

WOW Prayer  
June 2021  
**BORN OF THE SPIRIT**

Join the prayer team for a time of wonder and awe. Let us pray to the God who astounds us, who surprises us, who can't be nailed down. Come. Begin the journey. Celebrate the Church, **Born of the Spirit!** Wednesday June 2, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

**THE GATHERING**

Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song<sup>1</sup>

Like the murmur of the dove's song,  
Like the challenge of her flight,  
Like the vigor of the wind's rush,  
Like the new flame's eager might:  
    Come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ's body,  
To the branches of the vine,  
To the church in faith assembled,  
To her midst as gift and sign:  
    Come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division,  
With the ceaseless voice of prayer,  
With the power to love and witness,  
With the peace beyond compare:  
    Come, Holy Spirit, come.

**THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

*(inspired by John 3:1-17)*

Blow, wind of God,  
Blow away the tight rules that hold us back from trusting, risking, loving  
Blow away our sin that stands in the way of encountering our neighbors  
Ready us for birth  
Prepare us for risk  
Equip us with courage and vision for the new thing that waits outside the window  
We cannot choose the stories we have inherited  
But we can choose the stories that we become.

**Amen<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> (Reinhard, 2019)

<sup>2</sup> (Hamm, 2017)

## THE SCRIPTURE

John 3:1-8

3:1 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.

3:2 He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."

3:3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

3:4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

3:5 Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

3:6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.

3:7 Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.'

3:8 The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."<sup>3</sup>

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

## THE DEVOTION

(Inspired by Dr. Derek Weber)

Born of the Spirit<sup>4</sup>

The Pentecost season lasts until Advent. So, it is a journey of some length. It is also the church's story. The first half of the year, Advent through Easter is Jesus' story. From Pentecost the story shifts to us—to all the followers who answer the call of discipleship. We begin the journey, not with a reflection on our humanness, but on the unique nature of God. The story begins with the coming of the Holy Spirit, a reminder that we are who we are because of who God is. Our identity is in God. Our story is wrapped up in "THE Story," in "God's Story."

We are Born of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit who sweeps into the Upper Room, roaring like a mighty wind, who fills us with strength and power, then dances above our heads as tongues of flame. We can dance with the Spirit, our guide who burns within us and between us as the power of love. We can reach beyond the comfort of our "self" and dare

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<sup>3</sup> (John 3:1-8, 2021)

<sup>4</sup> (Weber, Dr. Derek, 2021)

to approach the frightening majesty and wonder of God. Grab hold of as much God as you can, with as much of God as you understand. Enter the holy of holies in wonder and awe.

Let us pray to the God who astounds us, who surprises us, who can't be nailed down. We tried that, remember? It didn't work out so well. But Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit that inspires us, that unsettles us a little bit too. The God we worship doesn't want to leave us as we are, but to continually transform us. That is never an easy and is often an uncomfortable process.

But let's prepare ourselves to tell the church's story by reminding each other that there is a God who guides us, who calls us by name. Who claims us and loves us unconditionally. Let's be reminded that we are continually made new. We are born of the Spirit. We are continually renewed in the Spirit, as we tell our story. As we seek to do our part in making disciples of ourselves and other for the transformation of the world.

### **THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

*(inspired by John 3:8)*

Holy Spirit of God, invisible like the wind,  
we do not see you moving among us,  
but the effect we see—  
**come to our hearts:**  
**that we may be renewed and reborn. Amen.**<sup>5</sup>

### **THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND PARDON**

*(inspired by Numbers 21:4-9 and John 3:14-16)*

God,  
we confess that we are an impatient and selfish people.  
When you offer us the promise of a new future,  
we complain that you don't get there fast enough.  
When you provide for our needs,  
we complain because we want more.  
And when our bad attitudes and negative outlooks cause us to stumble,  
we blame you.  
**Holy God, forgive our sinful ways.**  
**Teach us to be patient.**  
**Instruct us to be grateful.**  
**Guide us to be responsible and humble.**

As we turn away from the mirror and look to the cross,  
let us experience your grace and your gift of new life  
through the power of the Holy Spirit.  
In the name of Christ our Savior, we pray. **Amen.**

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<sup>5</sup> (Saward, 2013)

## THE PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

We pray together,  
Father God, **creator of all that is both seen and unseen,**  
Son of God, **revealer of truth and light**  
And Spirit of God, **advocate, and enabler;**

as we come before you now with prayers for peoples and nations so we acknowledge that in all of life's situations you have gone before us and will not fail us.

