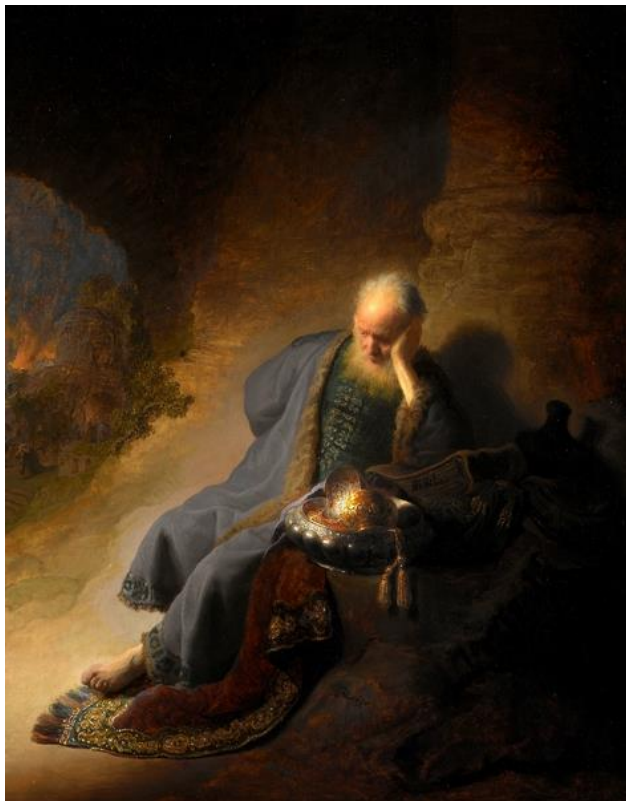


The Anglican Parish of
St. Peter and St. Paul
September 7th 2025
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Home Church Connections



Nourishing Faith
and Community

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS BEFORE GOD

Words of Welcome

The Gathering of the Community

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

Almighty God,

to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Renewing our commitment

Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?

I will, with God's help.

Let us pray,

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people, that richly bearing the fruit of good works, we may by you be richly rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

(please be seated)

THE STORY OF FAITH IS PROCLAIMED

First Reading: Jeremiah 18:1-11

A reading from the book of Jeremiah

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ‘Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.’ So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

Then the word of the Lord came to me: Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it.

And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

Hear what the Spirit is saying.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: 139:1-5, 12-17

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;

you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.

even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.

In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.
How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!

Second Reading: Philemon 1-21

A reading from the Letter of Paul to Philemon

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in your house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith towards the Lord Jesus. I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, am writing this with my

own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

One thing more—prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping through your prayers to be restored to you. Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow-workers. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

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

Gospel Reading: Luke 14:1, 7-14

God be with you.
And also with you.

The Good News of Jesus according to Luke
Glory to You Lord Jesus Christ.

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honour, he told them a parable. ‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honour, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, “Give this person your place”, and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest

place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher”; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.’

He said also to the one who had invited him, ‘When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.’

The Gospel of Christ

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon *The Rev. Gail Rodger*

As we look to our southern neighbours and see the slide away from democratic norms, our scriptures could not be more timely. There is a flurry of analysis within the United States about why the slide is happening, why more people are not paying attention as their president breaks with all traditions and a number of laws. What is actually happening in their society? David Brooks, a secular writer, (we will read one of his essays in the Bible Study) wrote a column this past week in the New York Times entitled “The Wrong Definition of Love.” In it, the poll he cites, revealed many people defined love by how the other person – the one who loved them – made them feel. “I fall in love when someone sees me in a way I didn’t know I could be seen” says one participant.”¹ The kind of love that is in absolute need of another person’s gaze is one that falters if the gaze shifts. It is fragile, and Brook’s argues, narcissistic because it is the kind of love based on how the “I” feels. Now it is pretty normal to want to be seen, to be held; and intimacy grows when we are seen especially by those we love – yet the need to be seen has become, in many ways a societal illness that is being used as a substitute for real love. Our scriptures today tell us that humility is the virtue we should aspire to – it means not trying to grab the limelight, the attention, the seat at the head of the table near the host. When we embrace

humility as a virtue a different kind of love is learned, a deeper more solid kind, a sacrificial kind, and the kind Jesus showed to us. Jesus never mentions the word love in our reading today but we can see the correlation. in the parable Jesus talks about a personhood that has the not needing to be seen kind of love, and it definitely is not about a particular feeling that being seen produces. Instead it is about a deliberate kind of love that steps away from ego.

