



Week 3 (May 22-28, 2023): a guide in discerning

We are taking 4 weeks to open our hearts, minds and spirits – to allow God’s Spirit to guide us. We ask: How might God’s Spirit be leading St Paul’s and Wilmot at this time? The journey of discovery depends on us each being personally transformed as well as the congregations being transformed together.

This guide pairs a text, a theme and one of the 4 questions that arose in the process thus far. The 4 questions are available as a separate document. Feel free to reflect on any of the 4 questions at any time in these 4 weeks, in relation to any theme or text.

Text: Acts 2 (Pentecost)

Theme: Wonder

Question: Outreach

In the story of Pentecost, people in Jerusalem, who have come from all over the Mediterranean world are amazed, astonished and bewildered that some uneducated Galileans are speaking with such clarity and boldness, in “their own language.” (Acts 2:7)

This week we celebrate Pentecost, when God’s Spirit is poured out indiscriminately “on all flesh” (Peter quoting the prophet Joel). This event is the beginning of a movement of the church out from Galilee to the whole Mediterranean world. There was something so real, and wonderous, that people of every tribe and race could somehow “connect”. This event led to the inclusion of people who were formerly excluded (see Acts 10, and Acts 8: 26-40). While we are not likely to replicate the wonder of the day of Pentecost, there is something here for us about God’s mysterious Spirit, that reaches deep into us and deep into our community. Mission-focused churches ask not only “What is God doing among us in our church?” but also “What is God doing beyond the bounds of our congregation, in our communities?” Maybe God’s Spirit is at works in ways we cannot imagine, and in places we feel uncomfortable.

What if we trust that God’s Spirit goes before us, reaching out and nudging us “out”?

This week try to spend anywhere from 2 – 20 minutes per day in intentional silence, as we have outlined in the prayer overview (published earlier). Outside of this time, be aware of the following questions:

1. *Call to mind times when you may have felt awe or wonder. What do awe and wonder feel like for you?*
2. *What does it mean for Wilmot/St Paul’s to embrace the possibility of joy, awe and wonder?*
3. *What are some possible (specific) ways to focus the energy of our two congregations and build on our strengths to focus our mission in Fredericton? What type of mission initiative for the city of Fredericton can we envision? What are some innovative ways to sustain hands-on work while taking into account our waning energies? Try to be as specific and concrete as you can.*



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