

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

May 23, 2021, Pentecost Sunday

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time Sunday at 7:00 p.m.

Email sketchingalong4@gmail.com to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Hymn: MV 23 *Come, O Holy Spirit*

1. Come, O Holy Spirit, set the Church on fire;
strike it as the lightning hits a posing spire.
Burn away the structures and consume the sham
of our holy systems: Come, in Jesus' name!

Come, come, come, in Jesus' name!
Take our hearts by storm.
All the world lies open: Pentecost is now!
(repeat refrain)

2. Blow away the cobwebs of our stubborn past.
Come, send flying from us myths unfit to last.
Wind of change, refresh us and disturb our calm;
teach us what true love is, take our hearts by storm!

Come, come, come, in Jesus' name!
Take our hearts by storm.
All the world lies open: Pentecost is now!
(repeat refrain)

3. Free us from the babble of our Babel mind;
spark in us a language all can understand.
Lighten then our darkness, come and show us how
all the world lies open: Pentecost is now!

Come, come, come, in Jesus' name!
Take our hearts by storm.
All the world lies open: Pentecost is now!
(repeat refrain)

Amen!

Welcome & Announcements

Welcome to St. Andrew's United Church, a community of faith in Sudbury, Ontario.
Today is the day of Pentecost, the birthday for Christ's Church, arguably the among the most important days of our worship year! So welcome on this special day!

If you are joining us for the first time today, thank you and welcome. At the end of the service, there will be information about how to contact us – via email, facebook, and even by phone. We also have a Virtual Fellowship time tonight at 7 p.m. hosted by Bev and Diane. Information on how to join this evening's fellowship time is included at the end of the service.

As we prepare to worship, let us take a quiet moment ... [silence]

Inviting Holy Light

We breathe, life flows. Holy breath. Creation of which we are a part is interconnected with Creator. You and I and all of Creation praise the Creator. The candle flickers, fed also by Spirit. Come Holy Spirit, Come! [Light candle in silence]

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

We are all Treaty people; I am still learning what that means. My ancestors, settlers to this land, made Treaties with First Peoples. I'm standing on Robinson-Huron Treaty land; perhaps where you are there was a different Treaty made. Treaties across Turtle Island, but not honoured by our government. We acknowledge that the Wahnapiatae First Nation and the Atikemeksheng Anishnabek call this territory home. We also give thanks for the current and historic contributions that Indigenous and Metis peoples have made. May we journey and act together towards Reconciliation.

Call to Worship

The Holy Spirit came as fire and wind.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

People of all genders, all ages,
all cultures witnessed the day of Pentecost.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

The people were bewildered, astonished, amazed!
They wondered:

What are we to do?

Then Peter stood and raised his voice.

We need to know: what did he say?

He said, "we're not drunk. We are filled with God's Spirit so that we can tell you about Jesus of Nazareth."

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

The spirit danced in fire and in a multitude of languages.
The spirit was poured out on those from young to old.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

Dare to be dreamers and to believe.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Dare to believe in what can and could be, for God is gracious.
God is the Creator. God's love knows no bounds.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

Come, abide in, and empower us, today!

Opening Prayer

Let us pray: Great spirit, comforting wing, soaring heart: open us to the wonder of your presence in wind and wind, in rain, in soil, and in sky. In each ray of sunshine, in each shining star, in each waving branch, may we recognize you reaching out to us with your invitation to rejoice in your glory. Christ of the changing seasons, Christ of the revolving earth, Christ of the cosmos: change us, turn us, expand our awareness and bless us, as you bless all creation with the joy of your heart. May our worship be a blessing. Amen.

The Prayer Jesus Taught

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: VU 376 *Spirit of the Living God*

1. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

2. Spirit of the living God, move among us all;
make us one in heart and mind, make us one in love:
humble, caring, selfless, sharing.
Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love!

Time Up Front (Video, Barber/Battaino family)

Acts 2: 1-18, 21 – A “campfire” telling of the Pentecost story.

Narrator:

They of Pentecost came, 50 days after Jesus had his last supper with his friends. *Picture yourself among the disciples:*

A sound roars from the sky without warning, the roar of a violent wind, and the whole house where you are gathered reverberates with the sound. Then a flame appears, dividing into smaller flames and spreading from one person to the next. All the people present are filled with the Holy Spirit and begin speaking in languages they’ve never spoken, as the Spirit empowers them.

