

May 19, 2024

Pentecost

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "May-Day Carol" English Folk Song (Essex) transcribed and harmonized by Deems Taylor
Nancy Quinn

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Lighting the Christ Candle

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Call to Worship

The day of Pentecost is here;

The day when the flames of faith dance in our hearts.

Today we celebrate the birth of the Christian church;

The day when our tongues utter Good News to all the world.

Today God puts the Spirit within us;

The day when compassion is seared into our souls.

The day of Pentecost is here;

Let the people of God rejoice!

Hymn: MV 23 "Come, O Holy Spirit" Words: Fred Kaan, 1972, revised 1998; Music: Ron Klusmeier, 2000;
Words © 1972, 1998 Hope Publishing Company; Music © 2000 Ron Klusmeier; OneLicense.net A620168

Come, O Holy Spirit, set the Church on fire;

Strike it as the lightning hits a posing spire.

Burn away the structures and consume the sham
of our holy systems: Come, in Jesus' name!

Come, come, come, in Jesus' name!

Take our hearts by storm.

All the world lies open: Pentecost is now!

I said a come, come, come in Jesus' name!

Take our hearts by storm.

All the world lied open: Pentecost is now!

Blow away the cobwebs of our stubborn past.

Come, send flying from us myths unfit to last.

Wind of change, refresh us and disturb our calm;
teach us what true love is, take our hearts by storm

Come, come, come, in Jesus' name!

Take our hearts by storm.

All the world lies open: Pentecost is now!

I said a come, come, come in Jesus' name!

Take our hearts by storm.

All the world lied open: Pentecost is now!

Free us from the babble of our Babel mind;
spark in us a language all can understand.
Lighten then our darkness, come and show us how
all the world lies open: Pentecost is now!

Come, come, come, in Jesus' name!

Take our hearts by storm.

All the world lies open: Pentecost is now!

I said a come, come, come in Jesus' name!

Take our hearts by storm.

All the world lied open: Pentecost is now! Amen!

Opening Prayer (*unison*)

Holy One, as your Spirit fell like tongues of flame on those gathered on the day of Pentecost, fall on us today. Burn away the inertia and complacency which binds us in outdated ways of being and thinking, for the sake of a renewed church – one on fire for Your mission to creation. As you blessed those gathered with the gift of tongues, bless us to speak truth to power, to speak words of hope to the despairing, to speak words of comfort to those who are suffering, to speak words of healing to the broken, to speak words of forgiveness to those who need to be freed. Your Spirit gave birth to the church, give it rebirth today, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Ministry of Music “There is a Balm in Gilead” Traditional Spiritual, Arranged by Mark Hayes

A Song of Faith (*page 5*)

We sing of a church

seeking to continue the story of Jesus
by embodying Christ's presence in the world.

We are called together by Christ

as a community of broken but hopeful believers,
loving what he loved,
living what he taught,
striving to be faithful servants of God
in our time and place.

Our ancestors in faith

bequeath to us experiences of their faithful living;
upon their lives our lives are built.

Our living of the gospel makes us a part of this communion of saints,

experiencing the fulfillment of God's reign
even as we actively anticipate a new heaven and a new earth.

The church has not always lived up to its vision.

It requires the Spirit to reorient it,

helping it to live an emerging faith while honouring tradition,
challenging it to live by grace rather than entitlement,

for we are called to be a blessing to the earth.

We sing of God's good news lived out,
a church with purpose:

faith nurtured and hearts comforted,
gifts shared for the good of all,
resistance to the forces that exploit and marginalize,
fierce love in the face of violence,
human dignity defended,
members of a community held and inspired by God,
corrected and comforted,
instrument of the loving Spirit of Christ,
creation's mending.

We sing of God's mission.

Hymn VU 198 "Come, O Spirit, Dwell among Us" Words: Janie Alford, 1979; Music: Thomas John Williams, 1890
Words © 1979 Hope Publishing Company; Music: Public Domain OneLicense.net A620168, CCLI 11438349

Come, O Spirit, dwell among us, come with Pentecostal power;
give the church a stronger vision, help us face each crucial hour.
Built upon a firm foundation, Jesus Christ, the cornerstone,
still the church is called to mission that God's love shall be made known.

