



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Rev. Gregory Daly: Minister of Word & Sacrament

Rev. Carmen Llanos: Minister of Community Development

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Betty McCulloch

May 23, 2021 – Pentecost



WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Away With Our Fears

Music: H.J. Gauntlett

Call to Worship (based on Ezekiel 37:1–14)

The hand of God is upon us.

We are brought out of the valley by the spirit of God.

God's spirit is within us, and we shall live.

God will bring us to new life.

No more can we say, "There is no life within us,"

for God has given us flesh and bones, spirit and life.

In the Spirit of Life, let us worship God.

Response

Like The Murmur of the Dove's Song

VU 205

Words: Carl P. Daw, Jr. Music: Peter Cutts
Words © 1982 & Music © 1969 Hope Publishing Co.

*Like the murmur of the dove's song,
like the challenge of her flight,
like the vigour 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 our 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.*



Life & Work of the Church

Welcome to online worship. Whoever you are, however you identify, wherever you come from, you are welcome here.



Land Acknowledgement



Candle Lighting

Opening Hymn

The Lone, Wild Bird

VU 384

Words (v 1, 2): Henry Richard McFadyen © 1927 Homiletic and Pastoral Review
(v 3- 5): Marty Haugen © 1991 G.I.A. Publications, Inc
Music: Walker's Southern Harmony

*The lone, wild bird in lofty flight
is still with you, nor leaves your sight.
And I am yours! I rest in you,
Great Spirit, come, rest in me too.*

*The ends of earth are in your hand,
the sea's dark deep and far off land.
And I am yours! I rest in you,
Great Spirit, come, rest in me too.*

*Each secret thought is known to you,
the path I walk my whole life through;
my days, my deeds, my hopes, my fears,
my deepest joys, my silent tears.*

*In secret depths you knit my frame,
before my birth you spoke my name;
within my soul, as close as breath,
so near to me, in life, in death.*

*O search me, God, my heart reveal,
renew my life, my spirit heal;
for I am yours, I rest in you,
Great Spirit, come, rest in me too.*

Prayer for Grace

Merciful God, we would rather stop your Spirit when she leads us to unfamiliar places, people, ideas, and situations.

We would rather choose how your Spirit comes, and receive the gifts we believe we deserve.

*Help us to remember that your Spirit is a gift
freely given to each of us for the common good.*

Help us to trust the Spirit's leading.

Amen.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

And Now for Something Completely Different



Hymn

O Holy Spirit, by Whose Breath

VU 200

Words: 9th-century Latin. Attributed to Rabanus Maurus.

English Translation: © 1971 John Webster Grant

Music: plainsong melody

*O Holy Spirit, by whose breath
life rises vibrant out of death:
come to create, renew, inspire;
come, kindle in our hearts your fire.*

*You are the seeker's sure resource,
of burning love the living source,
protector in the midst of strife,
source and sustainer of all life.*

*In you God's energy is shown,
to us your varied gifts made known.
Teach us to speak; teach us to hear;
yours is the tongue and yours the ear.*

*From inner strife grant us release;
turn nations to the ways of peace.
To fuller life your people bring
that as one body we may sing:*

*Praise to God, to Christ the Word,
and to the Spirit: all adored. Amen*

Prayer of Illumination



*Help us O God, to come to you with open lives to receive your words.
May we give them new life as we listen to what you have to say.
May we be fired by the Spirit to open our hearts as we embark on this journey
with each other and with you.
Amen*

John 15: 26-27 & 16:4b-15

New Revised Standard Version

²⁶“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from God, the Spirit of truth who comes from God, they will testify on my behalf. ²⁷You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning; 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. ⁵But now I am going to the One who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send them to you. ⁸And when they come, they will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰about righteousness, because I am going to God and you will see me no longer; ¹¹about 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. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, they will guide you into all the truth; for they will not speak on their own, but will speak whatever they hear, and will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴They will glorify me, because they will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that God has is mine. For this reason I said that they will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Acts 2:1-21

New Revised Standard Version

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

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

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “People of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, 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 children shall prophesy,
and your young people shall see visions,
and your elders shall dream dreams.

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

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

²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of God’s great and glorious day.

²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of God shall be saved.’

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God

Sermon

The Embarrassing Spirit



There's a Spirit in the Air

Words: Brian Wren © 1979 Hope Publishing Co.
Music: Jim Strathdee © 1993 Desert Flower Music

*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 leads the fight,
seeing wrong and setting right:
God in Christ has come to stay.
Live tomorrow's life today!*

*When a stranger's not alone,
when 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,
telling Christians everywhere:
praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working, in our world.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering



Prayers of the People



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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

VU 375

Words, Music: © 1978 James K. Manley

*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 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.*

*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.*

Benediction & Commissioning



Postlude

May the Grace of Christ Our Saviour

Music: Heinrich Albert

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Other Resources for Today

Acknowledgements

Call to Worship and Prayer for Grace – Wanda Winfield, Blenheim United Church
Prayers of the People adapted from Tricia Challoner, Norquay United Church, Saskatchewan

Sermon

[Welcome - Nadia Bolz-Weber \(nadiabolzweber.com\)](http://nadiabolzweber.com)

Lectionary Readings

Ezekiel 37:1-14 New Revised Standard Version

37 The hand of God came upon me, and brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² God led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³ God said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O GOD, you know.” ⁴ Then God said to me, “Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of God. ⁵ Thus says GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶ 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 God.”

⁷ 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. ⁸ 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. ⁹ Then God said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” ¹⁰ I prophesied as God commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹ Then God 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.’ ¹² Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says 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. ¹³ And you shall know that I am God, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ 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, have spoken and will act, says God.”

Psalms 104:24-34 New Revised Standard Version

²⁴ O GOD, how manifold are your works!

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

²⁵ Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.

²⁶ There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.

²⁷ These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;
²⁸ when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
²⁹ When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
³⁰ When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.

³¹ May the glory of God endure forever;
may God rejoice in their works—
³² who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
³³ I will sing to God as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing,
for I rejoice in God.

³⁵ Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!

Romans 8:22-27

New Revised Standard Version

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; 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 hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 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 with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.