** MELROSE UNITED CHURCH **

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| Minister:  | Rev. Sonia Ireson  |
| Music Director:Family Ministries Coordinator:Custodian:Office Administrator: | Alexander Cann Meg Chalmers Kevin Geluch Lorraine Lowry |

 **Sunday, May 28, 2023 **

**Pentecost Sunday**

#   GATHERING IN COMMUNITY 

PRELUDE -

## WELCOME AND LIFE OF THE CHURCH

OPENING HYMN – As Comes the Breath of Spring VU 373

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

One: The land on which we worship and serve God each week

 was first inhabited and cared for by the people of the

 Haudenosaunee and the Anishinaabe who are covered

 under the Upper Canada Treaty. For thousands of years,

 they walked on and treated the land with respect. May we

 continue with respect, by living our lives moving gently in

 creation, listening, learning, and striving to be people of

 reconciliation.

LITURGY OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

***Christ Candle is already lit***

One: We cannot function without light. It fills our waking days

 with natural light created by God, the Almighty.

 **All: We appreciate human-made light that dispels our darkness and allows us to extend our work and our leisure into the night.**

One: Yet the light that encourages us, that remains with us even when we cannot see it, the invisible light of Jesus, gives us the courage and the comfort to walk in his Way, knowing that He is beside us, leading us on.

 **All: For he has left us a Holy Spirit of Truth, powerful and**

 **present. From his central, guiding light, we take our own and pass it on out into a world that so very much needs to feel Jesus’ love. Shine Jesus, Shine! Let your light fill the far corners of our world.**

**\*\* All who wish may come forward to light a candle of their own from the central Christ candle…. Then return to your seats.**

GATHERING WORDS (Eric Hebert-Daly)

One: Take a breath. Feel the presence of God’s Spirit fill your

 lungs! (breathe) Feel the warmth of this place and the

 warmth of those around you in this community of faith.

 **All: We can feel God’s fire burning inside of us, God’s Spirit**

 **moving in this place!**

One: Open yourself to the wonders of God’s creation, living and working in our lives.

 **All: God brings us together to help those around us and to be**

 **open to help offered to us.**

One: This is a sacred place, a wonderful space, a gathering spot

 filled with care and love.

**All: By the wonder of the Spirit, we are God’s presence.**

 **We have come to live into our call!**

 **Come Holy Spirit ! Come!**

HYMN: Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness VU 375

PRAYER OF APPROACH (Richard Bott, former Moderator)

**All: Breath of Life, who fills our souls, we ask you to move in us. Change us. Blow us to the places you need us to be. Help us to carry the Creator’s love. Help us to carry your joy – into our lives, into the world, into all of creation.**

 **Bless all that lives, Holy Spirit. Amen!**

A TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE CHILD WITHIN US

HYMN: This is God’s Wondrous World VU 296, v. 1, 2

CHILDREN’S TIME – The Power of Prayer

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S LOVE

One: Lord, you listen to your children praying. You listen and you act. We do not know how you act, yet we feel your presence through the warmth and love you send our way. You provide people in our lives that correct us, that encourage us, that affirm us, that manifest your unlimited love and care. Thank you, Unseen, Yet Present God for your unconditional care for us.

CONFESSION FROM OUR HEARTS

 **All: Gracious and Magnificent God, we confess that we have difficulty in recognizing the presence of your Holy Spirit. Sometimes we forget to ask for help; and sometimes we ask and then we fail to see it is You who has manifested the answer. Remind us that Jesus promised Your Advocate to be with us, to walk in the difficult paths of Christian discipleship. When we fail to act lovingly, jolt us into spreading kindness, loving mercy, and walking humbly with You throughout this earth.** **Amen.**

**Hearing and Responding to the Word**

Reader: Rev. Rick Maxwell

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

One: God of Creation, Your Holy Spirit came through Wind and

 Fire with a blaze of glory to our forefathers and mothers

 long ago. Today, may we feel this continued power when

 we hear and interpret Your Word for our lives. Guide us in

 the ways You would wish us to learn and grow. Amen.

A LESSON FROM THE BOOK OF ACTS: 2: 1-21

**\*\* Background to be read by reader before Scripture –**

**The eleven disciples met in the Upper Room – They were: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James, son of Alphaeus, Simon, the Zealot, and Judas, son of James. They began to choose a replacement for Judas Iscariot by proposing two candidates. Matthais was chosen as the new disciple by casting lots.**

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

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

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ‘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. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

One: The Word of the Lord

 **All: Thanks be to God!**

Psalm 104: 24-34, 35b VU P. 827 Part Two

Notes for Reader: Psalm is responsive as printed below

Refrain: **Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!**

O God, how manifold are your works!

