

**Whitehorse Uniting Church
Sunday 19 May 2024
Pentecost Sunday_B**



Introit 132 Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty (modern)

The Hymns Project 2017 (Parkway Worship Ministry)

<https://youtu.be/JwuDSw-9cUQ?si=b4UnJGN64JKtqjEK>

Welcome

May the worship bless you.



Acknowledgment

We acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place.

We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.



Call to Worship

On Pentecost all were amazed and perplexed

Saying to one another: "What does this mean?"

May we be amazed and perplexed.

May we come to know Pentecost in our hearts and lives.

Prayer – Song to the Holy Spirit.



Lord, Holy Spirit,
You blow like the wind in a thousand paddocks,
Inside and outside the fences,
You blow where you wish to blow.

Lord, Holy Spirit,
You are the sun who shines on the little plant,
You warm him gently, you give him life,
You raise him up to become a tree with many leaves.

Lord, Holy Spirit,
 You are the mother eagle with her young,
 holding them in peace under your feathers,
 on the highest mountain you have built your nest,
 above the valley, above the storms of the world,
 where no hunter ever comes.

Lord, Holy Spirit,
 You are the bright cloud in whom we hide,
 In whom we know already that the battle has been won.
 You bring us to our brother Jesus,
 to rest our heads upon his shoulder.

Lord, Holy Spirit,
 You are the kind fire who does not cease to burn,
 Consuming us with flames of love and peace,
 Driving us out like sparks to set the world on fire.

Lord, Holy Spirit,
 In the love of friends, you are building a new house.
 Heaven is with us when you are with us.
 You are singing your songs in the hearts of the poor.
 Guide us, wound us, heal us. Bring us to the Father.

Song to the Holy Spirit. James K. Baxter from Thoughts about the Holy Spirit, Celtic Daily Prayer, Book Two, Copyright © 2015 The Northumbria Community Trust.

Hymn 418 She sits like a bird

Devana Parish Church of Scotland Aberdeen 2021

<https://youtu.be/5EmkyT6uUZE?si=6ilrs9LoUt0K-BEV>

First Reading from Acts 2:1-21

2 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** 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. **3** Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

5 Now there were devout Jews from every people under heaven living in Jerusalem. **6** And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. **7** Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? **9** Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."

12 All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" **13** But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Fellow Jews^[a] and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ ‘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.

¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. ²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. ²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’



Quiet moment of Reflection - What does this mean?"

Second Reading - Romans 8:22-27

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in^[a] hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes^[b] with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God,^[c] who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit^[d] intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Third Reading - John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15

²⁶ “When the Advocate^[a] comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. ²⁷ You also are to testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

⁴ But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate^[a] will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about^[b] sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Young at Heart – What does this mean?

Acts – “Suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.”

Romans - “²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes^[b] with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God,^[c] who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit^[d] intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”

John – “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.” What is the truth?



Hymn 407 Breathe on me Breath of God

Rosemary Siemens 2023

<https://youtu.be/jzxqtzju47I?si=n4T21Mv5B7ZolluW>

Sermon – Rev Tina

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



What does this mean?

Over a lifetime we get to see and feel, know, and ponder, be guided through prayer and to listen or read about the teachings of Jesus about the Holy Spirit and we form our own conclusions.

However, sometimes we form a new perspective after gaining a new insight and it can surprise us. It may even lead to a shift in our understanding or perspective. That is the nature of the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps this is what was happening at that first Pentecost where the crowds from many nations were gathered, amazed and perplexed, saying to one another: *What does this mean?*

Jewish people knew of the Holy Spirit, had their own understanding according to scripture, tradition, and experience. Something new was happening.

We know of the Holy Spirit from our traditions, interpretations, stories, scripture, and experiences. Many of us know of the Wesley brothers’ experiences of the Holy Spirit. They wrote about this in their sermons and hymns. There are stories of people in the fields feeling overcome by the presence of the Holy Spirit and falling to their knees in repentance and prayer, where their lives were transformed.

I'm often surprised by adults or young people saying they felt the presence of the Holy Spirit and were drawn into a church, often for the first time, where they say: *I don't know why I'm here.*

Jesus taught us about the Spirit of truth. In today's gospel written by John, Jesus speaks of the Spirit, and it engages with our minds. The Spirit of truth guides us towards the truth, who is Jesus.

For most of us, coming to know the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth can take a lifetime. It's a gradual movement. A deepening of understanding and insight.

Romans, written by Paul, offers us another perspective. The whole of creation is groaning and we are part of this movement. The Holy Spirit intercedes within the deepest parts of our souls, with sighs too deep to understand and we gain deep knowing, where we feel the Spirit of God, physically, in our guts, groaning, just like the birth pangs of creation, where everything is moving towards our final salvation by God. It's a physical experience.

Acts written by Luke, speaks of the Spirit engaging with our senses. People heard the sound of a strong wind moving amongst them. They saw tongues of fire on people's heads, baptising them with fire, just like John the Baptist prophesied.



Many artists have tried to portray Pentecost, the amazement, awe, wind, and fire.

Such as Greco. We see the tongues of fire and sense the awe and see the dove.

Greco, 1541?-1614. *Descent of the Holy Spirit*, from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48043> [retrieved May 14, 2024]. Original source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El_Greco_006.jpg.

