

COMMISSION & BENEDICTION

Pastor: People of God, go into the world with gladness!
Be of good courage.
Hold fast to that which is good.
Render to no one – evil for evil.
Strengthen the fainthearted.
Support the weak.
Help the afflicted.
Honor all people.
Love and serve God.
Rejoice in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Pastor: The blessing of God Almighty: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer
be with you today and forevermore.

All people: Amen.

POSTLUDE

May 28, 2023
Pentecost Sunday with Holy Communion
Confirmation Service & Graduate Recognition

“What if I fall? Oh, but my darling, what if you fly?” — Erin Hanson

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS & RECOGNITION OF GRADUATES

PROCESSIONAL *Tongues of Fire/Mighty Wind* **JAM Choir**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Contemporary, communal reading of Acts 2:1-21 in word and song)

Pastor: Tongues of Fire and Mighty Wind!

All people: The Holy Spirit’s coming! Praise the Lord!

Liturgist: When the day of Pentecost had come, they were ALL together – in one place. Without warning, there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind – a strong, gale force explosion of air – and it filled the entire space where they had gathered.

All people: The room was suddenly illuminated with God’s Holy Spirit. Like a wildfire - it swirled and swelled among them - leaping and dancing on EVERYONE there.

Liturgist: Not one person was left untouched by the Burning Flame and Rushing Airstream! And, at the Spirit’s prompting, the disciples began to speak new languages!

All people: There in that place, some were bewildered; many were afraid; some thought they were dreaming; while others, once lost, arose as they heard God calling their name.

All SING: Gather Us In (Verse 1, only) **Bulletin Insert**

Liturgist: Amazed and astonished, those gathered asked one another, “How can this be? The leaders speak only one language, how is it possible that each of us are hearing the good news according to the language WE speak?

All people: God’s people were gathered from every corner of the world: Some were from the region which is modern-day Iran. Others were from Mesopotamia or modern-day Iraq.

Liturgist: Still others had come from Judea and Israel; Cyrene and Libya...

All people: Pontus, which is modern-day Turkey and Media or modern-day Saudi Arabia...

Liturgist: Rome, Crete, Egypt, Cappadocia, and Asia!

All people: Young, old, rich, poor, proud, meek, male, female, every hue of skin and texture of hair – the Spirit invited each one into the eternal song.

All SING: Gather Us In (Verse 2, only) **Bulletin Insert**

Liturgist: Onlookers sneered and made fun saying, “They are intoxicated! Even at 9 o’clock in the morning, they are drunk on new wine!”
All people: But God’s people, led by Peter, stood united and with bold urgency, proclaimed these words of good news from the ancient prophet named: Joel! “In the last days, God will pour out the Holy Spirit, on every kind of person...”

Liturgist: There will be a new birth! Both sons and daughters will prophecy, the elderly will continue to dream; the young will be allowed to use their imaginations, and both the enslaved and free will have reason to hope.

All people: Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved!”
All SING: Gather Us In (Verses 3 and 4) **Bulletin Insert**

JESUS SAID, “LET THE CHILDREN COME”

SPECIAL MUSIC *We are the Church* **JAM CHOIR**
The congregation are invited to sing the refrain with the children, AFTER they have finished singing their anthem. The children will give the signal for when to begin. The words are:

I am the church. You are the church.
We are the church together!
All who follow Jesus, all around the world.
YES! We’re the church together!

EPISTLE READING – Acts 2:37-47

GOSPEL READING – John 13:31-35 and 20:19-23

SERMON *“What if I fall? What if you fly?”* **Pastor Laura Baker**

CONFIRMATION: AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Pastor: We invite to come forward, Rebekah Wertz, who wishes to avow her baptism by confirmation.

Friends in Christ, we are all received into the church the Sacrament of Baptism. Rebekah has found nurture and support in the midst of this family of Christ, Starview United Church of Christ. Through prayer and study, she has been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm her baptism and to claim in our presence her covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the church. Rebekah is here for service to Jesus, using the gifts given to her, by the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: **This is my body, which is broken for you. Take, eat, and remember me.**
Rebekah: After the meal, Jesus took a cup of wine and gave thanks for it. Then he passed it among them with these words:
Congregation: **This is my blood, which is shed for the forgiveness of sins. Take, drink, and remember me.**
Pastor: Holy God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine and pour out the fire of your Spirit on us. Make us one body, unified that we might be your faithful disciples who boldly proclaim and live the good news of forgiveness, peace, and eternal love. Amen.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Pastor: Those who are able, are invited to come forward to receive communion. For those who may find it difficult to come forward, please raise your hand, or have a neighbor raise their hand for you, and an usher will direct me, and I will come to you. The bread has been broken into small pieces. When you receive it, you may eat it immediately. Next, both wine and grape juice are offered. Wine is RED. Grape juice is clear. Please commune as you feel called. Ushers will release you from your seat. Please come to the Lord’s Table by way of the center aisle and return to your seats by way of the side aisles. This is the Lord’s Table, and *everyone* is welcome to receive communion. No one is exempt or excluded.
Rebekah: These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Come! All things are now ready.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

(As time allows)

