



Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Pentecost 23 **November 16, 2025**

Prayer of the Day

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without you nothing is strong, nothing is holy. Embrace us with your mercy, that with you as our ruler and guide, we may live through what is temporary without losing what is eternal, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

The Holy Gospel: Luke 21:5-19

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you O Lord.

When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down." They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them. "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven. "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls.

Homily

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

My question for you is: Why is June 18, 1918 significant to Pembroke?

On this day, Pembroke experienced a great fire that destroyed several blocks of its downtown. Investigation of the blaze took place. How the fire started was ultimately deemed to be an accident, despite many claims that it was deliberately set.

Standing in the ruins and rubble on Pembroke Street and gazing up the hill to Renfrew St. one would see the spires of: Calvin United, St. Columbkille, and Holy Trinity Anglican, pointing to the heavens. These structures are made from clay brick and beautiful stones.

This was the age when church involvement was an integral part of family life. Churches grew. These temples, built to the glory of God are now approaching one hundred and fifty years of age and thus far, have withstood the test of time.

No one would have dared to predict that churches would suffer a decline in attendance. But it has happened. Today you will find large “For Sale” signs on churches. Believe me; it is hard to look at this: A “For Sale” sign on a church. Yet it is not uncommon for our time. Churches are transformed into fine restaurants. In small town Ontario, churches stand vacant as their once bustling congregations have dwindled to a mere handful. In other towns they are changed into apartment units. In the country, they stand watch over their graveyards. It shows to us that even the most solid earth structures can crumble and change.

Jesus points to this in our text today. Jesus’ disciples are pointing out to Jesus their own temple; adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God.

And Jesus said, “the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.”

The disciples couldn’t possibly understand how this could happen. This was the temple of God. And yet they would have to cope with the temple being destroyed some forty years later.

Isn’t it true some two thousand years later we still look to find security in earthly structures, earthly possessions? We equate big with success.

The big house with rooms that never get used. The big car with more horsepower than we need. The big salary to support all the big wants of our lives.

Yet Jesus worked with the small. He chose only twelve disciples. He said where two or three are gathered he is present. He spoke about faith as small as a mustard seed.

The towers and temples in which we put our trust and security are not always built on concrete and steel. Perhaps it is our career. It means the world to us. When asked about our self, the first thing we talk about is our work not our husband or wife or children. We talk about our career because it helps to define us with a sense of worth and purpose in the world.

Then it happens, a recession hits or the company decides to close its doors, shut down the manufacturing plant and consolidate to our neighbours south of the border or to other countries. When these situations arise, we have the sense that our whole world has collapsed. Not a stone is left upon another, all is thrown down.

For others it is their youth – their health and fitness. But one dreadful day the doctor says, “I’m sorry. There’s nothing we can do.” Or we look into the mirror one day and see someone much older looking back. What happened to my hair? When did this happen? Not a stone is left upon another, all is thrown down.

If only we could have an insight when these tragedies occur, be given a sign when these changes will take place. We look and watch. We check our horoscope for the year, for each day.

We seek out people who read tea leaves or palms or cards not for enjoyment but to get a glimpse of the future.

This is what the disciples asked of Jesus; when will all of this happen? Jesus doesn't give a time, because the disciples and yes you and I, will be tempted to build second temples. Did we learn anything from the recession of the late eighties and early nineties? Do you remember those days? I do. In business, middle management disappeared. Companies became leaner; for a while. Today we have middle managers. They are not called supervisors or managers. They have a new title: team leaders.

Jesus didn't give the disciples a sign. Plain and simple the Gospel is not about being able to predict the future. We are called to follow Jesus and resist false temples that our society erects.

My friends in Christ. We will be tempted to erect another tower. We may have to learn that a lesson several times, caught up in the insecurity, and wanting to get another tower up to give us something to trust in. But there is no guarantee the new tower or temple won't come down just the same. Towers and temples will fall. They have before, and they will again. None of us are guaranteed that we will not experience our world falling apart.

The good news is God is there. God never leaves us even when all is thrown down. It is God's unshakeable love and compassion that remains. When our world comes crashing down, we will find ourselves falling into the loving hands of God.

Amen.

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.....

Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Bobby Keuhl, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori, and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

Fall Congregational Business Meeting

Sunday, November 23, 2025 following morning worship in Jubilee Hall.

Please plan to attend.

Purpose of the Meeting:

- Update from Council Chairperson
 - Update from Treasurer
- Elect members to Church Council and other positions
 - Other business

J. Wilmot Harvey Educational Bursary applications for post-secondary students are available in the office and must be submitted to the church secretary by November 30th.