Such as *Jesus MAFA*. We see the Spirit appearing as a golden globe of fire and tongues of fire over people's heads and people on their knees in awe. Perhaps it happened when they least expected it, during a communal meal. Perhaps how the Spirit is presented and people's response, is cultural.



JESUS MAFA. *Pentecost*, from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48388> [retrieved May 14, 2024]. Original source: <http://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr> (contact page: <https://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr/contact>).



Some of us may experience the Holy Spirit according to our culture and tradition. We may even experience the Holy Spirit in the outback, our homes, during prayer or worship, or when we are still and silent.

T Lyndon

The Holy Spirit often comes unexpectedly. It has been like this long before being recorded in the bible. Perhaps the Spirit has been present before creation and is constantly recreating our world and us.

Our experience of the Spirit can be a body and mind experience or a spiritual experience or a deep knowing or complete surprise or feeling of awe, or through the slow movement of the Spirit.

No wonder it takes a lifetime to understand and comprehend how God's Spirit engages with each one of us and all of us, as we journey through eternal life, here and now, and in the future.

Quiet Moment



St Margaret's Anglican Church, Eltham

Choir - O Holy Spirit, Lord of Grace - Christopher Tye

Choir of St Gregory of Nyssa Church (Mark Pritchard 2023)

<https://youtu.be/01lTJFQPSz8?si=ZMmWgacBe2j5TSO>

Choir of Trinity Episcopal Church Upperville 2022

<https://youtu.be/gwBWYz-quYw?si=1ljxuNvvbgAN-qCo>

Offering prayer

Lord and giver of every good thing we bring to you our lives and gifts for your kingdom all for transformation through your grace and love made known in Jesus Christ our Savior, amen.

Prayers of the People – Barb Wandoch

Let us come together to pray. Gracious Lord in our weakness we may not know what we should pray for, but with the intercession of your Holy Spirit we bring forward our hopes for the world, its people and ourselves.

We pray for an end to violence and trauma in all its forms: whether it is the horror of war that brings fear and oppression to so many places around the globe or the often hidden horror of domestic violence that tears apart families and destroys relationships.

Lord, make us wiser and stronger to take action to solve the problems that we create for ourselves. Teach us to care for this precious planet which is our home and to protect all living things for whom we should be good stewards.

Help us to hold up the example of Jesus and live as a loving, compassionate people with empathy for others. Whether they are asylum seekers searching for safety, homeless seeking security or people of other faiths seeking understanding and respect, help us to “walk in their shoes” and see their point of view.

We pray that governments, bureaucracies, and organisations will consider the impact they may have on individuals and society so that they can improve how they engage with people. Help those who are working for peace and an end to poverty and hunger have their voices heard above the clamour of other groups with self-interest.

For those facing tests and surgery we ask that you equip the medical professionals with the skills they need and for the patients in their care we pray for courage and healing as they face their results and procedures.

For those in professions that provide care, nurture, and healing; doctors, nurses, paramedics, carers, teachers and police- we ask that you send your spirit to energise and sustain them when they are feeling weary or stretched beyond their limits.

Gracious Lord, we pray for those who are recently bereaved. Comfort them in their distress and breathe upon them the peace of your Holy Spirit and its assurance that those they have loved, now rest safely in your care. We hold fast to the promise that all tears will be wiped away and there will be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.

As we share this quiet moment of silence, Lord we bring to you the prayers that are in each of our hearts today.

(pause for a moment of silence)

Gracious Lord we pray for our Synod and Presbytery as it continues to serve each church and congregation. We ask that you sustain our Ministers Tina and Peter and bless their work and uphold our Church Council. We also ask for your blessing for our neighbouring churches and for the Whitehorse Churches Care as it serves the needs of this community.

Lord, help us to fulfil our promises as followers of Christ. Pour out your spirit on each of us as we go forward to face this coming week. Together we share the Lord's prayer –

The Lord's Prayer

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 always Amen

Candle Prayers

If you have a candle, you're welcome to light it for prayers.



Hymn 658 Here I am Lord

St Louis Jesuits (UCP music 2000)

<https://youtu.be/Z4ATBaI7ycY?si=F8eBkBSQU-QWDsgh>

Sending out

God's glory has filled our hearts!

We will go to empty ourselves for others.

Christ has given himself for us!

We will go to offer ourselves to everyone in need.

The Spirit gifts us with new life!

We will go to be a blessing to everyone we meet.

Thom. M. Shuman, The Soft Petals of Grace, Wild Goose Publications, Glasgow. www.ionabooks.com Used with permission.

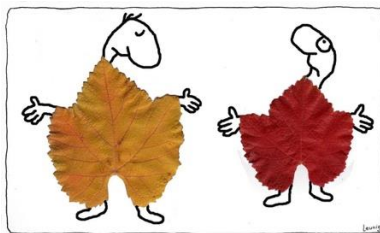
Hymn 779 May the feet of God

Robin and Dorothy Mann 2015

<https://youtu.be/WfOFIWxGaP8?si=wEQP-qhChep9aZCL>

Pastoral Care tips – Autumn. Rev Tina

There are two ways of responding to the world.



Leunig, used with permission.

A seedling from Joan Chittister, The Gift of years, copyright © 2008 Joan Chittister, used with permission.

“Life is not simply what happens to us. Life is what we make happen.”