

CALL TO WORSHIP

O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

**WHEN YOU SEND FORTH YOUR SPIRIT,
THEY ARE CREATED;
AND YOU RENEW THE FACE OF THE GROUND.**

May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works.

**WE WILL SING TO THE LORD AS LONG AS WE LIVE;
WE WILL SING PRAISE TO GOD WHILE WE HAVE BEING.**

PRAYER OF APPROACH

Mighty and gracious God,
we gather with gladness in Your presence,
bringing to You the worship of humble, grateful hearts.
We adore You, O God,
creator and sustainer of all things;
giver of every good and perfect gift;
for the countless blessings we have experienced in our lives,
for Your goodness and mercy that have followed us all our days.

God of overflowing generosity,
we praise You most of all for the greatest gift of Your love
in the coming of Your Son,
our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,
and for the God You have shown us to be through Him.

Today we remember with joy
the coming of your Spirit
from the risen, ascended Christ at Pentecost,
upon all those gathered:
dispelling their fears,
clearing their vision,
uniting them as one,
equipping them for mission.

Among us gathered together this day,
and among Your people wherever they are gathered,
may the same Spirit of Pentecost
minister grace in these ways to each of us too.

May our hearts and lives

be open to the wind of the Spirit,
the giver of life,
that we may be energised
to live more faithfully as members
of your coming kingdom
and as joyful witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ.
In whose strong name we pray.
AMEN

HYMN Holy Spirit, hear us

1 Holy Spirit, hear us;
help us while we sing;
breathe into the music
of the praise we bring.

2 Holy Spirit, prompt us
when we bow to pray;
nearer come, and teach us
what we ought to say.

3 Holy Spirit, teach us
through the words we read;
bring to life the Bible
with the light we need.

4 Holy Spirit, give us
each a lively mind;
make us more like Jesus,
gracious, pure and kind.

5 Holy Spirit, help us
daily, by your might,
what is wrong to conquer,
and to choose the right.

CONFESSION

God has promised
that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord
shall be saved.
Therefore, let us call upon the Lord,
confessing our sins

As we say together:

**HOLY SPIRIT, HOW WE NEED YOU!
OUR VISION IS DIM,
OUR DREAMS TOO SMALL.
COME HOLY SPIRIT,
INSPIRE AND DIRECT US.
OUR HEARTS ARE COLD.
OUR FAITH IS FEEBLE.
COME HOLY SPIRIT,
KINDLE FIRE WITHIN US.
OUR BODY IS BROKEN,
OUR UNITY BREACHED.
COME HOLY SPIRIT,
HEAL AND PRESERVE US.
FILL THIS PLACE WITH SONGS OF PRAISE.
FUEL OUR LIVES WITH POWER AND GRACE.
RENEW THIS WORLD, WE PRAY,
THAT IT MIGHT GLOW
WITH THE LIGHT OF YOUR LOVE
AND SHOW FORTH YOUR SALVATION.
AMEN**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Sisters and brothers,
Hear this good news:
God offers forgiveness of our sins
And the grace of repentance.
In that grace
We have been offered new and abundant life
In Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Time with the Young and the Young at Heart

Scripture

Acts 2:1–21

Psalms 104:24–34, 35b

1 Corinthians 12:3b–13

John 20:19–23

Sermon GOD'S DELIGHT

During this time of self-isolation
you may have seen on newscasts
how wild creatures are showing up
in the heart of our cities;
places where they haven't been seen for years.
Dolphins have been returned to the shores of Italy,
kangaroos have been spotted in the streets of Adelaide,
coyotes in San Francisco,
the list goes on.
Even here in Ontario,
there are reports of more wildlife evident in our larger cities
and many people have commented on the prevalence of bird songs.

It has all been an interesting study
on the effect of human activity
on the natural world;
and on nature's ability to recover
when given a chance.

I began to think about these news stories
during this past week
as I was listening to a podcast
that I often listen to
on the texts for this Sunday.
In discussing the reading from the Psalm
Professor Rolf Jacobson from Luther Seminary
in St. Paul MN,
noted that there is an error in the NRSV's
translation of the Psalm.
Rather than verse 26 reading
"There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it."
the Hebrew text actually says:
"There goes Leviathan that you formed
to take joy in him."

Time and again,
in my reading and preparation
for this morning's service
I kept encountering this idea of joy:
that the creation is God's delight
and that God created for God's own enjoyment.

As a whole,
Psalm 104 is this great hymn of praise to God
for God's work of creation,
beginning with the heavens and the earth,
water and vegetation,
the wild animals,
the moon and sun.
And then we arrive at the section of the Psalm read for us by Andrea;
which speaks of the sea and all its creatures.

Throughout the whole Psalm there is this sense of awe
for all that God has done in creation,
and how creation so marvellously supports life.
And here in these verses,
we are presented with the image of the sea
not as some murky and mysterious source of chaos,
inhabited with great monsters from the deep;
but rather we are given an image of God's pond
where even the most terrifying creatures
cause God to chuckle with their antics.

And integral to that act of creation is God's Spirit.
What an amazing thing for us to be reminded of
in these days when everything seems to be so serious;
that God,
the God who creates us,
the God who redeems us,
and the God who empowers us through the Spirit,
is a God of joy;
and creation is God's delight.

