

# **Knox-Calvin Presbyterian Church, Harriston, Ontario**

## **Meditation for Sunday May 30, 2021**

**Submitted by Rev. Dirk Kramer**

### **Psalm 135:1-7**

- 1** Praise the Lord.  
Praise the name of the Lord;  
praise him, you servants of the Lord,
- 2** you who minister in the house of the Lord,  
in the courts of the house of our God.
- 3** Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good;  
sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant.
- 4** For the Lord has chosen Jacob to be his own,  
Israel to be his treasured possession.
- 5** I know that the Lord is great,  
that our Lord is greater than all gods.
- 6** The Lord does whatever pleases him,  
in the heavens and on the earth,  
in the seas and all their depths.
- 7** He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth;  
he sends lightning with the rain  
and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

### **John 3:1-8**

- 1** Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council.
- 2** He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."
- 3** Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."
- 4** "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!"
- 5** Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.
- 6** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
- 7** You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'
- 8** The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

### **Psalm 135:1-7**

### **John 3:1-8**

**"The Tidings of the Breeze"**

If there's one conversation in the New Testament I wish I could have been privy to it's this one, the one between Jesus and Nicodemus. In a sense we are because of the transcript John provides us with. Was he there himself or did Jesus recount the gist of the conversation later? We don't always know, do we? the mechanics involved in compiling the biblical documents. But even if we weren't there ourselves, we can imagine that nighttime scene.

If you happen to have one of those formerly popular "red letter editions" of the New Testament with its intermittent black type and red type, you know Jesus is doing most of the talking here. Nicodemus is asking the questions; Jesus, providing the answers. Only Nicodemus is having a hard time understanding what Jesus is explaining to him, the topic being new birth or the birth from above. "How, Jesus, does all of this work?" he wants to know.

And we can imagine in the midst of that spirited conversation a predawn breeze gently stirring through the heights surrounding the Kidron Valley there below the old city of Jerusalem. It sighed among the fig leaves; it made the olive branches toss and turn. Perhaps the candle lighting the room where the extended conversation was being held flickered ever so slightly. Jesus, master of all things both natural and supernatural, seized upon the moment and turned what to us (and to Nicodemus) may have seemed like a small thing...turned it into a parable, a breeze bringing tidings if you will.

"The wind, Nicodemus. The wind. The wind blows all around us as if it has a will of its own; we feel it and hear it, but we do not understand where it has come from or where it will end up. Life in the Spirit is as if it were the wind of God." [*The Voice Bible*]

The season of Pentecost is about life in the Spirit. It's a time to be reminded that the wind of God, the Holy Spirit blows wherever God has a mind for the Spirit to blow – even in our lives! The wind blows wherever it wishes, Jesus observes.

I like how George Morrison speaks of the freedom of the wind:

"You may tell its direction, whether east or west; you may devise instruments to measure its velocity; you may watch its path across the field of corn [think wheat here], or where the giants of the forest bow before it; but spite of all minutest observation, and all the imprisoning energies of science, the breeze is still gloriously free. You can raise no barriers that will block its progress. You can forge no chains that will confine it. You cannot divert it as it crosses the ocean, or bid it halt in its hurrying for an hour."

Such is the free, unbounded movement of the Holy Spirit. You can observe it in the smallest of ways. Preachers know this full well. They hear it at the entrance to the sanctuary when Sunday worship is over. Why is it you can have such entirely different responses to the same message that was preached? Why is it heard so differently? Why do some hear in that message something you don't think you even said? Well, it's the work of the Holy Spirit blowing wherever God pleases.

It's all part of the mysterious workings of God, the not knowing where the wind comes from or where it goes.

Quoting George Morrison once more; this is what he writes about the mysterious encounters believers (even we ourselves) have had with God:

"As with the wind, we can trace back the course of [our] spiritual renewal. Perhaps we can point to a sermon or a prayer, or a quiet talk with somebody we trusted; perhaps we can point to a striking and signal providence, or to a terrible illness when we fought

with death, or to an open grave when the dull earth that thudded seemed to be falling on the heart. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit. We can trace out the history a little way. We can say it was this or that which changed us to the depths, in the unerring providence of God. But when we have said all that, and said it gratefully, then overpowers us the wonder of it all, and saved by grace when we deserved the darkness, we can but whisper, *'We know not whence it cometh.'*"

But the effects, Jesus says, the effects of the wind we definitely can observe. We can hear the sound of the wind and we can see what it does when it blows. In our lives, too. Others should be able to see that as well. The presence of the Holy Spirit's presence in a Christian's life has consequences and should have a certain measurable effect. The listing of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 6 gives us a checklist to measure ourselves against. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control become increasingly evident in our lives. These are the signs of the Spirit's presence in our lives, the Spirit, remember, of Jesus.

One thing more about the wind that Jesus points out. He reminds Nicodemus of the wind's ultimate destination, the fact that we really don't know where it goes or where it'll end up. I find that exciting when we apply that analogy to our life in the Spirit, that we don't know what power, and use, and blessing we'll travel on to as we go through life as followers of Jesus, living in his Spirit and his Spirit living in us!

