

**Order of Worship May 23, 2021  
Pentecost Sunday**

Words of Welcome

Hello beloved people of God. Built into foundations of our faith is the invitation to cease from busyness and being productive every seven days, and to rest. This day is the seventh day. Sabbath. Here is the invitation to pause and think about other things. The Maker knows it is necessary for the wellbeing of our bodies and our souls. Welcome to these church words – hymn poems, the Ancient Sacred Text, prayers, liturgy, a word or two about the community of faith. May God bless you in your pausing on this seventh day.

If you like, light a candle and let the light of the flame be a symbol of God's living presence within and all around.

Lighting of Christ Candle

One: We light this light

**All: in the name of the God who creates life  
In the name of Saviour who loves life  
In the name of the Spirit who is the fire of life.**

This Sunday is the 50<sup>th</sup> day after Easter, Pentecost. In the story of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit is described with wind and flames of fire. Watch for these images in the first hymn.

Opening Hymn: # 287 O God, whose fire lit the stars (tune: I heard the voice of Jesus say)

1. O God, whose fire lit the stars and set them in their course:  
you are life's origin and end, the vast creation's source.  
Come, touch us who were formed from dust and set our hearts ablaze  
that life and breath may rise to you, a sacrifice of praise.
2. O Christ, in whom God's holy fire blazed forth in human form:  
in you God's truth has touched the earth in love made cruciform.  
May we, your living body now, enkindled by that flame,  
by glowing word and loving deed make known your glorious name.
3. O Spirit, as at Pentecost you fell, a living flame,  
and sent the chosen twelve abroad the gospel to proclaim:  
descend on all you call today to serve a servant Lord.  
Ignite their praying hearts till they are burning with your word.
4. Praise God who makes all stars to shine! Praise Christ who conquered night!  
And praise the Spirit by whose gifts our faith will end in sight!  
Sing praises to the Trinity, creation's life and light,  
one holy fire, a threefold flame forever burning bright!

Call to Worship: selected verses from Psalm 104:24-35

O Lord, how manifold are your works!

**In wisdom you have made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.**

When you hide your face, they are dismayed...

**When you send forth your Spirit they are created  
and you renew the face of the ground.**

So let us sing to the Lord as long as we live.

**We will sing praise to our God while we have being.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

**Praise the Lord.**

Prayer of Praise and Adoration

Triune God, Creator, Saviour, Spirit, we come away in this time to praise you  
for you are great and you are good.

At the dawn of creation, you spoke the word and out of dark chaos  
came light and order and life in all its manifold beauty and wonder, simplicity and complexity.

Over the centuries, you called your servants to proclaim your love and your justice.

Through the flames of Pentecost, you gave birth to the church with power and wonder.

And you are still active in the world, working to bring renewal and hope to all people.

With joyful hearts, Holy Spirit, we celebrate your presence and work in human history.

May you continue to renew our lives with healing and wholeness that being made well in our  
souls we may live and move for the well-being of this world you so love.

We hunger and thirst for you.

Amen.

Community Looking Back ~ Looking Ahead

Again a word of welcome to these words inviting a coming away from the regular routine. Well  
respected Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann would say,

“Sabbath, in the first instance, is not about worship. It is about work stoppage. It is  
about withdrawal from the anxiety system of Pharaoh, the refusal to let one’s life be  
defined by production and consumption and the endless pursuit of private well-being.”

In these days he might even add, “it is the refusal to let one’s life be defined by the pandemic and  
all that is required of us as we wait for public health permission to no longer wear masks and  
physically distance. We are more than keepers of one another’s safety, we are the beloved of  
God, precious and treasured, worthy of respect and dignity.

In spending a few moments remembering the days of this past week, I wonder what moments  
stay with you: When did you feel respected and treasured - was it a kindly word spoken or the  
opening of the door at the grocery store? Perhaps it was the patience of the office assistant

taking time to answer your question or explain the procedure, or being received with a grandchild's joyful smile?

And then there is the extending of respect and dignity to another – did the remembering of another with a smile or phone call make someone else's day?

Take a moment and if you like share a story with someone... even send it along for next week's worship words.

Session met this past Tuesday. It was hoped we would be able to gather for the annual congregational meeting the beginning of June, but with the continued public health restrictions that is not possible. The Session has decided to postpone the meeting until the beginning of September with the hope that we can meet in person.

As we look forward to celebrating our 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary this October, it was great to hear of ideas. Please pass along ideas to chair of 160<sup>th</sup> committee, Terry Fisk – 519-338-3784.

In the next week or two, work is being done to upgrade technological ability to allow for live-streaming of worship services.

