffer insult. Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. I did not sit in the company of merrymakers, nor did I rejoice; under the weight of your hand I sat alone, for you had filled me with indignation. Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail. Therefore thus says the Lord: If you turn back, I will take you back, and you shall stand before me. If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall serve as my mouth. It is they who will turn to you, not you who will turn to them. And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you, says the Lord. I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

Second Lesson: Romans 12:9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you O Lord.

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ.

Homily

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

Before the cross became equated with salvation and a symbol for Christianity, it marked a moment when paths intersected. The term "cross in the road" came into our vocabulary; where two paths intersect from different directions. Often times we come to the fork in the road and stand there almost frozen; not knowing which road to take. Finally, the decision comes to, "Take it!"

In our reading this morning, Jesus knows he is at a cross road along with his friends, the disciples and the many other followers. He bluntly tells them there are some influential religious and community leaders: the elders, chief priest and scribes who will inflict great violence on him and even kill him. They will conspire with Caiaphas, the high priest and Judas, a member of Jesus' inner circle, together with a sword-and-club-carrying mob, will join the conspiracy. The disciples probably react in some of the ways you might expect, but it is Peter who pulls Jesus to the side and rejects these grim predictions. Immediately Jesus rejects Peter's resistance to reality. "Get *behind* me, Satan!"

"Join the path on which I am walking," Jesus seems to say. "Lose the preoccupation with the way you wanted or expected things to be, and get on board with reality!" "If you want to change the world, follow me." Sometimes we need to hear the same message, and often it needs to feel like a slap across the face to be effective.

In 1972 Paul Henderson, the Toronto Maple Leaf left winger was playing for his country in the Summit Series against the Soviet Union. Played during the Cold War, the series was viewed as a battle for both hockey and cultural supremacy. Henderson scored the game-winning goal in the

sixth, seventh and eighth games, the last of which has become legendary in Canada and made him a national hero: it was voted the "sports moment of the century" by The Canadian Press and earned him numerous accolades. Henderson has twice been inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame: in 1995 individually and in 2005 along with all players of the Summit Series team. He was inducted into the International Ice Hockey Federation Hall of Fame in 2013.

Henderson struggled to adjust to his new-found popularity. While he appreciated the support from fans and the business opportunities it created, he grew increasingly frustrated over time as the attention intruded on his private life.

By 1974 he was at a cross road in his career. Henderson was at odds with the Leaf owner. Should he stay or jump ship to join the newly formed World Hockey Association hockey team; the Toronto Toros. And he did. It was though during this time that Henderson turned to religion. After retiring after the 1980-1981 season, Henderson decided to remain in Birmingham and pursue a career as a stockbroker. However, he was unable to get a work permit in the United States despite a petition signed by thousands of Birmingham residents who fought for him to stay. Unable to work as a broker, Henderson entered the seminary and studied to become a minister.

He later founded Leader Impact and as a motivational speaker, he develops people for leadership roles.

Indeed, following Jesus has, does, and will continue to lead us on a path of personal and communal transformation. It is not, however, we who change the world, but rather God in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, who changes us.

God sneaks into our inner life and pivots our consciousness. God calls us out of our routines to notice the plight that weighs heavy on God's heart, and the more we follow Jesus, the more we read the gospels, and the more we pray and meditate on Jesus' life, the more we will encounter those in need. Not only that, the more we seek God, the more God will lead us to face our fears, and face the challenge of risking everything for Jesus' sake.

This is what it means to take up our cross and follow Jesus. To follow Jesus is to go to the place we would not normally go, to follow a path that leads to the outsider, and to seek an encounter with the Living God. When we follow that path, we often find ourselves in intimidating circumstances, but God is with us, and there we find ourselves on holy ground.

My friends in Christ! Perhaps this week, better still today, would be a time to reflect on the meaning of the cross: not as a symbol of our identity as Christians but as a reminder of that moment in time when your identity as a Christian was called into question.

A time and place: when the world reminded you who the world needs you to be.

A time and place when the power of the world was crossed: when you choose to embody a different expression of power; the kingdom of God.

A time and place: when you had the willingness to stand against power that silences and oppresses; the insistence of speaking up for those the world would crucify; the courage to call a thing what it is.

This is what Jesus did and the Messiah came not to give us what we want but what we need.

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.

Dismissal

Heaven had come near.
Go, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

STTLC Communiqué

In Our Prayers Today.....Joanna Spencer, Marie Lenser, Mike Harrington, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

Parents of Post Secondary Students – Applications for the J. Wilmot Harvey Educational Bursary are available in the church office and must be submitted to the Church Secretary by September 30, 2026.

The Venasse Family tragically lost their home and all their belongings the morning of July 26. Kaitlyn, Eric and their daughters Ava and Rhea were able to escape. The family have been part of our community in recent years. Kaitlyn is the daughter of Karen and James Kutschke.

How can we help?? Throughout the month of August, a jar will be available in the narthex of the church for you to make a monetary gift to support the family. Please note, these donations are not receiptable and go directly to the family. Thank you for your caring acts of kindness.

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