There are Jewish pilgrims there in Jerusalem because of the holy festival, people from every nation. They are amazed because each of them can hear the group speaking in their native languages. They are shocked and amazed by this...

Pilgrims:

Just a minute. Aren’t these people all from that little out-of-the way place? How in the world do we all hear our native languages being spoken?

Look, I hear French and Fin, Ojibwe, Spanish, Dutch and German, and Vulcan... We each hear in our own languages people talk about God’s powerful love.

Their amazement becomes confusion as they wonder,

Pilgrims:

What does this mean?

Skeptics:

It doesn’t mean anything. They’re all drunk on some fresh wine!

Peter shouted to the crowd,

Peter:

People, listen. I want you to understand: these people aren’t drunk as you may think. Look, it’s only nine o’clock in the morning! No, this isn’t drunkenness; this is the fulfillment of the prophecy, remember God saying:

In the last days,
I will offer My Spirit to humanity.
Your children will boldly speak the word of the Lord.
Young warriors will see visions,
and your elders will dream dreams...
And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord
will be liberated into God’s freedom and peace.

What a story. Some call this day the birthday of Jesus’ church, Pentecost. Do you think that these things might have happened? People were waiting, kind of scared, wondering what would happen after Jesus died and rose. How do you think the disciples felt, being in the middle of this? What about the people watching?

Hymn: MV 156 Dance with the Spirit (“Dance”, “Move”, “Sing”)

1. Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin’,
walk with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin’,
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

2. Move with the Spirit early in the mornin’,
walk with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin’,
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

3. Sing with the Spirit early in the mornin’,
walk with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin’,
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

Scripture Readings (*Michael Kamau*)

Psalm 104: 24-34

Listen to the poetry of faith from Psalm 104...

Our Lord, by your wisdom you made so many things;
the whole earth is covered with your living creatures.

But what about the ocean so big and wide?

It is alive with creatures, large and small.

And there are the ships, as well as Leviathan,
the monster you created to splash in the sea.

All of these depend on you to provide them with food,
and you feed each one with your own hand, until they are full...

You look at the earth, and it trembles.

You touch the mountains, and smoke goes up.

As long as I live, I will sing and praise you, the Lord God.

I hope my thoughts will please you,
because you are the one who makes me glad.

Acts 2: 1-17

A reading from the biblical book The Acts of the Apostles, this is the birth of movement of the followers of Jesus that became the Church:

On the day of Pentecost all the followers of Jesus were together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

Many religious Jews from every country in the world were living in Jerusalem. And when they heard this noise, a crowd gathered. But they were surprised, because they were hearing everything in their own languages. They were excited and amazed, and said:

Don't all these who are speaking come from Galilee? Then why do we hear them speaking our very own languages?...

Everyone was excited and confused. Some of them even kept asking each other, "What does all this mean?"

Others made fun of the Lord's followers and said, "They are drunk."

Peter stood with the eleven apostles and spoke in a loud and clear voice to the crowd:

Friends and everyone else living in Jerusalem, listen carefully to what I have to say! You are wrong to think that these people are drunk. After all, it is only nine o'clock in the morning. But this is what God had the prophet Joel say,

“When the last days come, I will give my Spirit to everyone.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy...
In those days I will give my Spirit to my servants,
both men and women, and they will prophesy.”

Let us pray: God, your power shines through in the elements of water and fire, within them both there is power to destroy and to build up, to end life and create it anew. You have baptized us with both, now, open our hearts and our minds to the wisdom revealed by your Spirit and your Word.
Amen.

Message:

Message not available at time of printing.

Hymn: MV 142 Oh a Song Must Rise

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

1. From the mountains to the valleys, from the desert to the sea,
a song must rise once again.
From the voices of our leaders, the voice of you and me,
a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

2. From poverty and riches, from the voice of young and old,
a song must rise once again.
From the free and the imprisoned, the timid and the bold,
a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

3. From ev'ry house of worship, in ev'ry faith and tongue,
a song must rise once again.
From the villages and cities, a new song must be sung,
a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Minute for Mission

Thank you for Believing – Arwa's Story

We all need someone who believes in us. Someone who supports our dreams. When you give to Mission & Service, you are that someone. Here's one story of how your belief and support make all the difference.

