

2024 05 19

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on May 19th

Announcements

Mission Moment Gifts to Presbyterians Sharing support international partners through leadership development grants. In 2023, the National Council for Higher Education recommended that the position of Assistant Librarian at Zomba Theological University in Malawi should require at least a bachelor's degree. So, the Rev. Dr. Takuze Chitsulo, Vice Chancellor, requested support from the PCC for Assistant Librarian Jane Mwalabu Makupete to upgrade her Diploma in Library Information to a Bachelor of Arts degree in Records Management. Jane was ecstatic and very grateful when she heard of the PCC's support.

The idea of the **speaker series** had been germinating for a quite a while and then last fall the opportunity for a grant arose. Your Session acted quickly, then Toyota Goderich approved the grant to assist in our efforts. The speaker series intends to provide helpful information for the congregation and the larger local community. Deb and I are working together on this project. We have been reaching out to organizations to make arrangements. We are hoping that you will help to spread the word about the speakers. The first speaker is from the Alzheimers Society at 1:30 on June 2nd. We hope you will join in helping to organize the events. If you are interested in working on this project talk with Deb or with me.

The **FoodBank** continues to need assistance for the local community. Remember to bring your donations to the church.

The efforts to **upcycle** are going well. I took six jumbo garbage bags filled with empty egg cartons to Crieff Hills this spring. Remember to bring in your egg cartons, milk bags, eye glasses, and stamps.

The **Book Discussion** group will not meet tomorrow. - We will resume next week with our new book...Sensible Shoes, A Story About Spiritual Journey by Sharon Garlough Brown. All are welcome at noon most Mondays

Mark your calendars for June 23rd when Linda Street will share her musical talents with us.

The people of Knox Bayfield acknowledge with gratitude the territory upon which we live, work, play and worship. We live on the traditional lands of the Chippewa and

Haudenosaunee, 'People of the Longhouse,' Anishinabewaki, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and Mississauga peoples within Treaty 29, of 1827. We are all treaty people. We make this acknowledgement, knowing it is incomplete and inadequate. May we listen, learn, and repent.

HYMN Praise God

#306

CALL TO WORSHIP [responsive]

One: Breathe upon us, Holy Spirit

All: Inspire our worship with your truth

One: Stir in our hearts, Holy Spirit

All: Fill us with your love

One: Strengthen us, Holy Spirit

All: Move us to action

One: Breathe in us, Holy Spirit

All: Receive our prayers and praise

Prayer of Adoration and Confession **[responsive]**

God of power and possibility, with the flame of your Spirit, you give us energy to move into the world in Jesus' name. Your Spirit embraces us in the diversity and difference woven into your creation and unites us in your love. We praise you for your presence in every time and place. May your Holy Spirit guide us in this time of worship. Renew us to serve you in this world that aches for the healing and wholeness you offer through Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord.

God of mystery and mercy, we confess we hesitate to be attentive to the urging of your Spirit. You created us to love one another. Stir our hearts with your Holy Spirit. Transform who we are and direct who we shall become through the redeeming love of Christ. Amen

Assurance of Pardon God's amazing love allows each of us to receive his grace and be at peace with God, with yourselves and with each other. May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn

Be thou my vision

#461

To Hear The Word Of God

Prayer For Illumination and Scripture

God of truth and wisdom, Jesus confronted those who stood against him as your Truth. Send us your Holy Spirit to hear your truth again in his story. Inspire us with his courage and conviction so that we may love you more fully and serve you with wisdom. Amen.

Scripture

Tanakh*	Ezekiel 37:1-14	[B#806/W#898]
Psalms	Psalms 104:24-34	[B#555/W#614]
Historical	Acts 2:1-21	[B#119/W#123]
Gospel	John 15:26-16:15	[B#110 /W#114]

May God bless our understanding of this, God's holy word. **The word of the Lord.**

Message

O holy One, by the power of your Holy Spirit at work in the word read and proclaimed, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you. Amen.