We pray for peace in so many parts of our troubled world where ethnic, tribal and religious differences continue to blight humanity's potential for greater things. Our advancing technologies have yet to find a solution to our selfishness and intolerance; and so we pray that in all areas of conflict seeds of hope may be sown by men and women of courage and faith and by those who can see the bigger picture which includes a God of love.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say: **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

We pray for countries where demands for individual freedoms and rights are crushed at every opportunity and where activists can disappear without trace. We remember those in the hands of people-smugglers, as they are taken off our streets and from our malls; as they flee poverty or persecution and pray that the international community can find an equitable solution to what will be an ever increasing problem. We pray for the work of all engaged in humanitarian work amongst the refugees and migrants in many parts of the world. We pray for the victims of natural disasters that the world's response will always be swift and generous.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say: **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

We pray for our own country and its peoples, for President Biden, his administration, advisors, cabinet and staff. We pray for all who hold authority and power. We pray for our parliamentary that it remains true to its ideals and that all Members of Congress, through Christ's love and mercy, may strive in seeking what is right and just for all citizens regardless of party or status.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say: **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

As we have recently remembered those who gave their lives for our country and its freedoms, so we must not forget the sacrifices made by our service personnel and their families, especially those requiring medical and psychiatric support as they return from more recent conflicts abroad and thus, we pray for those now still on active service here and overseas.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say: **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

We pray for your church – forever re-assessing our role in the current age; at the same time – preaching the eternal message of a risen Christ and of hope in a world of contrasts and competing ideologies.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say: **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

We pray for our church, Mt. Zion, and all of the churches in our District and in the North Georgia Annual Conference.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say: **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

We pray for all who maintain our buildings, gardens, and grounds and for those who enrich our worship, provide pastoral care and reach out into the community. We pray for Pastor Harden, Pastor Debra and Pastor Montana, that through their encouragement and preaching our church may be a place to find friendship, security, and inspiration - and above all to know Jesus as Lord.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say: **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

We pray for those in most need in our own families and neighborhoods. We remember the sick (in both mind and body), the lonely, the homebound and those facing uncertain futures. We pray for all those who care for and minister to them, whether family, friends or professionals and we ask that you bestow on these your gifts of patience, compassion and understanding. We pray for those that we know who are in some special need today and we commit them to your loving care.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say : **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

We also remember those who have been drawn to their eternal rest and are now in your safe keeping. We pray for those left behind with their grief and memories of times past. Help them feel assured that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, a light which no darkness can quench nor you turn our darkness into light; in your light shall we see light.

*(personal prayers of intercession may be offered)*

We say : **Lord, hear our prayer - 'And let our cry come to you'**

And so - Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**<sup>6</sup>

### THE COLLECT

Holy God,  
**the earth is full of the glory of your love.**

May we your children, born of the Spirit,  
so bear witness to your Son Jesus Christ, crucified and risen,  
that all the world may believe and have eternal life  
**through the One who saves,**  
**Father, Son and Holy Spirit,**  
**now and forever. Amen.**<sup>7</sup>

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

*(Matthew 6:9-13; 1 Chronicles 29:11a CEB)*

**Our Father who is in heaven,**

**uphold the holiness of your name.**

**Bring in your kingdom**

**so that your will is done on earth as it's done in heaven.**

**Give us the bread we need for today.**

**Forgive us for the ways we have wronged you,**

**just as we also forgive those who have wronged us.**

**And don't lead us into temptation,**

<sup>6</sup> (Intercessory Prayer, 2015)

<sup>7</sup> (Scripture Prayer Trinity Sunday, 2021)

**but rescue us from the evil one.**

**To you, LORD, belong greatness and power, honor, splendor, and majesty. Amen.**

### **THE BENEDICTION**

*Inspired by Psalm 29*

Now let us go out into the world to be the prophetic voice that God has called us to be, allowing our lives to be the very mouthpieces of God, evangelizing the sinner, equipping the saint, and being the change that we want to see in an ever-changing world.<sup>8</sup>

### **THE SENDING FORTH**

I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing

I'm gonna get down on my knees  
And obey your Spirit, Lord.

I'm gonna pray when the Spirit says pray  
And obey your Spirit, Lord

I'm gonna get up on my feet  
And obey your Spirit, Lord

I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing  
And obey your Spirit, Lord

I'm gonna walk out on that street  
And obey your Spirit, Lord

Gonna shout when the Spirit says shout  
And obey your Spirit, Lord<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> (Butler, 2021)

<sup>9</sup> (Burton arr., 2020)

## References

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