

River of Life Lutheran Church

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Welcome to Worship



Sunday, May 28, 2023 – Day of Pentecost

Introduction

Pentecost derives its name from the Jewish festival celebrating the harvest and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai fifty days after Passover. Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the Holy Spirit as God's presence within and among us. In Acts the Spirit arrives in rushing wind and flame, bringing God's presence to all people. Paul reminds us that though we each have different capacities, we are unified in the Spirit that equips us with these gifts. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, empowering them to forgive sin. We celebrate that we too are given the breath of the Holy Spirit and sent out to proclaim God's redeeming love to all the world.

*Please stand as you are able

We Are Gathered for Worship

Pastor: Christ is risen!

All: He is risen, indeed!

Prelude

“Near to the Heart of God”

*Call to Worship (based on Psalm 104)

Asst: God stretches out the heavens and shapes the earth.

All: Come and give thanks!

Asst: God raises up the mountains and pours water into the seas.

All: Come and give thanks!

Asst: God calls forth plants from the soil and forms animals in infinite variety.

All: Come and give thanks!

Asst: God breathes upon us and fills us with life.

All: Come lift your voices in praise!

Asst: God gives our lives meaning through laughter and tears.

All: Come lift your voices in praise!

Asst: God touches our hearts through family and friends.

All: Come lift your voices in praise!

Asst: God loves us and blesses us with everything good.

All: Come and worship!

Asst: God loves us and overwhelms us with never-ending generosity.

All: Come and worship!

Asst: God loves us and surrounds us with love in abundance!

All: Come and worship!

~ from the Mennonite Church Canada website. <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/>

*Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross in remembrance of baptism as the presiding minister begins:

Pastor: In the Name of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Pastor: Let us bring our repentance before God the giver of all things. *(Pause)* O Lord my God ...

All: You give me an understanding mind, and the ability to discern good from evil, but I make the goals of my life, wealth, triumph, even long life. You show me your steadfast love, yet I struggle at all my relationships, with my family, friends and neighbors. Your love could be the greatest discovery of my life. You make marvelous things from the smallest beginnings. Yet I search elsewhere for joy

*Please stand as you are able

and glory. Save me Lord from the sins I know. Save me Lord from the sins I hide.

(Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination)

Pastor: The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness as we try to pray to God. The Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God who searches our hearts knows our repentance. In God's steadfast love, Jesus Christ, God's only son is given for us. For his sake our sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. We may walk in faithfulness, righteousness and in uprightness of heart for God, because nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

***Opening Hymn**

"Spirit of Gentleness"

ELW 396

**Refrain: Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free;
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.**

- 1. 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:
"Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings." (Refrain)**
- 2. You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
and when they were blinded with idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes. (Refrain)**
- 3. 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. (Refrain)**
- 4. You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.
From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions your people arise. (Refrain)**

***Prayer of the Day**

Asst: Let us pray. O God,

All: on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your

*Please stand as you are able

Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

***Sharing of the Peace**

Asst: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

We Hear and Respond to God’s Word

First Reading: Acts 2:1-21

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, [the apostles] 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, “Men 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 sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men 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

*Please stand as you are able

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 the Lord's great and glorious day.
²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' ”

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

^{3b}No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Choir

“Psalm 121”

by Robert J. Powell

Gospel: John 20:19-23

¹⁹When 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.” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Children's Chat / Message

Pastor Bill Ottum

***Hymn of the Day**

“Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart”

ELW 800

**1. Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;
stoop to my weakness, strength to me impart,
and make me love you as I ought to love.**

*Please stand as you are able

2. I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,
no sudden rending of the veil of clay,
no angel visitant, no op'ning skies;
but take the dimness of my soul away.

3. Have you not bid me love you, God and King;
all, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling.
Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!

4. Teach me to love you as your angels love,
one holy passion filling all my frame:
the baptism of the heav'n-descended dove,
my heart an altar, and your love the flame.

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of The People

Asst: United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

(A brief silence.)

Asst: Passionate God, you sent your Spirit through the gifts of fire, wind, and word. As you equipped the disciples for their work, equip us to bring the good news to all those who long for you. Hear us, O God. **All: Your mercy is great.**

Asst: Restoring God, wind and flame bring life and destruction throughout the world. We pray for those who work with wind energy, for migratory birds, for protection for lands facing destructive fire, for forestry managers and firefighters. Renew the face of the earth. Hear us, O God. **All: Your mercy is great.**

Asst: Ever-present God, your spirit embraces all. Send your spirit of understanding to immigrants, refugees, and any experiencing language barriers. Bless the work of translators, ESL teachers, ambassadors, and international peace organizations. Safely guide those fleeing war and danger. Hear us, O God. **All: Your mercy is great.**

Asst: Merciful God, you anoint us with your spirit. Bless nurses, doctors, midwives, chaplains, counselors, and hospice workers as they care for those in need. We pray for all who seek your comfort (*especially...*). Hear us, O God. **All: Your mercy is great.**

Asst: Generous God, you impart a variety of gifts. Set aflame the desire to learn from one another, especially those who differ from us. Make your presence known through missionaries, peace workers, and through the outreach ministries of our synod and community (*especially...*). Hear us, O God. **All: Your mercy is great.**

Pastor: Let us now share other concerns on our hearts and minds ... spoken, or in silence.

(Time is taken for prayers to be offered...)

Pastor: Life-giving God, we give thanks for those who have died to new life in you (*especially...*). As we observe Memorial Day, we remember those who died in military service. Comfort all who mourn, and usher in a world where war is no more. Hear us, O God. **All: Your mercy is great.**

Pastor: Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

All: Amen.