**With Wisdom at your side you made them all,**

**The earth is full of your creatures R.**

There lies the great and mighty Sea,

Teeming with living things both great and small.

**Upon is sail the ships,**

**And there is Leviathan, the monster you made to play in it.**

All these looks to you,

To give them their food in due season.

**What you give them they gather up.**

**When you open your hand,**

**You fill them with good things.**

But when you hide your face they despair.

When you take away their breath, they die, and return to dust.

**But when you send out your spirit, they live again,**

**And you renew the face of the earth. R**

May your glory, O God, endure forever.

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST: John 20: 19-23

**\*\* Background to be read by Reader before Scripture –**

**Mary Magdalene had come to the tomb to care for the body of Jesus, but on her arrival, she saw the stone had been rolled away and Jesus was no longer in the tomb. She stood weeping outside the tomb. Two angels were inside and they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said: “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” Then she turned around and saw who she thought was the gardener, but who in fact, turned out to be Jesus. She recognized him when he spoke to her. “Rabbouni!” Jesus told her to tell the disciples he was ascending to the Father.**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

 One: Let us respond in faith to the Gospel of our Lord!

**ALL: Praise be to Jesus Christ!**

REFLECTION: Transitions and Changes!

ANTHEM - Good News, The Chariot's Comin'

 arr. M. Hogan/adapt. R. Dillworth

INVITATION TO OFFERING

One: Today, we are reminded that our church began its life on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit breathed life into the people. We continue in the tradition of service and dedication by providing for the work of God’s Kingdom through our offerings which are used far and wide. Our offerings will now be presented.

OFFERING HYMN: Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow VU 541

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise God, all creatures high and low;**

**Give thanks to God in love made known:**

**Creator, Word and Spirit, One.**

OFFERING PRAYER

One: Jesus, you call us into community as your church has done since the first Pentecost. Your Spirit fills this place and your people this morning, and emboldens us to answer Christ’s call and reflect his love throughout the world through these gifts that we present as our offering. May they fulfill your purpose for the work of your church. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (adapted from David Sparks)

Come into our world, mind and heart changing Holy Spirit – transform the violence we see in the groups raged against each other throughout the world. Bring communication, understanding and a will for peace. Transform the racial labelling and prejudice we experience in our lives through talking, working, and playing together. Transform the gross indifference to the fate of our planet – air and water polluted, forests clear-cut, fossil fuels exhausted - through the will to conserve and live more simply.

Come to the places of suffering, healing Holy Spirit – bring peace where industrial strife causes resentment and inconvenience. Bring reconciliation where conflict mars the bonds of family or friendship. Bring patient endurance where sickness restricts normal activity or ends accustomed patterns of living. Bring hope where the ache of bereavement is felt or the loss of control is a reality.

Come to our faith community, Holy Spirit of fellowship – Search out and meet the obvious and the hidden needs within our church. Encourage each of us to give of our time, talent and money for the common good. Lift our eyes outward to perceive the needs that are beyond our walls. Clarify our service and commitment that we may live up to our calling as Jesus’ disciples in the world. With your unseen but effective influence, Holy Spirit, we can do this together.

Come and restore each of us personally life-giving Spirit – when we are reluctant to make the first move in friendship, when we feel overwhelmed and cry out in despair, when hurt goes on and on, and rejection is experienced, when depression sets in and bitterness is present. Come Holy Spirit, with you as our companion, we can be restored!

We pray this day for the congregation of Burkholder, for their minister, their lay leaders, and their people, that they may be supported in their work of the discipleship of Jesus Christ.

We pray for our community of Melrose, for Doreen, Olga, Ted, Rod and Neil and all those others that we hold in the silence of our hearts and we lift up to you now for their safekeeping….

Silence…

LORD’S PRAYER

**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 brad,**

**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**

**Forever and ever. Amen.**

**SENDING FORTH**

CLOSING HYMN- Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life, VU 681

COMMISSIONING (Carol O’Neil)

One: Within us is the presence of the Gentle Spirit, strengthening, encouraging, reassuring. We know it is inside our soul. Pay attention. Greet the Spirit each day with a sense of pure wonder and let it lead you, for the Enfolding God, the Trinity of Love, is our source, our goal, our life. May we go forth, sharing the Spirit’s breath, carrying it in our hearts. Amen.

CHORAL BENDICTION - Amen VU 970

 BLESSING

May God keep us in our going out and our

coming in;

In our lying down and our rising up;

In our work and in our leisure;

In our laughter and in our tears;

Until we meet again. Amen**.**

POSTLUDE –