This coming week I am on holidays. With much appreciation, Rev. Dirk Kramer will be providing the meditation for next Sunday.

Song: # 655 Give me oil in my lamp

1. Give me oil in my lamp; keep me burning; give me oil in my lamp, I pray.  
Give me oil in my lamp; keep me burning; keep me burning till the break of day.

Chorus: Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the Servant King;  
sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna, let us sing!

2. Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising; give me joy in my heart, I pray.  
Give me joy in my heart; keep me praising; keep me praising till the break of day. chorus
3. Give me peace in my heart; keep me loving; give me peace in my heart, I pray.  
Give me peace in my heart, keep me loving; keep me loving till the break of day. Chorus
4. Give me love in my heart, keep me serving; give me love in my heart, I pray.  
Give me love in my heart, keep me serving; keep me serving till the break of day. Chorus

#### LISTEN TO THE WORD

Prayer of Illumination: Psalm 25:5

**Lead us in your truth, O God, and teach us, for you are the God of our salvation.  
For you we wait. Amen.**

Gospel Reading: Acts 2:1-21

“Whenever the wind blows, something new is created.

Way back in the first chapter of Genesis, a “wind from God swept over the face of the waters.” In a beautifully poetic way, the author paints a picture of a cosmos fashioned, an earth created, time begun. And God was active in it all.

In today’s story from Acts, that same wind of creation returns. The disciples, gathered there in that upper room, experienced a “sound like the rush of a violent wind.”

The wind blew and something new was created.”<sup>1</sup>

The story goes like this... reading from Acts...

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.<sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.<sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.<sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup> And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.<sup>7</sup> Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?<sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?<sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,<sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,<sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”<sup>12</sup> All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”<sup>13</sup> But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.<sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> ‘In the last days it will be, God declares,  
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,  
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
and your young men shall see visions,  
and your old men shall dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup> Even upon my slaves, both men and women,  
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;  
and they shall prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> And I will show portents in the heaven above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

<sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood,

---

<sup>1</sup> Words penned by Rev. Hugh Donnelly in his reflection on the story of Pentecost

before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.

<sup>21</sup> Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

Sermon Messy and Something New

It is interesting how different things catch our attention when reading the Bible. The year reading the story of Pentecost in Acts 2, it is not the prophetic words of Joel that Peter recites about God's Spirit being poured out on all kinds of people that catch my attention or the boldness of Peter standing up and addressing the crowd or the mysterious power of the Spirit enabling ordinary Galileans to speak different languages. This year what catches my attention is the messiness of the whole event. Perhaps it is because of the messiness of what all that is going on in my own little world at the present. With house renovations on the go, Dad returning from the hospital requiring some extra attention (by the way, thanks for the phone call and prayers remembering him), and as a commissioner to General Assembly there is a huge stack of reports to be read. Life feels rather messy right now and I am not sure if I could go on at all if it wasn't for the practice and help of the Spirit with sitting still and breathing and meditating, praying, that "*A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord*" ear worm, and my super supportive husband! Change is in the air. Something new is about to happen. The wind is blowing.

Or perhaps my attention is drawn to the messiness of the story of Pentecost because of an article I read in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank magazine that came a few weeks ago. While the program is winding down and coming to an end, for the past five years they have been teaching farmers in Ethiopia about conservation agriculture. The practice of minimal soil disturbance, soil cover to help lock in the nutrients and moisture, crop rotation and variety are all ways of increasing the health of degraded soil and improves the land's ability to produce. These practices are catching on and the results are astounding. The acceptance of this new way of farming is happening at government levels! It was not an easy leap for the farmers in rural Ethiopia to change their practices however. For generations in that place, a nicely tilled plot of land has been synonymous with hard work. Conservative agricultural practices can make the land look messy, with some weeds, and mulch and compost spread over the soil. The old assumptions of a messy field meant a lazy farmer, had to be challenged. Turns out, messy is good for the soil! What a great story of farmers who were willing to lay aside what others thought in order to restore health to the soil! Dandelions make a lawn look messy – even though the grass was cut only a couple days ago, the globes of winged seeds on tall cellulosic stems disrupt the neatness. Apparently dandelions are good for the soil with the long slender tap root system breaking up and aerating the soil!<sup>2</sup> Humm, what will it mean to set aside our preference for the neat and tidy lawns and make room for dandelions?!