We would raise our hallelujahs for the grace of yesteryears;
for tomorrow's unknown pathway, hear, O God, our humble prayers.
In the church's pilgrim journey you have led us all the way,
still in presence move before us, fire by night and cloud by day.

Come, O Spirit, dwell among us, give us words of fire and flame.
Help our feeble lips to praise you, glorify your holy name.
God, all holy, Son and Spirit, three in one: what mystery!
We would sing our loud hosannas now and through eternity.

Psalm 104:24-35b VU 827 part 2

R: Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

O God, how manifold are your works!

**With Wisdom at your side you made them all,
the earth is full of your creatures**

R: Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

There lies the great and mighty Sea,
teeming with living things both great and small.

**Upon it sail the ships,
and there is Leviathan, the monster you made to play in it.**

All these look to you,
to give them their food in due season.

What you give them they gather up.

**When you open your hand,
you fill them with good things.**

But when you hide your face they despair.

When you take away their breath, they die, and return to dust.

**But when you send out your spirit, they live again,
and you renew the face of the earth.**

R: Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

May your glory, O God, endure forever.

May you rejoice, O God, in your works.

When you look at the earth it trembles,

when you touch the mountains they smoke.

I will sing to God as long as I live,

I will praise my God while I have being.

R: Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-14 The Valley of Dry Bones

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

*The other readings for this week are: **Acts 2:1-21 (Alt); Romans 8:22-27; John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15.** You can look them up on www.biblegateway.com and search for the passage..... in the translation of your preference.*

Meditation: "Host or hostage?"

Hymn VU 457 "As We Gather at Your Table" Words: Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1989; Music: Benjamin Franklin White
Words © 1989 Hope Publishing Company; Music: Public Domain; OneLicense.net A620168

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's victory known.

Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.

Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion modified from a prayer by Thom M. Shuman © 2021 and used by permission

May the Spirit of Pentecost touch you this day.

And touch you, as well.

May the soft, gentle breeze of love fill your hearts.

We open them to the Spirit who would overflow from our hearts.

May the words of Pentecost offer you new songs.

We will sing praise and thanksgiving to our God.

Wow! What you do, God of imagination and wonder! You breathe your Spirit into chaos, even the confusion in which we are living, to shatter the emptiness of our hearts to reshape them into beauty. You whispered your Word into the silence, and rivers raced to the oceans, and bugs creepy-crawled across meadows. Whisper your Word now into the silence of our isolation, so we might see the butterflies drifting in the air, and see the dolphins leaping from the waves. Like any loving parent, you fed creation with hope, as you long for us to care for others, but we run off with tellers of lies, we lock ourselves in death's quarantine. Yet these moments of fear and worry are not new, and so you keep sending those we call prophets, to tell of what you are doing and will do.

Yet we continue to huddle in with sellers of fear to shutter our hearts from such words. So you sent Jesus to us, to breathe your peace upon us and to bring us back to you. With those who continue to live in isolation yet long to share the Spirit with others, we will sing your praise forever and ever:

Holy, holy, holy are you, Shattering Spirit.

All creation will sing until it has no more breath.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who stands in our midst speaking peace.

Hosanna in the highest!

Like your glory, may your holiness be eternal, God of wind and flames, and may your Child, Jesus, bless us with words of wonder and joy. Though we would sit in our loneliness, he comes to be with us in love. Though we would keep our souls shuttered, he comes to throw them wide open with grace and hope. Though we would remain hidden away in death's cold upper room, he enters to take its power over us away, so the bright flames of the resurrection might dance over our lives, bringing us hope. As we would open our hearts to the Spirit, as we would welcome the peace and power, we tell of that faith grounded in Pentecost's mystery:

Drawing his last breath, Christ died for us;

with the sudden breath of the resurrection, Christ was raised;

Christ will return, to breathe the Spirit into us forever.