The details, of course, we can't tell peering into the future; but we can be sure it'll involve joy, and victory, and power, and usefulness, and gratitude. Best of all, it'll all lead to Him! The Spirit will make sure of it.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

God of Mystery and Mercy,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
we meet you in wonder as the Blessed Trinity.  
You are the Ancient of Days, eternal and unchanging;  
yet you are the Source of each new day, renewing all things.  
In Christ, you encounter us in whatever each day brings  
with a heart that beats in love for us.  
Through the Spirit, you breathe life into what is growing older,  
energizing us to serve you in good times and hard times.  
In the mystery of the Trinity, you are always with us  
and so we bring you our worship and praise to join in your dance of life and love,

Lord, our God, whose power is beyond compare  
with glory beyond our understanding;  
whose mercy is boundless, and love for us is endless;  
look upon us in your compassion.  
We pray for peace that calms our hearts and saves our souls,  
and for peace in the whole world and throughout creation.

We pray for the stability of the church and the unity of this congregation,  
for all who desire to follow you with faith and reverence,  
and for the ministries of your church around the world  
in these challenging times.

We pray for our country, our leaders, and all those in public service

*(names may be added as you say this)*

for this city, and for every city and nation,  
and for all who offer themselves with diligence and compassion  
as months of pandemic stretch on.

We pray for the Indigenous people in Canada,  
for the nurturing of relationships between cultures and communities,  
for healing of old hurts and for repentance and reconciliation,  
for new and better ways to walk with one another in respect and care.

We pray for the safety of those who must travel by land, sea, and air,  
for those who long to travel but cannot,  
and for all those who are separated from those they love.

We pray for the sick, the suffering, and the isolated,  
for victims of violence, refugees and captives,  
and for our protection against all affliction, danger, and distress.

To you, Holy God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
belongs all glory, honour and worship,  
now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen

**Hymn: Like the murmur of the dove's song,**

Like the murmur of the dove's song,  
like the challenge of her flight,  
like the vigor of the wind's rush,  
like the new flame's eager might:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ's body,  
to the branches of the Vine,  
to the Church in faith assembled,  
to her midst as gift and sign:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division,  
with the ceaseless voice of prayer,  
with the power to love and witness,  
with the peace beyond compare:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

**Hymn: There's a spirit in the air**

There's a spirit in the air,  
telling Christians everywhere:  
'Praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world!'

Lose your shyness, find your tongue,  
tell the world what God has done:  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

When believers break the bread,  
when a hungry child is fed,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,

living, working, in our world.

Still the Spirit gives us light,  
seeing wrong and setting right:  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

When a stranger's not alone,  
where the homeless find a home,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,

living, working, in our world.

May the Spirit fill our praise,  
guide our thoughts and change our ways  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

There's a Spirit in the air,  
calling people everywhere:  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

### Notes and News

*We are very grateful to Bill & Iris Richardson for their hard work re-doing the flower beds. They look fantastic!! Thank you!!*

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*Food Grain Shares are available!*

*\$40/per share. You can include this with your offering.*

*If you have any questions you can contact John Crispin at 519-323-2700*

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

1 Samuel 8:4-11, (12-15), 16-20, (11:14-15) and Psalm 138 OR Genesis 3:8-15 and Psalm 130;

2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:20-35

#### Prayer List

Fred & Peggy Roger

Mary Stoddart

Roeli Wassink

Isabel McCutcheon

Eldon Weber

Irene Fisk

Elizabeth Gamble

Gerald Hattle

Henk Zimmelink

Fred Newman

Jonathon Newman

Please be in touch if there are others you would like added to the prayer list. 519-321-1942.

#### Moment for Mission:

##### **Supporting Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh** (*Trinity Sunday*)

Four years ago, the Myanmar military began a campaign of violent attacks against the Rohingya. Widespread killing, torture, robbery and assault forced over 700,000 Rohingya from their homes into neighbouring Bangladesh. Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) responded and continues to do so. We are providing lifesaving food assistance and temporary shelter, and ensuring that psychosocial support is available to those who need it. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the crowded refugee camps, PWS&D is helping ensure families have access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. Families are also receiving food vouchers to help meet nutritional needs and boost the local economy.

#### **From Seniors Centre of Excellence of Wellington County**

##### Information on Vaccinations

♥ Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph Public Health: 1-844-780-0202 ♥ To register for a vaccine: <https://register.wdgpulichealth.ca>

♥ To register at a local pharmacy for vaccine: <https://covid19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>

Look us up on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram! If you need help with technology training and support, please email [info@connectedcanadians.ca](mailto:info@connectedcanadians.ca)

Yoga on Zoom – Free New Participants always welcome Mondays 9:30-10:30am Pre – registration is required to access the zoom room – email [kerry@studiokerry.ca](mailto:kerry@studiokerry.ca)

ZOOM Upcoming David and Melanie Carlson describe their experience on the CBC show Back in Time for Winter. This modern Canadian family gave up all their cold weather comforts and digital distractions to go back in time and experience 60 years of Canadian winter – both inside and outside the home. It started with their house, each week as their own home underwent a massive transformation. What was the most challenging, the most fun, the most surprising? Join us on Thursday, June 24 @ 2pm to find out.