

Call to Worship

With a rush of wind and kisses of fire, God's Spirit invites us to dance.

**As dust is shaken off our souls and our hearts are stirred,
we take her hand in joy.**

Our tongues touched with flames, with hope tingling our tongues,
we utter words lodged deep in our souls

The Breath of God fills our lungs so we can sing God's praises.

Come, Holy Spirit, come, blowing away our weariness and rekindling our faith.

**Blessed by the Spirit, given new life by the Spirit,
we worship our God this day.**

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Hymn

O Breath of Life, Come Sweeping Through Us

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1. O Breath of life, come sweeping through us;
revive your church with life and power.
O Breath of life, come cleanse, renew us,
and fit your church to meet this hour.
2. O Wind of God, come bend us, break us,
till humbly we confess our need;
then in your tenderness remake us,
revive, restore, for this we plead.
3. O Breath of love, come breathe within us,
renewing thought and will and heart:
come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us,
revive your church in every part.
4. O Tongues of fire, come rest upon us,
so we may speak your word aright;
kindle the flame of love among us;
equip your church to spread the light.

"O Breath of life, come sweeping through us." Words (v.1-3) by Bessie Potter Head. Public domain. Words (v.4) by Iona Maclean.
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Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Holy God,
from our scattered lives, we gather to praise you,
for you are great and wonderful; wise and compassionate.
With joyful hearts, we celebrate the gifts and guidance of your Spirit.
At the dawn of creation, you sent your Spirit to bring life.
Over the centuries, your Spirit equipped your people

to proclaim your love and justice.
Through the flames of Pentecost,
your Spirit gave birth to the church with energy and wonder.
Today, your Spirit is at work in the world,
bringing renewal and hope here and everywhere.
Transform us by your Spirit
to become more faithful followers of Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Almighty God,
you poured out your Spirit to guide your disciples,
and empower your church with gifts for ministry.
We confess we often resist the Spirit's guidance.
The challenge to change makes us uncomfortable.
We overlook the gifts others can offer
and fail to live out Christ's love for the world.
Forgive us, O God.
Send your Holy Spirit to us again
to open our minds and hearts to the challenges in ministry
you set before us in Jesus' name. Amen.**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Worship Planner. Day of Pentecost. June 8, 2025. Year C.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear and believe this promise of the good news:
If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.
The old life has passed away and new life has begun.
Know that in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
You are set free to live life anew in the power of the Spirit. Amen.

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Scripture Reading Acts 2:1-21

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

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 people 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, 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.”

Peter Addresses the Crowd

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.’

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Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. **Thanks be to God.**

Message Hope and Possibility

The sound like the rush of a violent wind filling an entire house and only what could be described as divided tongues, that appeared like fire moving among them and then resting on every person in the room. I can’t even begin to imagine the fear of the people gathered there. So often we think of Pentecost as this mundane story of how the church began, but the Holy Spirit showed up and it probably felt more like all hell broke loose!

I have never experienced a natural disaster, but this description of the Holy Spirit showing up seems to me to resemble more like the sound of what some people are experiencing due to uncontrolled forest fires than the peaceful dove that also represents the Holy Spirit. The dove is another symbol we get from the story of the baptism of Jesus to represent the Holy Spirit demonstrating that the Holy Spirit cannot be contained within

one symbol. It is complex and has many roles as scripture attests to as advocate, comforter, along with teacher, to name only a few roles. The Spirit was there when creation came into being and the Holy Spirit is sent from Jesus and God to us to accompany us in the ways that are needed for God's work to be done and for us to know that God goes with us.

The story doesn't stop with the wind and fire; the people present get accused of being drunk and disorderly as they start speaking in different languages. Now interestingly enough these are all recognizable languages. They are the languages of the people present. You see, many people were in Jerusalem at the time to celebrate an ancient Jewish harvest festival that also recognized the gift of the law or Ten Commandments as given to Moses. So there were people from around the region present who had languages native to their area and were now hearing people talking to them about Christ and the story of hope and possibility in a way that was deeply personal.

