# Moderator’s Pentecost Message 2024

## Transcript of video message

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

—Romans 8:26–27

Hello. I am the Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator of The United Church of Canada.

Pentecost greetings to you, siblings in Christ!

We give great thanks to God, who at this time of year pours out the Spirit onto the church—and our young people see visions and our elders dream dreams!

This Pentecost, as we gather in our regional meetings and as we recognize, commission, and ordain people across the church into various ministries, I want to offer you a word of hope. I have been travelling across the church to talk about Flourishing. This has given me the opportunity to spend time with leaders—both lay and ministry personnel—to talk about our futures. Those working on individual visions, visions for their community of faith, or our collective flourishing are showing up and getting excited.

We are in a time of polycrisis—there are too many competing crises affecting our lives. Sometimes we don’t know which way to turn. But, as it says in Romans 8: the Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

And with the sighing of the Spirit, the winds of God pass over the church and I see signs of energy and new life. I see deeply spiritual folks gathered in worship that is lively and compelling. I see music ministry stirring our hearts, causing us to “sing lustily and with a good courage.” I see growing children and youth ministries, and young people showing up to dream their dreams out loud and in public. They dream of a church that is radically inclusive and intercultural, a church that practises what it preaches by reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and engaging in divestment and shareholder advocacy. They dream of a church that feels like home, even though sometimes the church is not always welcoming to them.

I see elders in the church who are finding new ways to support each other in their aging. I see folks planning for the future of their aging buildings in ways that are faithful and discerning. I see those gathering to strengthen each other, and I see and hear from affinity networks raising prophetic voices in the name of a just peace. Peace for Palestinians and Israelis. For Ukraine. For Sudan. For Yemen. For Colombia. For Myanmar. For anywhere there are powers and principalities causing war to take hold and seeking to destroy humanity and the planet.

You may feel that it is harder and harder to be connected to the whole denomination. I can assure you I see the binding threads of deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice woven throughout our church. The Spirit is indeed interceding in our lives with deep breath and stoking the winds of change. May we feel the winds of God on our faces and the flames of Pentecost bringing us together in celebration and unity. May it always be so. Amen.