

Southminster United Church, Ottawa, Ontario

May 24, 2026

Pentecost Sunday

Worship Leader: Rev. Susan Toller

Director of Music: Sarah Westbrook

Reader: Eugene Oscapella

Prelude:

Welcome

Land Acknowledgement

As we gather on the unceded and unsundered land of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people, we are grateful for this teaching from the Indigenous Climate Hub.

In Indigenous worldviews across Canada, whether among the Coast Salish, Anishinaabe, Cree, Dene, Mi'kmaq, Inuit, or Métis, fire is understood as more than heat and flame. Fire is a relative: a powerful presence that teaches and transforms. Fire holds knowledge about when and where to flow, how to clear away the old and invite new life, and when to retreat to allow healing. It is a force that must be listened to, respected, and lived with, not tamed or feared.

The land itself contains this fire knowledge, its patterns and rhythms, held not only in the soil and trees but also in the pulse of the more-than-human relations that weave together plants, animals, insects, and waters. These relationships have been cultivated through generations of ceremony, stewardship, and attentive listening.

Lighting of the Candles

Flames dancing, tongues of fire burning brightly, illuminating the shadowed places of our lives and searing radiance, all remind us of the first Pentecost. The Christ light brings a reminder of Pentecostal splendour. May the dazzling light be for us a spark of Holy Wonder.

Laura J. Turnbull, Penticton, B.C.

We light the Affirming candle to remind us that everyone is welcome here. We value how the Holy Spirit moves through people of all cultural backgrounds, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientations and gender identities. God loves all of us.

Call to Worship

The Spirit of the Lord is upon us,
and in the shelter of the Spirit, we will rejoice and be glad.

The heavens are telling of the glory of God,
and beneath those very stars, we raise our spirits and proclaim that God is good.

The gifts of the Spirit are offered to us,
**and, when we put them to use, we discover that our gifts blend with the gifts of others
into a wonderful song filled with hope, energy, life, and love.**

In this house of prayer, may we find shelter, lift our hearts in prayer, and sing songs of
praise:

**May we find strength in knowing we are the Body of Christ,
enlivened by the Spirit, engaging the work of God in this world.**

Come, let us worship our God!

Nora Vedress, Calvary U.C., Prince Albert, Sask.

Opening Prayer

Great are your ways, Holy Spirit.

Great are your words, Holy Spirit.

You are in us and we are in you.

Your love abides in us and we abide in your love.

You lead us to the truth.

You teach us the way.

You inspire us to love others.

You give us peace in our hearts, easing our troubled spirits.

We are grateful you guide us to the truth of who we are and what we are meant to do.

We thank you for your love and your guidance, today and every day. Amen.

Tricia Challoner, Norquay U.C., Norquay, Sask.

Opening Hymn: Spirit, Open My Heart (MV 79)

Refrain:

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.

As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,

Spirit, open my heart.

**God, replace my stony heart
with a heart that's kind and tender.**

**All my coldness and fear
to your grace I now surrender. *Refrain***

**Write your love upon my heart
as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word, and deed,
may my living bring you glory. *Refrain***

**May I weep with those who weep,
share the joy of sister, brother.
In the welcome of Christ,
may we welcome one another. Refrain**

Words: Ruth Duck, 1994. Music: traditional melody, Ireland; arr. Arthur G. Clyde, 1997. Words copyright © 1996 and arrangement copyright © 1997 The Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.

Passing of the Peace/ Greeting Time

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, we often live without relying on the Holy Spirit. We forget how much you desire for the Spirit to be an active presence in our lives. You love us as we are but you have given us the Holy Spirit to teach us, guide us, empower us, and encourage us. Loving God, we know the times when we have not allowed the Spirit to move within us. May we be ever more sensitive to what the Spirit has to offer us. We ask that you mould and make us into the people you want us to be through the power of the Spirit. Help us to trade in the things of this life that we may treasure but that hold us back from living as the people you have made us to be, born of the Spirit and washed in the blood. Show us our spiritual gifts and give us a passion to serve according to the gifts we have received. Make us a blessing and renew a right spirit within us. Amen.

Tabitha Carey, Dorchester U.C., Dorchester, Ont.

Affirmation of Faith

Through Christ, we are one body, each of us with unique gifts given by the one Spirit, so that the body may be whole. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Wanda Winfield, Tupperville P.C., Tupperville, Ont.

Prayer of Illumination: Open Our Hearts (MV 21)

**Open our hearts, open our minds.
Open our lives to you O loving God. Repeat
Open our hearts.**

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Scripture Reading

Acts 2:1-21

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 people 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, "Fellow Jews 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.'

Psalm 104 (VU p.827 Part Two)

Refrain

**Bless, O my soul, the Almighty,
who rules all creation.**

Stralsund Gesangbuch 1665

O God, how manifold are your works!
**With Wisdom at your side you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures. Refrain**

There lies the great and mighty Sea,
teeming with living things both great and small.

**Upon it sail the ships, and there is Leviathan,
the monster you made to play in it.**

All these look 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. Refrain**

May your glory, O God, endure forever.