The Psalmist praises the God
who is the source of every good thing:
*"all [of creation] looks to you
to give them their food in due season;
when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand,
they are filled with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground."*

Sometimes on Pentecost Sunday,
it can seem that the Holy Spirit
was God's unique gift to the Church;
and yet the Spirit is an integral part of the triune God
and cannot be separated from God the Father,
and God the Son.

Indeed the Spirit
is as old as time itself.
In Genesis' record of the creation
it states:

*In the beginning
when God created the heavens and the earth,
the earth was a formless void
and darkness covered the face of the deep,
while a wind from God
swept over the face of the waters.*

...while a wind from God
swept over the face of the waters.

Ruah – in Hebrew –

Breath,
Spirit,
Wind,
Life.

God breathed across the waters of chaos
and creation began.

God breathed into Adam

-- the first human –

and we were filled with the image of God
and we had life.

*you give them their food in due season;
... and they are filled with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.”*

It was the Spirit of God – Ruah –
that descended upon Jesus at his baptism,
affirming for him his calling

and preparing Jesus to reveal God's will to us
in his earthly ministry.

It was the Spirit,
that drove Jesus out into the wilderness
after his baptism,
to face the temptations of this world;
to give us a glimpse of new life in Christ.

And today,
on this Day of Pentecost,
it was God's Spirit -- Ruah --
who settled upon Jesus' disciples
with tongues of fire,
and allowed them to proclaim God's word
to the whole world
-- to all those who had gathered in Jerusalem
for the Feast of Weeks
fifty days after the celebration of Passover.

And on that day,
in the midst of the assembled throngs,
the disciples proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ;
and each was able to hear the message
IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE.
In that moment Babel's curse is removed
and the nations are restored.

And all who are able to hear
are invited to image the in-breaking of God's Kingdom
as Peter draws on the image of the return of the Exiles
from the Book of Joel.

A day in which the Spirit of God will be
poured 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.

Life
New Life in Christ
Recreation

The celebration of Pentecost
is a reminder to the Church

that we have a message to tell.
That God will not leave us to languish in our sin
but that the God who creates
is also the God who recreates
all through God's Spirit.

That God's longing is for a created order
that is as God declared it to be:
a creation that is good.
And not just the creation
but humanity too.

It is an important reminder for us
as we seek to make sense of a world
turned upside down by this current disease.

It is an important reminder for us
as we seek to make sense of a world
that has been set on fire
by racism and people's demands for justice.

Into our powerlessness,
into our alienation,
into our anger,
into in our longing for justice,
the Psalmist speaks:
*"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.
...[Therefore] I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being."*

Do not despair.
The Spirit of God
breathes life into the creation;
Watch for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

MOMENT FOR MISSION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD'S PRAYER
Lord our God,

we thank You for the Holy Spirit
which was from the very beginning:
moving over the waters of creation;
bringing light out of darkness;
order out of chaos;
breathing life into us who were formed in Your image.

We thank You for the Spirit's anointing
of prophets, priests and kings,
who revealed your will to your people,
and who prepared the way for Your coming to us in Your Son.

We praise You for the Spirit's anointing,
without measure,
of Jesus
and for everything accomplished in His life and ministry,
His death and resurrection,
through the Spirit's filling.

And we thank You that,
true to the promise of Jesus,
the Spirit came in transforming power
on the disciples at Pentecost
to send them out on mission,
as Jesus was Himself sent by the Father.

We rejoice that we are the benefactors of that mission
and in turn have been called to point others to you.
We pray now for our world,
that your Spirit might heal and enliven us this day.

Brood over the chaos we have created in today's world,
so that people everywhere
may learn the way of life as You intend,
and find purpose, meaning and hope in their existence.
Where there is oppression and abuse of others,
bring Your justice.
Where there is anxiety and fear,
bring Your peace.
Where there is hatred and division,
bring Your love.
Where the resources of this awesome world are exploited,
and we fail in our calling as trustees of land and sea,

grant us repentance and the grace to learn a better way.

We pray for those who know all too well
the effects of discrimination and racism.
Help us all to see beyond ethnicity
or the colour of another's skin,
and to see in them your divine image.
Especially, we pray for the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul
as they reel from the animosity and destruction
that has arisen in that place.
May all those involved be able to find even a kernel
of justice and unity,
and use that as a starting point to build a new community.

We pray for our world
as we seek to respond to the current pandemic.
We pray for medical workers who must care for the ill,
for researchers and technicians who work in laboratories
processing tests and search for a cure.
We pray for those who face the uncertainty
of closed workplaces
and unstructured days.
Help us to refocus our lives upon your grace
and to rediscover the blessing that is our
in being created in your image.

Breathe new life and zeal into your Church
that we might delight in the gospel.
Set our hearts on fire with Your love.
Grow Your own fruit in our lives.
As You did that day in Jerusalem,
in all our diversity make us one in truth and love.
May the gifts of all be valued
and used for the common good.
Empower and equip us
to bear compelling witness to Jesus' universal Lordship,
that all may know of the hope Christ came to give;
the hope of in-breaking the Kingdom of God.

As we wait for your Kingdom's fulfilment,
keep us constant in prayer
as we say together the prayer Jesus taught his disciples:
OUR FATHER >>>

HYMN Like the murmur of the dove's song

1 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.

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

3 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.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Be witnesses of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
who rose from the dead,
who sits at the right hand of God in glory,
and who sends the Holy Spirit to empower us
for service in his name.

May the grace of God the Father bless you with peace,
may the love of Christ, God's son, sustain you in joy,
and may the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with courage,
this day and forevermore.

AMEN