In his 1956 book, "The Art of Loving," the psychoanalyst and philosopher Erich Fromm argued that love is not a feeling; it's a practice, an art form. He wrote, "Love is the active concern for the life and growth of that which we love." The difference is the posture of love – not inward saying I feel but outward care of what you love. The art form of love, like all art takes practice. Love becomes less about emotional feeling of euphoria and well being and more about concern of others. For the doing for others. Love, particularly love of neighbour requires a series of actions that require discipline, care, respect, knowledge, and the deliberate overcoming of self-centeredness. It takes the thoughtful and specific action of not sitting at the head of the table.

In society, when the attitude adopted sounds like "it's not my problem because it does not affect me" we need to recognize that, at its

core, that is a self-centered posture. Remember the definition from the poll. “I fall in love when someone sees me in a way I didn’t know I could be seen” says one participant.”² There is a whole lot of “I’s” in that statement. It is not *my* problem it does not affect *me*. Again a whole lot of self centredness in the statement. Compare that to the writing in Hebrews; “Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.” “How about remember those who are being snatched off the streets and deported to a prison camps as if you were snatched off the streets and sent to a prison camp.”

Of course, we are not the United States, yet this real world example of the divisive politics and seemingly societal break down offers us an opportunity to delve into our Scriptures more deeply. Showing hospitality to strangers because you might be entertaining angels has a light ring of providing tea and cakes to the neighbour who drops by when it is really talking about setting your ego aside. Brooks writes “When the culture encourages people to idolize the needs of the self — to focus on self-actualization, self-esteem, self-display — that doesn’t produce strong people but needy, touchy and insecure ones.”³ The writer of Hebrews is summing up the kind of love Christ has for the world and that we are to emulate. It is the kind of love that is good and strong and

true. It's a love that says *'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?'* Did you hear that? What can anyone do to me? The worth of personhood is seen through God's eyes so there is no need to constantly seek validation from the world. It is a humble, brave and confident love, filled with surety. That's the kind of love Jesus showed during his whole life on earth, and in his death on the cross. That is the love that changes the world and holds societies together. All we have to do is keep practicing that kind of love.

Amen.

Announcements

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

The Affirmation of Faith

(Taken from Season of Creation ecumenical service which was adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book)

**You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
God made flesh,
who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.
You are our God. We worship you.**

Prayers of the People

With Thanksgiving and Remembrance for the Merchant Navy (September 3rd)

Let us pray

**Almighty Lord, God, the Protector of all who trust in you, we
commend to your keeping all those in the Merchant Navy who**

gave their lives on our behalf. And we pray that out of the fruits of their sacrifice, Canada may have a righteous and abiding peace. They performed their duty with bravery, confident that in their life or in their death you were their refuge, and we know you hold them in your ever loving arms. We entreat you, O Lord God so to turn the hearts of the people of this land to do good, trusting in your goodness, so that we are renewed to do your service, learning and honouring from the past and evermore moving into the future and giving you praise, from one generation to another, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us take a moment to still our minds and hearts before God, coming together to lift our prayers in unity, responding to Loving God, with Hear our prayer.

We pray for the church, for the work and witness of those who continually show love to all people.