The story of Pentecost is messy. This is no organized well-planned, everything under control kind of happening. The sound of the violent wind, the flames of fire, the cacophony of twelve

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.almanac.com> › weeds-indicator-plants

disciples all talking different languages and it could not have been in a quiet mumble kind of way; without megaphones – they must have been shouting loud and clear to catch the attention of the people from all over the city and draw a crowd. Bewilderment, amazement, astonishment, perplexed – are the words used to describe what was going on. The wind is blowing and it is so messy some sneer and describe it as a bunch of drunks! You heard what happens next. Peter gets up and with raised voice, addresses the crowd to clarify something much bigger is going, something new – the pouring out of the Spirit of God on even the least expected of people.

The winds are blowing in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. This year General Assembly is being asked to vote on these two remits:

Remit B, 2019 – Definition of Marriage

The Presbyterian Church in Canada holds two parallel definitions of marriage and recognizes that faithful, Holy Spirit filled, Christ centered, God honouring people can understand marriage as a covenant relationship between a man and a woman or as a covenant relationship between two adult persons.

That congregations, sessions, ruling and teaching elders be granted liberty of conscience and action on marriage

Remit C, 2019 – Ordination of LGBTQI persons

That congregations and presbyteries may call and ordain as ministers and elect and ordain as ruling elders LGBTQI persons (married or single) with the provision that liberty of conscience and action regarding participation in ordinations, inductions and installations be granted to ministers and ruling elders.

Regardless of which way the vote goes it is going to be messy. Can we trust the wind of God is blowing and it is going to be okay? Something new is about to be created.

This is not the first time in history the Presbyterian Church in Canada has been messy. We need only look back to 1925. Prior to 1925 the Presbyterian Church in Canada was the largest denomination in English speaking Canada. In 1925, **70%** of the congregations left the PCC and joined with the Methodist Church and Congregationalist Union to form the United Church of Canada. It was a messy time. A class mate of mine at Knox College recalled the story her parents told about Union. They lived in Waterloo. Apparently the local congregation was all in favour of uniting to form a United Church of Canada until they discovered they would be uniting with the Methodists. Now, the Methodists were tee totallers – were against drinking, while many of the Presbyterians were at liberty to have a drink with some even working at the local brewery. And that was the end of the discussion on Union. It was a very messy time in the life of the PCC, but it was not the end of the story. The wind of God blew and something new was created. The church is continually being made into something new. How else can it continue down through the centuries?

In the beginning, the wind of God blew and something new was created. On that day of Pentecost, the wind blew and something new was created. A community was born. Receiving the Spirit, the disciples were given the gifts of courage and proclamation that took them out into

the streets, declaring God's deeds of power, embodying the love of God. And devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem were given the gift of listening! And the rest is history!

The same wind that blew at the beginning of time, the same wind that blew on that day of Pentecost, that same wind from God blows still. As messy as it might be, if we keep our eyes and ears and hearts open, we will encounter this ongoing creative and re-creative work of God. This is Pentecost. Amen.

#### RESPOND TO THE WORD

*Silent Reflection Take a few minutes to sit quiet with these sermon words. What catches your attention? Is there a new thought, a new perspective? What is worth hanging onto? Is there anything lacking? What more would you add?*

#### Prayer of Confession

We confess O God, we are not always good at letting go of familiar beliefs and practices to make way for the new thing you are doing in us and in this world you so love.

One: ...and so we pray.

**All: Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy,  
Lord Jesus grant us your peace. Amen.**

#### Assurance of Pardon

Thank goodness for the new thing God was doing in Jesus Christ, making way for us to know the power of God to raise up new life, the forgiveness of sin, the unconditional love God has for us. Where regret is real, pardon is granted and we are set free to begin again. Thanks be to God.

#### Hymn: #392 O holy Dove of God descending

1. O holy dove of God descending, you are the love that knows no ending;  
all of our shattered dreams you're mending: Spirit, now live in me.
2. O holy Wind of God now blowing, you are the seed that God is sowing;  
you are the life that starts us growing: Spirit, now live in me.
3. O holy Rain of God now falling, you make the word of God enthralling;  
you are the inner voice now calling: Spirit, now live in me.
4. O holy Flame of God now burning, you are the power of Christ returning;  
you are the answer to our yearning: Spirit, now live in me. Amen.

#### Offering – Rose sent in this little story the other day...

A single guy decided life would be more fun if he had a pet. So he went to the pet store and told the owner that he wanted to buy an unusual pet. After some discussion, he finally bought a talking centipede, (100-legged bug), which came in a little white box to use for his house. He took the box back home, found a good spot for the box, and decided he would start off by taking his new pet to church with him. So he asked the centipede in the box, "Would you like to

go to church with me today? We will have a good time." But there was no answer from his new pet. This bothered him a bit, but he waited a few minutes and then asked again, "How about going to church with me and receive blessings?" But again, there was no answer from his new friend and pet. So he waited a few minutes more, thinking about the situation. The guy decided to invite the centipede one last time. This time he put his face up against the centipede's house and shouted, "Hey, in there! Would you like to go to church with me and learn about God?" This time, a little voice came out of the box. "I heard you the first time! I'm putting my shoes on!"

