

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, MAY 19th, 2024**

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Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God
Ministry of Pastoral Care & Worship: Pastor Peggy Bartlett
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REGIONAL COUNCIL PRAYER CYCLE

Vittoria: St. Andrew's

Pentecost Sunday

“Pentecost is one of the most exciting days in our Christian Year. It is the birthday of the church; a time when disciples no longer feared but were energized to proclaim the good news of God’s love through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.”

OFFERING PRAYER

Precious Lord, we hunger for the light and strength that only the Spirit can bring. Feed us and strengthen us, as we learn to feed others. Fill us with the breath of your spirit as you search our hearts. Take our lives as proof of our faithfulness. Take our gifts as proof of our love.
Use them to your purpose here on earth.

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Fling wide the doors. Open the windows! Let the Spirit of God pour in!

*Sing: #204 "Come, Holy Spirit"
Come, Holy Spirit, gracious heavenly dove;
Come, fire of love.*

People: Hear us calling.

L: Open your eyes and see the new day!

*Sing: #204 Come Holy Spirit
Come, Holy Spirit, gracious heavenly dove;
Come, fire of love.*

People: Hear us calling

L: Get ready, God’s promised Spirit comes sailing on the Wind

*Sing: #204 Come, Holy Spirit
Come, Holy Spirit, gracious heavenly dove;
Come, fire of love.*

People: Hear us calling to you

L: Let your hearts burn with hope and joy at this wondrous Gift!

People: Hear us calling, hear us calling to you.

L: Give your gift of life to this church, teach us your ways! Guide us and point us in the ways of truth and hope.

People: Come, give your gift

L: Teach your church

People: come bring your truth

L: glorify our Lord.

People: come be our guide

L: point the way, come walk beside.

*Sing: #204 Come, Holy Spirit
Come, Holy Spirit, gracious heavenly dove;
Come, fire of love.*

OPENING PRAYER

Holy One, ignite within us a fiery passion for your mission in the world today. Warm us by the Spirit’s dancing tongues of flame, that we may feel your kindling blaze within, urging us to do your greater good. Make us wholly present to experience a new birth, and awaken possibilities within us to share your love in the world. In this love and abundance, we come to celebrate your harvest—a harvest bearing the first fruits of the Spirit within us. Show us how to use these gifts, as we listen for your truth in the gentle breeze of your Spirit. Amen

ANTHEM

CHILDREN'S TIME**CHILDREN'S VIDEO****PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

We aren't ready, Lord. It is easier for us to hide in the upper rooms of our lives, to let the world go by and not acknowledge your presence. But you have challenged us to come alive again with your love and words of healing mercy. Forgive our hesitant witness and our complacent spirits. Heal our fears and our wounds. Help us to be agents of healing and hope for others. Challenge and inspire us to overcome our feelings of inadequacy and remind us that you have called us beloved and have given us what we need to proclaim your Good News. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Don't be afraid! God's Holy Spirit brings you healing comfort and hope. You are being prepared to serve God in some mighty ways. Rejoice! God's Holy Spirit is with you always. AMEN.

***CHORUS: #148 "HOLY GROUND"**

**We are standing on holy ground,
And I know that there are angels all around.
Let us praise Jesus now,
We are standing in His presence on holy ground.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Acts 2:1-16; Romans 8:22-27

Acts 2:1-16 New International Version (NIV)**The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost**

2 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.
² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them.
⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came

together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,^[b] ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." ¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!

Romans 8:22-27 New International Version (NIV)

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.
²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

MESSAGE

The Day of Pentecost is always a great celebration for the church. We gather together each year on this day, to hear the story of the birth of the Church, told in Acts 2: when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles like the rush of a violent wind, with tongues as of fire dancing on their heads; people from all nations hearing the apostles speaking in their own language, and more than 3,000 responding by being baptized into Christ.

It is an amazing story to hear again, isn't it? The miracle of Pentecost. But don't you wonder a little, when you hear this story, whether we are missing something today? After all, I doubt that our celebration this morning will include a violent wind, or fire, or miraculous speech. So, are we missing something? Where is the wind and the fire today? Where is the excitement of that first Pentecost?

Perhaps the better question to ask is: where is the Holy Spirit today? After all, isn't that the point of Pentecost? To give us the Holy Spirit? So, the question to ask today is not, where is the wind and the fire, but where is the Holy Spirit?

And if we ask the question in that way, then we do, indeed, have a pretty exciting answer, if you ask me. Because the Holy Spirit is without a doubt here with us today, in some very amazing and powerful ways. Let me share three of those ways.

First, the Holy Spirit is here, and comes to us today, through the Holy Word – the divinely-inspired, faith-producing, life-changing Word of God – which connects us to all Christians going all the way back to that first Pentecost, and connects us to the God who inspired and guided its every word.

The same Holy Spirit who inspired Peter to preach on that first Pentecost, is here with us today as we hear again his ancient words. Those who heard Peter that day heard him speak in their own language. And so do we. Just as many Christians around the world today are hearing this in their own language. It may not seem as miraculous, but I think it is pretty incredible to think of Christians around the world today hearing these words in their own language. Just like the first Pentecost when all people gathered spoke in their own languages.

The second way that the Holy Spirit comes to us today, is through the gathered congregation. As Martin Luther put stated:

“The Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith.”