Three years ago, Arwa was a Palestinian refugee who had just arrived in Montreal. She had made a harrowing journey, travelling from Saudi Arabia through New York City with three children in tow. "It wasn't easy for me. I was a single mom in a new country with new people. I was struggling for housing and looking for a job. It wasn't easy at all," she says.

Arwa sought help at Montreal City Mission, an outreach ministry your Mission & Service gifts support. There, her whole family found support and belonging. Arwa's children made friends, and she benefitted from training programs and events. It wasn't long before Arwa gathered a group of women together to form a catering cooperative called Women Weaving Their Dreams, which specializes in homemade Middle Eastern meals. The group was going strong and the women were becoming more financially secure when COVID-19 struck.

No stranger to hardship, Arwa was determined to help others through the pandemic. She initiated a sewing circle to make masks. The group made over 500 masks a week and distributed them to homeless shelters and frontline workers. "I was so happy to help people," says Arwa, whose extraordinary leadership skills landed her a full-time job at Montreal City Mission.

"I consider myself a lucky person that I got to know this organization. It has become not only my full-time job, not only my provider. It has become my home. I hope to see more and more women getting the same chance to have this better life for their families," she says. "I wanted a country that could hold me and hug me my whole life long. I found it in Canada."

Your gifts through Mission & Service don't just support dozens of organizations like Montreal City Mission across the country. They also support people's dreams for a better life—amazing people who make their communities and our country stronger. Please give generously through Mission & Service. Show incredible community leaders like Arwa that you believe in them. Thank you for your support.

Invitation to the Offering and Prayer

We gather, grateful for blessings but so aware of our yearning to show generosity. We give from our hearts, not out of a sense of obligation. We give not just to God's church, but we prepare for another week where the greatest gifts to God will be with our lives lived with love and working for peace.

Thank you for your generosity to God's Church, locally and globally, and for all you will do this week to make this world kinder, and more generous in spirit and love. If you would like to join me, as you think about what you plan to give, to church, of yourself to God this coming week, we can hold our hands out, offering...Let us pray: Come, Holy Spirit, set our hearts on fire! Make the passion you have placed in our lives into a fire of transformation; that refreshes, that refills, that renews, not just for us, O God, but may your love transform the world. Amen.

Dedication Hymn: MV 191 *What Can I do?*

What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

Prayers of Community

Dear God, we live in a world that does not listen for the Holy Spirit. We live in a world that is troubled;

**a world where we find terrorism, sexism, and racism,
a world with its fear, scarcity, and violence,
a world its abuse, addiction, and abandonment.**

The Holy Spirit tells us to love others as you love us.
We pray for the courage to show others we love them.

The Holy Spirit warns us that the world may hate us,
so we pray for the integrity to defy the world's values.

The Holy Spirit tells us to give unselfishly.
We pray for the strength to deny ourselves for the good of others.

The Holy Spirit is God's presence in us.
We are God's presence in the world.

May we bring God's peace and comfort:
**to those who are sick or in hospital;
to those who are mourning loss;
to those who are lonely or depressed;
to those we name aloud or in our hearts in this silent moment:**
(silence)

May others know we are disciples of Jesus,
the way we love every neighbour, no exceptions.
**May we offer God's love, compassion, and grace to all.
May the Holy Spirit inspire us to live Christ's commandment.
Amen.**

Closing Hymn: VU 382 *Breathe on Me, Breath of God* (vv. 1,2,3)

1. Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.
2. Breathe on me, breath of God, until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with thine, to do and to endure.
3. Breathe on me, breath of God, till I am holy thine,
until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine.

Blessing

Empowered by the word and the story...
We go to be God's people in the world.

Encouraged by the past and beckoned by the future...
We claim our places as teachers and learners.

Accompanied by Creator and Creating, by great spirit God...
We go with confidence and grace.

Celebrate in the Spirit and God's joy becomes your joy;
God's purpose becomes your purpose,
Christ's compassion becomes your compassion,
and the Spirit's love finds direction and fulfillment
in your loving words and actions.

**Come, Holy Spirit,
set our hearts and lives on fire!**

Benediction Hymn: VU 958 *Halle, Halle, Halle*

Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
(repeat verse)

Postlude

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