You have heard it said, "Patience is a virtue." So is generosity. May we be intentional in giving this week, not only of our resources, but our time and skills too.

Prayer of Dedication, prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, the Lord's Prayer

AS the beloved of God, precious and treasured, let us pray.

Holy God, we give thanks for the gift of this day and the goodness that meets us at every turn, every breath, every heart beat, every taste, every glimpse of beauty, every sound of music, every touch of kindness.

We give thanks for the new life you give us at every turn, saving us, forgiving us, setting us free to begin again and again in every moment and encounter of life.

We give thanks for church – your church in every corner of the world speaking the good news of your love and care. We give thanks for this church – how you have called us to mission and ministry, enabling us to be useful in the work of your kingdom.

In this moment of silence we lift up to you those situations and persons who lay heavy on our hearts... we lift up the messiness of our lives that bring us close to you.

We pray for those on our prayer list, the elderly who once sat among us and now sit in places of care.

Fred & Peggy Roger, Mary Stoddart, Roeli Wassink, Isabel McCutcheon, Eldie Weber, Irene Fisk, Elizabeth Gamble, Gerald Hattle. We pray strength for Henk Zemmeling and Fred Newman. We lift up to you Jonathan in his struggle for health. May your graces of healing and peace attend him.

We pray for the people of Israel and Palestine – the many caught in the warring conflict of their leaders. O God, may visions of living peaceably together be dreamed and imagined, that a new way forward might be possible.

WE pray for the Presbyterian Church in Canada, as they vote on issues of inclusiveness. Grant us your peace, give us your peace that lays to rest fear of what might happen next. In the messiness hold us steady, trusting in the new thing you are doing in and through the church.

When the doors are closed and we are afraid to move, fill us Holy Spirit.

When we are weak and unable to act, fill us Holy Spirit.

When we are hesitant and unable to speak, fill us Holy Spirit.

When we lack energy and are unable to cope, fill us Holy Spirit.



That we may go out in your power, to live and work and be useful, fill us Holy Spirit.  
 Come, Holy Spirit, breathe life into us that we may serve you, worship you, enjoy you.  
 Help us Spirit to pray earnestly as we have been taught,  
 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 sins as we forgive  
 those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the  
 kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever Amen.

I am mindful of Peggy Rogers as I we go forth with this hymn – it was one of her favorite hymns  
 and most appropriate for Pentecost.

Going Forth Hymn: #399 Spirit, Spirit of gentleness

Refrain: Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free,  
 Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

1. 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:  
 “Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.” Refrain
2. You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,  
 and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
 and when they were blinded with idols and lies,  
 then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes. refrain
3. 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 through your people on the rush of the wind. Refrain
4. You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.  
 From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;  
 our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.  
 With bold new decisions your people arise. Refrain

Benediction

In work and worship **God is with us.**

Gathered and scattered, **God is with us**

Now and always **God is with us.**

May God watch between me and you while we are absent one from the other.

Closing Song: Go now in peace

Go now in peace, never be afraid.  
 God will be with you each hour of every day.  
 Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.  
 Know God will guide you in all you do.  
 Go now in love and show you believe.  
 Reach out to others so all the world can see.  
 God will be there watching over you,  
 go now in peace, in faith, and in love. Amen.

Lectionary Readings for May 30 – Isaiah 6:1–8; Psalm 29  
 Romans 8:12–17; John 3:1–17

Prayer List

Fred & Peggy Roger	Mary Stoddart
Roeli Wassink	Isabel McCutcheon
Eldie Weber	Irene Fisk
Elizabeth Gamble	Gerald Hattle
Henk Zemmeling	Fred Newman
Jonathan Newman	

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

Moment for Mission

Worship Resources to Do God's Work

This year, Pentecost and Healing and Reconciliation Sunday fall on the same day, making it a day not only for celebration, but also for solemn reflection and prayer for the Indigenous children who attended residential schools and the people who are living with its legacy. Resources to help worship leaders develop services to mark the church's birthday and honour its commitment to reconciliation are available on the PCC website at [presbyterian.ca/worship](http://presbyterian.ca/worship). Gifts to Presbyterians Sharing have helped build this comprehensive library of worship resources, providing congregations with free materials (seasonal, intergenerational, ecumenical, etc.) to do God's work throughout the year.