May you rejoice, O God, in your works.

When you look at the earth it trembles,

when you touch the mountains they smoke.

I will sing to God as long as I live.

I will praise my God while I have being. Refrain

Anthem: In the Sanctuary by Kurt Carr

Reflection: Pentecost Sunday

Hymn: Spirit of Life (VU 381)

Spirit of Life, come unto me.

Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.

Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;

move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.

Roots hold me close; wings set me free;

Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

*Words: Carolyn McDade 1981. Music: Carolyn McDade 1981, barm. Grace Lewis-McLaren 1992, alt.
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Invitation of Offering

God has blessed our lives with hope and love. In response to God's blessings in our lives, we are now invited to share our offerings.

Presentation of the Offering: Grant US, God, the Grace (VU 540)

Grant us, God, the grace of giving,

with a spirit large and free,

that ourselves and all our living

we may offer faithfully.

Words: anonymous. Music: attrib. Cristian F. Witt, Psalmody Sacra 1715; adapt. Henry John Gauntlett 1861

Offering Prayer

Creator God, we are so thankful for the gifts that you have given us
through the Holy Spirit.

We desire and need a constant connection to you, and you have provided that connection
through the Holy Spirit.

We praise you for ongoing knowledge, wisdom, and gifts that we receive
through the Holy Spirit.

We thank you for your promises made and never forgotten
through the Holy Spirit.

And so we bring our gifts and tithes, that they may become a blessing
through the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sue Carleton, Shallow Lake U.C., Shallow Lake, Ont.

Prayers of the People

Breath of Life, in your wisdom grant us knowledge and grace.

Fill all peoples with the Spirit.

Guide us all into forgiveness of one another, of institutions, of ourselves.

Help us to find the peace and healing that you want for us in the quiet moments, in the majesty of nature, among friends and enemies alike.

Bring us closer to you that we may reach out.

Bring your strength to those who would wield it to create your kingdom but who are getting tired.

Bring your love to those who would nurture and support others but who are depleted.

Bring your joy to those who are in the depths of grief and sorrow.

Bring your blessings to the attention of those who feel the void of emptiness.

Bring the gifts of the Spirit to the attention of those who do not recognize them.

Through you, all things are possible.

Lend us your strength to create unity.

Now let us pray together for each other and for each one in our community and beyond who needs support as we hold them in our hearts and lift them up to you:

(prayer requests)

And now, let us pray together, as Jesus taught us to pray,

Shannon Duffus, St. John's U.C., Levack, Ont.

The Prayer of Jesus - VU 959

**Our Creator 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 for ever.

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Announcements

Closing Hymn: She Comes Sailing on the Wind (VU 380)

Refrain:

**She comes sailing on the wind,
her wings flashing in the sun;
on a journey just begun, she flies on.
And in the passage of her flight,
her song rings out through the night,
full of laughter, full of light, she flies on.**

**Silent waters rocking on the morning of our birth,
like an empty cradle waiting to be filled.
And from the heart of God the Spirit moved upon the earth,
like a mother breathing life into her child.**

**Many were the dreamers whose eyes were given sight
when the Spirit filled their dreams with life and form.
Deserts turned to gardens, broken hearts found new delight,
and then down the ages still she flew on. *Refrain***

**To a gentle girl in Galilee, a gentle breeze she came,
a whisper softly calling in the dark,
the promise of a child of peace whose reign would never end,
Mary sang the Spirit song within her heart.**

**Flying to the river, she waited circling high
above the child now grown so full of grace.
As he rose up from the water, she swept down from the sky,
and she carried him away in her embrace. *Refrain***

**Long after the deep darkness that fell upon the world,
after dawn returned in flame of rising sun,
the Spirit touched the earth again, again her wings unfurled,
bringing life in wind and fire as she flew on. *Refrain***

Words: Gordon Light 1985. Music: Gordon Light 1985; arr. Andrew Donaldson 1994. Words and music copyright © 1987 Common Cup Company. Arrangement © 1994 Andrew Donaldson.

Benediction and Sending Forth

On this anniversary of the birth of the church,
this celebration of hope,
this commemoration of a Spirit of redeeming love,
go out to be the peace, share the justice,

and offer the truth in Christ's name. Amen.

Robin Wardlaw, Toronto, Ont.

Postlude:

Coffee Time

Scripture readings are from the New Revised Standard Version (Updated Edition) of the Bible.

Many of the prayers in today's service are from Jackie Harper's "Kin to One Another - Worship Resources for Christian Family Sunday" (2018 United Church of Canada)

Coffee Host:
Ushers/Counters: Paul Mullin/ Margaret Isaac

As the people of Southminster United Church, we affirm and actively support the life experience of all. All persons are invited to take part in every aspect of church life including membership, leadership, celebration of life passages and marriage. We are committed to following Jesus' example as we embrace people of all ages, racialized groups, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities, ethnic origins, economic circumstances and differing abilities and challenges in the ministry and life of Southminster United Church.



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