The Holy Spirit is the reason we are here today. The Holy Spirit called and gathered us here, just as it has done for centuries all around the world. The Holy Spirit brings us together and gives us a variety of gifts, all for the common good. “Now there are varieties of gifts,” as Paul reminds us, “but the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:4). The Spirit has

been poured out upon all, as Peter reminds us in his famous sermon, young and old, men and women, all have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit, and we come together to share our gifts and insights, and become more than we can possibly be, on our own.

The Pentecost miracle happened when the apostles were all together in one place. And it happened when devout Jews from every nation under heaven were present. That's not a coincidence. The Holy Spirit likes us to be together. Something important happens when we are together. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is present when we gather in his name, which we do whenever we worship together. The Holy Spirit can come to us when we are alone, of course, when we pray, when we need reassurance, when we are one on one with God.

And, how do we come together in Jesus' name? Through the Sacraments.

When Peter finished his sermon on that first Pentecost, those who heard it asked him, “what should we do?” And Peter responded, “Repent, and be baptized ... and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”. They will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit not through wind and fire, but through holy baptism. And it is in baptism that we, too, first received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And right after those who heard Peter's sermon were baptized, what did they do? The very next verse says, “They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”. In other words, they gathered together as a community, to hear the Word and celebrate Holy Communion.

That is where the miracle of Pentecost continued to be enjoyed and realized in the Church. Then, and now. When we gather in the name of Jesus. Remember our baptisms. Devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching. And to the breaking of the bread, and the prayers.

We may not have wind and fire today, but we are here, gathered in the name of Jesus. Doing those very things that the Church has done since that first Pentecost. And that means that the Holy Spirit is present among us now, just as it was then.

It's always tempting to think that we need more – we need more excitement, more enthusiasm, more emotion; we need more wind and fire on Sunday mornings.

But if the point of Pentecost is the gift of the Holy Spirit, then the result of Pentecost is sharing the good news of the gospel with all nations.

Without the Holy Spirit there would be no Christians and no Church. The gospel message would be unknown. The world would be in a mess. There would be no hope of eternal life.

The Holy Spirit is to the Church what air is to every human being. Air surrounds us so completely that we sometimes forget it is there. We breathe it continuously without always realizing what we are doing. So, it is with the Holy Spirit. He empowers our lives. He deepens our faith.

He motivates our mission. And he demonstrates beyond the shadow of a doubt that God has a plan for all people – to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

On Pentecost, God's promised Holy Spirit descended on all. At our baptism God's Spirit descended upon us. Maybe we've become a little blasé, a little unenthusiastic, a little lukewarm. The Spirit wants to work in kids, parents, elderly people. He wants to work in you – in all of us – to make us into a church that is living, renewed, refreshed, revitalised to do his work – to be the church, ready with gospel, ready to draw all people into the warmth of God's presence.

HYMN: #382 Breath on Me Breath of God

- 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 wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.
- 4 Breathe on me, breath of God:
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Knock us off our seats, O Lord, with the wind of your Holy Spirit. Don't let us just sit back and rest as though nothing important was happening. Remind us that you have come to bless and prepare us for your service. Now is the time of proclamation and celebration! Now is the birth of your church, not as an exercise in futility, but as a dynamic group of people who know you and love you as you know and love each of us. Flame up our hearts! Make us so joyful that we find it difficult to sit back and watch. We want to be part of your healing love and mercy. We want to be people who bear the word that your love for us is eternal; that Jesus Christ, our Savior, proclaimed and taught that love in all that he did and said, modeling for us a new way to live. Pick us up and propel us forward into your world. Help us to remember that you have given to us what we need to be your disciples. We just need to say a resounding "Yes!" to you. Thank you for all the wondrous patience and blessings you pour into our lives each and every day, as we offer our lives back to you in joy and hope. AMEN.

LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN: #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!

SENDING FORTH

May the power of the Holy Spirit transform you with the healing fire that unifies the world. Let the wind of that first Pentecost teach you of God's grace, love, hope, and mystery. With tongues of flame, may you be marked for Christ. Go out in faith and abiding love.

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE

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Announcements

Sunday, May 19th: Join us at Hagersville in the sanctuary at 7pm to watch the series “The Chosen”.

Saturday, June 1st: High Tea at Hagersville from 12pm-2pm. Join us for an afternoon of sandwiches, scones, tea & desserts. Cost is \$20/person in advance. Etransfer available: dalebvecero@hotmail.com. Text or call Dale at 905-515-6908 to reserve your seat.

Thursday, June 6th: You are invited to attend our Annual June U.C.W. Meeting held at Springvale United Church at 7pm. Our special guest speaker will be Patti Cote (Media/Relations/Community Safety Officer Haldimand County O.P.P.) will be sharing with us, important information regarding fraud, scams & social media safety. There will be refreshments following Patti's presentation. If you wish to attend, please call or text Kathy at 289-921-1794 by June 1st.

Wednesday, June 12th: Hagersville Church Council meeting at 2pm.

Wednesday, June 19th: Official Board meeting at Springvale at 10:30am.

Tuesday, June 25th: Mark your calendars for Springvale’s Annual Strawberry Supper! More details to come.

**Please bring in paper products for the
Hagersville Food Bank!**