I Come with Joy **Bulletin Insert**
Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart **Hymnal, #193**
Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness **Bulletin Insert**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

All people: Thank you, Lord Jesus, for this holy meal and for coming to us in the Holy Spirit’s power, as we have shared it. May the love we find at this table be reflected in our lives. May the power we receive at this table make us peacemakers and healers. May the Holy Spirit who fills us at this table, lead us out into the world, that we might proclaim God’s love in every word we speak and everything we do. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

HYMN *Holy, Holy, Holy* **Chime Choir**
Kevin Crone, Piano

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.
Congregation: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.
 Pastor: It is right to give God thanks and praise, and yet we know that all of us sin and fall short of God's glory. Let us confess.
All people: Gracious God, you have promised to receive us when we come to you. We confess we have disobeyed your commandment to love. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. We have not loved our neighbors as we should. Forgive us, O God, and grant that we may forever, hereafter, serve and love, to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.
 Pastor: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether. The past is finished and gone. Everything has become fresh and new. Friends believe the good news of the gospel:
All people: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
 Rebekah: In gratitude for God's mercy and the chance to begin anew, let us lift our voices in song, to give God our thanks and praise.
All sing: Gloria Patri Hymnal, #493
 Pastor: We celebrate the Holy Spirit of God, who hovered over creation and brought order out of chaos and formlessness.
Congregation: We praise you, Holy Spirit of God.
 Rebekah: We celebrate the Holy Spirit, who filled Jesus with power and wisdom and through Him, made the life of God available to all.
Congregation: We praise you, Holy Spirit of God.
 Pastor: We celebrate the Holy Spirit of God, who gave birth to the church, which has been poured out on all people, and leads them into the Kingdom of God.
Congregation: We praise you, Holy Spirit of God.
 Rebekah: As we gather at the Lord's Table, we recognize the Holy Spirit's Presence among us, and we open our hearts to the Spirit's influence.
All people: Lord, we come, knowing that we depend on you for life and truth and love. We come, knowing that you welcome us with open and accepting arms. We come, ready to meet with you and to be changed by the encounter around this holy meal. Amen.
 Pastor: On the eve of his crucifixion, Jesus gathered with his friends for a meal. During supper, he took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and passed it among them with these words:

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATE

Pastor: Rebekah, do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?
Candidate: I do.
 Pastor: Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?
Candidate: I do.
 Pastor: Do you profess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?
Candidate: I do.
 Pastor: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus as best you are able?
Candidate: I promise, with the help of God.
 Pastor: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church, celebrating Jesus' presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?
Candidate: I promise, with the help of God.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Pastor: Will you please stand to affirm what we believe using the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith?
All: We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:
You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.
You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.
You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you, forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CANDIDATE

Rebekah: O God, my God, known to me in Jesus Christ, I give myself to you as your own, to love and serve you faithfully all the days of my life. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CONGREGATION & THE LORD'S PRAYER (using "sins")

Pastor: Let us first pray in silence.
All people: Almighty God, who in baptism received Rebekah, as your servant into the church, forgive her sins and promise her eternal life. Increase in her, the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Grant to her, love for others, joy in serving you, peace in disagreement, patience in suffering, kindness toward all people, goodness in evil times, faithfulness in temptation, gentleness in the face of opposition and self-control in all things. Strengthen Rebekah for her ministry in the world. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior, who taught us to pray, saying: 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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. Amen.

ACT OF CONFIRMATION

Pastor: O God, in the grace of Jesus Christ, you have accepted your beloved child and servant, Rebekah Wertz, through the water of baptism. Nourish in her, the power of your Holy Spirit that she may serve you in the world, all the days of her life.
All people: Amen.

PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray once more.
All people: Almighty God, may your hand always rest upon your beloved child and servant, Rebekah, who was confirmed this holy day. We praise you for calling her and us into your church, the Body of Christ. Confirm in each of us too, the power of your covenant that we may live in your Spirit, building one another up in love and sharing in the joy and cost of discipleship. Together, may we love and serve you, O God, and may we love and serve others, as we love ourselves. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Jesus Shall Reign

**Chime Choir
Kevin Crone, Piano**

OFFERING INVITATION

Liturgist: After believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit, they shared all things in common, selling their goods and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. May the work of the Holy Spirit flow like living water from the our hearts, through the generous offerings of our time, talent, and financial resources. May we be a vessel for God's good news in the world. Let us dedicate our offerings with a song and prayer.

DOXOLOGY

We Give Thee but Thine Own

Hymnal, #258

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All people: Holy God, thank you for sending your Spirit, the Spirit of the risen Christ, from heaven. Help us to be like the early disciples, praying for your guidance and power. Fill our hearts and minds with your gifts of faith, hope, and love. May our encounters with people of every language and culture around us witness to your grace and mercy. We dedicate ourselves and our offerings to your good purposes in the world through our church's mission by the power of your Spirit. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANTHEM

Holy Spirit, Speak to Me (Martin/Nolan)

**Chancel Choir
Kevin Crone, Piano**

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION (With Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon)

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
Congregation: And, also with you.
Rebekah: Lift up your hearts.
Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.