Think about it. You find yourself in a place where the language is not your first language. Maybe you understand those around you, maybe you don't. Yet if you hear someone speak in the language you are most comfortable with there is a feeling of welcome and security. You are more likely to hear, really hear what someone is saying to you, not just the words but also the hear the meaning behind the words in ways you cannot when it comes to you in another language. We know that language, that words shape us and so to hear people speak to you in a language that is part of oneself can also change us.

The number of voices and the ruckus had people hearing it all thinking that the group had more than their fair share of libations. Peter somehow manages to get a handle on the crowd and started in on a sermon that would change lives. He begins a sermon with a quote from the prophet Joel. Once again, the words are not really all that comforting, they are actually a little terrifying with signs on the earth of blood, fire, and smoky mist. The sun turning to darkness and the moon to blood. This is the description of what will come in the days when God pours out the Spirit upon all flesh, with children of God speaking with divinely inspired words. Young men seeing visions or the future and old men dreaming dreams of what can be.

This is powerful stuff, and the thing is, that the powerful, life-giving, possibility provoking Spirit hasn't gone away as if that was only for that time in history. The Holy Spirit is still present, still at work, still filling the world with a message of hope and possibility and disruption.

Our denomination, as with most churches, is in decline. The message of Jesus' saving grace just doesn't seem to land on people with the same power as it did in the past. The reasons are many, but I often wonder if it is because we have conveniently put the Holy Spirit in the corner of our faith. We forget how powerfully the Holy Spirit can and will act, but we have to be open to it. Dare I say, pray for the Holy Spirit to come into our midst and change us so that the way we do ministry has an impact on us and maybe even on others here and in the city, maybe even more broadly than that.

Just think of the many people present on the first Pentecost as it was celebrated with Peter and the others. People went from there, back to their communities and the power of that moment continued to sustain them. We know this because here we sit centuries later still proclaiming the saving grace of the risen Lord for our own time. This is a story with life-changing power, yet, so many of us, even those of us who show up at church or read the sermon at home regularly often don't know the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through them, not only for their transformation, but for the transformation of the world.

I have been so proud of this congregation because of the work we have been doing and continue to do because of the openness to hope and possibility. The willingness to be curious, creative, and courageous. Still, we have not even begun to touch the depths of change, hope, and possibility that could be ours. The Holy Spirit still comes with power and might, but when the Spirit does that it is terrifying, however often our prayers do not invite that power. We say the words, but really, change is not what we want. David Lose puts it this way, "...while I've never heard anyone actually pray, 'Come Holy Spirit that we might remain exactly as we are,' that's often how we act. For whatever we may mouth on Pentecost, most of the time we resist meaningful change in favor of 'the way things have always been done.'"¹

Even as this congregation has done a lot to reset how we think and what we are doing, we have not even begun to imagine as big as God can do. To really see what the Holy Spirit wants to do with us is going to take a lot of prayer, and not just of a few, but of this whole community of faith. It is going to take a lot of courage because the Holy Spirit at work does not allow us to stay comfortable, in fact it is always challenging, changing, and scary. Power is scary and especially the power of God. Yet that same Spirit that challenges and changes us goes with us as guide, comforter, advocate, teacher and more.

The Spirit will change us as individuals, and the Spirit will change our church. It is work and worship filled with hope and possibility. It is work and worship filled with angst and unknowns. It is work and worship that transforms us and the world around us. Let's begin to see visions of our future and dream dreams that are impactful and bold, all the while understanding that this also invites disruption and stress. It will take our loving one another through it, yet refusing to stay as we have always been so that we might share this life-saving gospel story of Jesus with the world as God calls us to it.

At Pentecost the people were accused of people drunk, today that might say we are high on something, but the point is others will want to dismiss us, but in the power of the Holy Spirit we can continue to share the word of hope, love, grace, forgiveness, and possibility to all who will listen, to all that we are called to love.