Offering

We join millions of Christians all over the world in joyfully responding to God's goodness through the giving of our financial resources. Offerings may be brought forward at the time

*Please stand as you are able

of communion or may be mailed to: River of Life Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 670470, Chugiak, AK 99567.

Offering Prayer

Asst: Let us pray. Generous God, in this meal you offer your very self. We give thanks for these gifts of the earth. In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One. In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

We Come to the Lord's Table

***The Great Thanksgiving / Holy Communion**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection, you pour out the fire of your Spirit, uniting in one body people of every nation and tongue. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn: *(the following is spoken...)*

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

***Words of Institution** *(In the night in which he was betrayed...)*

Pastor: Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory, and we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pastor: Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

*Please stand as you are able

***The 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 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, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Pastor: Come and know Christ, broken and poured out for you.

***Distribution:** All who believe in Jesus as their risen Lord and Savior are invited to His Table. The clear liquid is grape juice, the red is wine.*

Communion Blessing and Prayer

Pastor: The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen.

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being. With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together. Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Announcements

We Are Sent Out to Serve

Thanksgiving at the Conclusion of a Call

The person whose call is concluding and representative/s of the congregation come before the assembly. A representative of the congregation addresses the pastor whose call is concluding with these or similar words.

Leader: Pastor Bill, on June 12th, 2011, we of River of Life Lutheran Church called you to be pastor in this place: to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach, to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's table. With the gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you and your family have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ, in our service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world. As you leave this community of faith, we say farewell, and we pray for God's blessing.

*Please stand as you are able

At The Font:

Leader: Pastor, you were called to be among us, helping us to baptize, to teach and believe that God truly forgives our sins. May we continue to plunge continually into the living water, which is Our Lord, washing us into the life that never ends. **All: Amen.**

Pastor: I return this to your care.

At the Table:

Leader: Pastor, you were called to be among us, helping us lead worship and celebrate the meal of Christ's body and blood. May we continue to hunger for the beauty within us and around us, and savor the truth beyond all understanding. **All: Amen.**

Pastor: I return this to your care.

At the Pulpit:

Leader: Pastor, you were called to be among us, helping us to welcome the stranger and proclaim the good news. May we continue to receive the grace to seek justice for all, and to share the Gospel of life with our family, friends, neighbors and the world, and so join the company of the saints whom God relies upon to transform the world. **All: Amen.**

Pastor: I return this to your care.

Center of Congregation:

Leader: Pastor, you were called to be among us, helping us learn community in Christ's name. May we all continue to take on the light burden of loving one another as Christ loved and to shape ourselves into Christ's body in this place. **All: Amen.**

Pastor: I return this to your care.

At The Sanctuary Door:

Leader: Pastor, you were called to be among us, helping us to welcome visitors, friends and members to worship. May we continue to receive grace, mercy and good news of the Gospel through our presence here. We continue to be sent forth as ambassadors for Christ to our community and world so that we might minister to all who are in need. **All: Amen.**

Pastor: I return this task to your care

The leader addresses the assembly with these or similar words.

Leader: People of God, members of River of Life, do you release Pastor Bill Ottum from service as your pastor?

All: We do, and we give thanks to God for our ministry together.

*Please stand as you are able

The leader addresses the person whose call is concluding.

Leader: Pastor Bill, do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with River of Life?

Pastor: I do, and I give thanks to God for our ministry together.

Thanksgiving and Sending

Leader: Let us pray. Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. You equip your people with abilities that differ according to the grace given to them, and you call them to various avenues of service. We give you thanks for the ministry of Pastor Bill Ottum among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in: bless this time of ending and beginning. You surround your people in every time and place: keep us close in your love. Help Pastor Bill and his family and all of us to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us. As they have been a blessing to us, so now send them/us forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: Amen.

***Benediction and Blessing**

Pastor: By the power of the Spirit which is present in all of us, may the love of God continue to flow over us, in us and through us, and out into the world we love.

**All: God be in our heads and in our understanding,
God be in our eyes and in our looking
God be in our mouths and in our speaking
God be in our hearts and in our thinking
God be there at our last and in our departing**

Pastor: And may Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

All: Amen.

***Sending Song**

“O Day Full of Grace”

ELW 627

**1. O day full of grace that now we see
appearing on earth's horizon,
bring light from our God that we may be
abundant in joy this season.
God, shine for us now in this dark place;
your name on our hearts emblazon.**

2. O day full of grace, O blessed time,
our Lord on the earth arriving;
then came to the world that light sublime,
great joy for us all retrieving;
for Jesus all mortals did embrace,
all shame and despair removing.
3. For Christ bore our sins, and not his own,
when he on the cross was hanging;
and then he arose and moved the stone,
that we, unto him belonging,
might join with angelic hosts to raise
our voices in endless singing.
4. God came to us then at Pentecost,
the Spirit new life revealing,
that we might no more in death be lost,
its pow'r over us dispelling.
This flame will the mark of sin efface
and bring to us all true healing.
5. When we on that final journey go
that Christ is for us preparing,
we'll gather in song, our hearts aglow,
all joy of the heavens sharing,
and there we will join God's endless praise,
with angels and saints adoring.

***Our Purpose Statement**

We are a community of faith, called to Glorify God... Grow in faith and love, and
Go into the world with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

***Dismissal**

Asst: Go in peace. Serve the Risen One

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Morning Has Broken”