Today is Pentecost Sunday. This marks the beginning of the 'ordinary time' of the church seasons. The term Ordinary Time in our liturgical calendar sets it apart from Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. During this time there is a focus on the teachings and ministry of Jesus. Within our church tradition Pentecost follows the season that began with Ash Wednesday and flowed through Lent into Holy Week and then concluded with the Sundays of Easter. It is an annual journey that moves symbolically from ashes to fire. Pentecost helps us to better understand that the church exists to proclaim the love and grace of the triune God.

The scripture readings this morning speak of times of major transitions. The prophet Ezekiel is speaking to the people of Judah who had been exiled to foreign lands. In the book of Acts and gospel of John the disciples are in the tumultuous time during and after Christ's physical presence among them. These stories provide rich imagery of rushing wind with the many voices of Pentecost and the re-animation of hope as dry bones come to life. The re-birth of hope and faith with the Spirit of Truth as guide.

In the book of Acts, the physician Luke wrote about the disciples gathering to celebrate Pentecost, Shavuot as it is known in the Jewish tradition. Shavuot is a festival that happens fifty days after Passover to celebrate Moses receiving the Torah from God. The

Jewish people had gathered from many places to celebrate and as they gathered many languages were spoken.

There is a rabbinic tradition that shares the giving of the Ten Commandments. There was a single sound, yet when that sound went out ... it divided into seven voices and then seventy , so that everyone received the law in their own language. The law was meant to share the will of God. In giving the Spirit on Pentecost, the church received God's Spirit to guide the people. The Spirit is intended for all... to unite us with prophecies, visions, and dreams. ..united in diversity...the diversity of age, gender, and social status ...united by the great outpouring of the Spirit.

Christians celebrate Pentecost fifty days after Easter Sunday; fifty days after the resurrection. We celebrate the arrival of the Spirit. Pentecost is the reversal of the effects of the tower of Babel, when the languages of the world were "confused" and people were scattered. The people who gathered on this day learned of the life and teachings of Jesus with the disciples speaking in the listeners language as the Spirit moved them.

When God's Spirit called the ancient prophets to boldly speak, it was into dangerous situations. Ezekiel saw a vision of God's Spirit blowing through a valley of dry bones and bringing them to life.

Mickey Anders speaks to the imagery of the Spirit, which is often depicted as a gentle dove. Anders wrote, "Celtic Christians chose, not the dove, but the wild goose as a symbol representing the Holy Spirit. It sounds strange to us, but it has a long tradition in Ireland. While the Roman Church imagined the Holy Spirit in the form of a peaceful, graceful dove, the Ancient Celts understood the Holy Spirit to be like a wild goose." The wild goose in Ireland includes the Canada goose along with several other varieties. Consider how this might shift your understanding of the Holy Spirit. Doves cooing are very different from geese honking. I cannot recall a dove chasing people or other creatures through a park. Most of us are aware that geese can be loud and aggressive. Anders continued, "When you hear of the Spirit descending like a heavenly dove on you, you hear harps and strings softly playing and get a peaceful feeling. ... The image of a wild goose descending upon you is a different matter altogether. A wild goose is one noisy, bothersome bird. I like this image of the Holy Spirit as a wild goose because it jars us out of our complacency."

Pentecost urges us to be mindful of the events that marked the early church.

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

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Each year during Pentecost I am reminded of walking in Hebron, a Palestinian city in the southern West Bank, 30 kilometres south of Jerusalem. In the fall of 2014 I travelled with a small group in a Presbyterian Church study tour in the Middle East. During the tour of Hebron, the guides from the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI – pronounced “yappie”) walked with us. While I watched a group of children passing through a checkpoint controlled by the Israeli military, young men and women armed with automatic guns I listened to the advocates. They shared stories of their work in Palestine. This organization offers a vital demonstration of God’s love in the world. EAPPI, coordinated by the World Council of Churches, is a mission effort supported in part by the PCC. It was developed when Churches in Jerusalem identified the need to bring an international presence to the West Bank. Their vision is a future when the Palestinian occupation has ended, a future where Palestinians and Israelis enjoy a just peace with freedom and security based on international law.