¹ David Lose. [Pentecost Change - Working Preacher from Luther Seminary](#). Accessed June 7, 2025.

And that is also the overarching point of this Holy Spirit, life-changing, message of God that goes out into the world through us. God is love. In the challenges before us, the work that we do, the worship we participate in, the relationships we build, the changes we make, it is all for the sake of people knowing that they are loved by God. Each made as image bearer of God, each meant to know the deep and abiding love of God, each meant to share in the love that is so deep, so high, so broad, that it cannot be contained.

This is the hope and possibility that is ours to share, to live into, to experience. This is Pentecost and it didn't just happen once. Pentecost is the ongoing transformation of the world in which we live. The Holy Spirit shows up! It is bold, frightening, empowering, and transforming. Today we pray to be curious, creative, and courageous in the power of the Holy Spirit and mean it when we say, "Come Holy Spirit, come!"

Prayers of the People

God of all places, people and times; hear us as we speak to you of our gratitude and our concerns in the world; and let us hear your voice calling us to help build your commonwealth of grace and reconciliation in the world you love.

We thank you for the Spirit's presence among us, for the gifts you bless us with and for the ways people use the gifts you give to bring life and joy to the world.

Blow through us on this day of Pentecost and renew our faith.

Re-awaken in us love for God, strengthen our fellowship with one another and nurture our care for one another and your creation.

Let your Pentecostal flames warm our hearts, with trust in Jesus Christ and hope for the future being created among us.

Nurture us to do great things in your name.

Wind of the Spirit: **Enliven us and renew our faith.**

Blow through us and renew our energy
to serve you in Christ's church.

Open our eyes to recognize the need for ministry and mission in changing times.

Open our hearts to welcome newcomers and meet those we don't yet know.

Open our hands to share in the tasks that need doing,
and open our lips in prayer and praise.

Wind of the Spirit: **Enliven us and renew our energy.**

Blow through us and give us new understanding
for those whose lives seem so different from ours,
and for those facing situations we've never encountered.

For those with whom we've disagreed
and for those whose values challenge our expectations.

For problems and challenges we face at home or at work
and for the complex issues we face in your world..

Wind of the Spirit: **Enliven us and give us new understanding.**

Blow through us and bring us healing and peace
for all who face pain or illness, discouragement or disappointment.

Bring healing for all who know sorrow, sadness or grief.

Bring healing for those who face stress and pressure.

Bring healing to places in the world facing conflict
and for the creation struggling for life itself.

Wind of the Spirit: **Enliven us and bring healing and peace.**

Blow through us and bring us the wisdom and compassion we see in Christ Jesus.

Blow through us and equip us to serve the world you love in his name.

Blow through the General Assembly meeting this week
and inspire the debates and decisions of the commissioners.

Blow through our whole church and refresh us as your faithful people
as together we say the words Jesus taught us:

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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 forever. Amen

Invitation to the offering

Pentecost celebrates the gifts of the Spirit poured out on the Church, preparing Christ's followers to serve him. Our offering today will build up the ministry and mission of Christ's church here and elsewhere, in his name.

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There are various ways that people give to this congregation for our work as God's people, through signing up for a monthly donation, or sending an e-transfer.

Check out the opportunities to support St. Andrew's ministry at our website,
[St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay, ON – Part of the PCCWeb network of churches](#)

1. God of grace and God of glory,
on thy people pour thy power;
crown thine ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.
2. Lo! The hosts of evil round us,
scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us,
free our hearts to love and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.
3. Cure thy children's warring madness,
bend our pride to they control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal,
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.
4. Set our feet on lofty places;
gird our lives that they may be
armoured with all Christ-like graces,
pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
that we fail not them nor thee,
that we fail not them nor thee!
5. Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the search for thy salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving thee whom we adore,
serving thee whom we adore.

"God of grace and God of glory." Words by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Public Domain

Benediction

May the God of hope
fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Romans 15:13*

Postlude