In our Anglican Communion we pray for The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean; for our new Primate the Right Reverend Shane Parker; for Chris Harper, the National Indigenous Archbishop; Territory of the People Anglican Church, Bishop Clara Plamondon; and for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada

In our own Diocese, we pray for our bishop, the Right Reverend Anna Green-wood Lee;

In our Region of Greater Victoria we pray for our brothers and sisters of St John the Divine, The Venerable Alastair Singh-McCollum, The Rev. Dr. John Thatamanil.

In our Parish we pray for Ruth D'Hollander, John & Bridget Ducker, Patrick Dunae, Ann Easton, Victor Flett Sr., Victor Flett Jr., Sandra Flynn and Pat Fraser. For the month of August we pray for the building maintenance and repair Ministry.

In the Community we pray for St. John the Divine Food Bank and those among us whose illness is addiction.

God, may your Church honour and glorify you through service to others. Teach us in all things to see others before ourselves.

Loving God,

Hear our Prayer

We pray for Charles our King, and those in authority in nations around the world. May they strive for peace, and temper justice with mercy. May they place health above wealth, seeing abundance to share with the world.

Loving God,

Hear Our Prayer

We pray for the world torn apart by disease, hate and fear. Send your spirit to sustain all people that are living with natural disaster, trapped in war zones, dealing with violence in their communities. And help us to work towards a more equitable world, where hate and fear are no more, and compassion and gratitude flourish.

Loving God,

Hear Our Prayer

Thank you for the warm summer sun and the bounty the earth provides, the garden produce and the autumn flowers. Help us to see your beauty in all of creation. Teach us to care for creation, knowing it shows respect for you and for our neighbour.

Loving God,

Hear our prayer

We pray for those who are sick in mind, body or spirit. We pray for, Read list of names, those on our prayer chain, those on our own hearts and those known to you alone.

Heal them O God, and help them to know your peace.

Be with all that work with the ill and renew their strength.

(We pray for the dearly departed list names. May they/he/she rest in peace and may Your Spirit comfort the family.)

Loving God,

Hear our Prayer

Finally God, we pray for ourselves, in your Spirit help us to share the abundance in our lives, showing compassion and patience, listening well to the other and learning to grow. And may we be counted among the saints and martyrs who have gone on before showing us the spirit of service and sacrifice.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father 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 sins as we forgive those who sin 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.

Doxology

Glory to God, whose power working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God, from generation to generation, In the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing

Dismissal

Go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit
Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

Weekly Cycles of Prayer

The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean; for our new Primate the Right Reverend Shane Parker; for Chris Harper, the National Indigenous Archbishop; Territory of the People Anglican Church, Bishop Clara Plamondon; and for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada.

In our diocese, we pray for our bishop, The Right Rev. Anna Greenwood-Lee and in our region, St John the Divine, The Venerable Alastair Singh-McCollum, The Rev. Dr. John Thatamanil.

In our parish we pray for: Ruth D'Hollander, John & Bridget Ducker, Patrick Dunae, Ann Easton, Victor Flett Sr., Victor Flett Jr., Sandra Flynn and Pat Fraser.

In our community we pray for St. John the Divine Food Bank and those among us whose illness is addiction.

For the month of August we pray for the building maintenance and repair Ministry.

Parish of St Peter and St Paul

1379 Esquimalt Road

Victoria, BC V9A 3R4



ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL
ESQUIMALT

Bishop The Rt. Rev. Anna Greenwood-Lee

Rector The Rev. Gail Rodger 250-507-9941

Rector's Warden John Ducker

People's Warden Adora Waters

Organist Lawrence Surges

Safe Church Liaison Karen Hogg safechurch@stpeterandpaul.ca

Envelope Secretary Andrew Sebo givings@stpeterandpaul.ca

Parish Office Hours: by appointment only.

Office Phone: 250-386-6833



www.facebook.com/AnglicanParishOfStPeterAndStPaulVictoriaBcCanada/

E-mail: admin@stpeterandpaul.ca

Website: www.stpeterandpaul.ca

CCLI License No. 3233500

One License No. A739997

Charitable Tax No. 118787142 RR 000 0005