Their mission is to witness life under occupation; to engage with local people pursuing peace; to change the international community’s involvement in the conflict; and to urge others to take action against injustice in the region. They have a core set of values of love, truth, justice, peace, and reconciliation. EAPPI is a response of the global Church to the call of the local Church.

During the escalation in Gaza, the advocates were evacuated. “While prioritizing safety and carefully assessing risks, the WCC is gradually resuming in-person involvement by accompaniers. The return of accompaniers is coupled with continued vigilance. ...

Jerusalem is the primary location for the physical presence of ecumenical accompaniers.” Their goal is to walk with the Palestinians, live directly with the local community, and work with local and international organizations. Their placement allows them to experience life under occupation. EAPPI advocates for change when they help to focus global attention on the situation. It is a biblical model for acting justly by following in the ways of Christ. The volunteers gather from around the world, from many cultures, with many languages. They seek to understand the truth and then share the truth of their experience when they return to their communities.

We live in challenging times that are filled with distractions. It takes some effort to develop the practice of being in prayer, in seeking God’s direction for our daily lives.

Consider setting time aside to meditate ... to pray ... to breathe into the ways in which the

Spirit is guiding you and this congregation. Gerry Pierse shared an interesting perspective. He wrote, "Those who say that meditation is an escape from reality obviously have no experience of it. Because if they had this experience they would know that meditation makes us face honestly the reality that is at our own core and it gives us insight into the core of that reality. This, I think, is another way of saying that it puts us in touch with the Spirit. In a sense, then, each time we put on our spiritual snorkels and set out to meditate we are celebrating Pentecost, the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst."

As you meditate, consider reflecting on the ways in which we collectively proclaim the love and grace of the triune God. Consider the ways in which you find the Spirit guiding you. Be attentive to the peaceful presence of the dove and the barking demands of the goose. Praise be to God for visions and the movement of the Spirit among us.

Hymn I am the church! You are the church! #475

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD

Quote The unselfish effort to bring cheer to others will be the beginning of a happier life for ourselves. Helen Keller

At Pentecost, God poured out gifts of the Spirit upon the Church, to equip Christ's followers to bear witness to him throughout the world. We offer our gifts and our lives to God, so that the witness of the Church will continue with the blessing of the Holy Spirit in this generation and beyond.

Doxology We give Thee but Thine own, What e'er the gift may be; All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

Blessing of Gifts

Spirit of grace and power, bless the gifts we offer so that they may accomplish surprising things in Jesus' name. Bless our lives, too, so that our words and actions bear witness to Jesus' love and mercy each and every day. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Wind of the Spirit, blow through your whole church on this day of Pentecost: Blow through us and renew our faith. Re-awaken our love for you God. Let the flames of your love warm our hearts with trust in Jesus Christ. Dare us to do great things in his name.

Wind of the Spirit, blow through us and renew our hope. Open our eyes to recognize needs for ministry and mission around us. Equip us to offer support for those who are near to us. Open our hearts to welcome newcomers and meet those we don't yet know.

Open our hands to share in tasks that need doing, and open our lips in prayer and praise. Wind of the Spirit, blow through us and renew our faith and hope.

Before we call, you answer, God. Before we speak, you know our voices. Hear our prayers. Loving God, by your Spirit, surround us with strength and love. Draw near to those who must confront illness, loss, and changing circumstances. We are thankful for healing and we are thankful for the end of suffering.

God of compassion, we lift up families who travel the long journey of grief and your Spirit to linger with Jim, Jane and family as they mourn Valerie; with Brenda, Faye and family as they mourn John; and with friends and family as they mourn the loss of Marjorie. May their shared memories be a blessing. God of hope, we ask you to linger with all who are dealing with challenges: Renee & Jim; Judith & Gerry; Rob, Jim & Jane; Carl; Betty Lou; Ruth; Audrey & Grace; Courtney, Gayle & family. We lift up all who are on our hearts as they face immense challenges.:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallow'ed 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn

We are one in the Spirit

#471

To Go Forth In God's Name

Commissioning and Benediction

On this Pentecost Day, go in the strength of the Spirit to serve with renewed energy. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Postlude

Amen