Here in this moment, with people gathered wherever they are, alone or with others, may you pour the Spirit of Pentecost upon the simple gifts of the bread and the cup. With the brokenness of the bread, we pray hope might dance upon our souls so we will might become a mighty wind to bring healing to our shattered world. Drinking from the cup of grace, we pray it flow through us so we might become a fountain of unending generosity to parched people thirsting for life.

Reignite the passion of Your church, God of flaming tongues, that it might fulfill the mission you created it to fill. Especially this week we pray for Calvary United Church in Rodney.

Inspire the leaders of this world, Spirit God, that they might rule with justice and equity for all peoples. Especially this week we pray for the peoples of the islands of the Indian Ocean: Comoros, Madagascar, the Maldives, Mauritius, and the Seychelles.

Strengthen and comfort all who mourn, especially the friends and family of Ken Purdon, and bring healing and wholeness of spirit to all who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention, or recovering from treatment, especially Janet Carter, Lisa Gardner, and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

And when that day comes when we no longer need to shelter in place or isolate from others, you will gather us around the Table with our sisters and brothers of every time, of every place, breathing the Spirit upon us, telling us the Word of grace and hope, as we sing our thanks forever and ever, God in Community, Holy in One.

The Lord's Prayer VU 959 Music: David Haas, 1986; © 1986 G.I.A. Publications, Inc.; OneLicense.net A620168

**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.**

Distribution of the Elements

Prayer Following Communion

We give thanks, God of Pentecost, that you have refreshed us at your table, by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and unite us in courage and peace. May we rejoice in the power of the Holy Spirit this day and always. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

Holy One, your Spirit is the wind of change that blows through your church and around the world. It blows the dust off our fears, that we might be more generous people. It blows the dust off our gifts that we think are so paltry, that we might realize how they can bring hope and life to others.

It blows the dust off our biases, that we might see all people as our sisters and brothers. We offer ourselves, our skill, and share our material wealth, gifts of grace for those in need of it. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn VU 538 "For the Gift of Creation" Words and Music: Steve Garnaas-Homes;
Words and Music © 1991 Abingdon Press; OneLicense.net A620168, CCLI 11438349

For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,
and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,
we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands.
May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that we give.

Prayer of Dedication

Life-giving Spirit, bring to the bones of these gifts the flesh of our actions and the breath of our caring, that our church and our service to others may come to life in your Holy name. Amen

Hymn VU 375 "Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness" Words and Music: James K. Manley, 1978;
Words and Music © 1978 J. Manley Publishing; OneLicense.net A620168, CCLI 11438349

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;
and over the eons you called to each thing:
wake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You swept thro' the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
and when they were blinded with their idols and lies,
then you spoke thro' your prophets to open their eyes.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,
when you blew thro' your people on the rush of the wind.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams,
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes,
with bold new decisions your people arise.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

Commissioning and Benediction

May the gentleness of the Spirit heal you;
the boldness of the Spirit transform you;
and the gifts of the Spirit equip you to serve and worship God,
this and every day. **Amen.**

Response: VU 381 "Spirit of Life" Words and Music: Carolyn McDade © 1981 Carolyn McDade
OneLicense.net A620168

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

Postlude: "Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart with O Breath of Life"
Frederick C. Atkinson , Joel Blomquist , arr. by Cindy Berry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Mark will be away the next two Sundays. May 26 due to the Annual Spring Meeting of Antler River Watershed Regional Council (ARWRC), and June 2 due to Continuing Education. He will be available for pastoral emergencies until (and including) Thursday, May 23. From May 26 to June 2, please contact Karlene Kimber (the minister at Belmont United Church) for pastoral emergencies. Karlene can be reached at 519-282-3056.

Central Board meets Wednesday, June 19 at 7 p.m.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

May 26 – Pentecost 1 (a.k.a. Trinity Sunday)

Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

June 2 – Pentecost 2 (Proper 4)

1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 2 Corinthians 4:5-12; Mark 2:23 - 3:6

June 9 – Pentecost 3 (Proper 5)

1 Samuel 8:4-11, (12-15), 16-20, (11:14-15); Psalm 138; 2 Corinthians 4:13 – 5:1; Mark 3:20-35