

Sunday, May 23, 2021

Day of Pentecost, Year B

Introduction

Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Crossing all boundaries that would separate us, the Spirit brings the wideness of God's mercy to places we least expect it—to a crowd of strangers of different lands and tongues, to dry bones, to our weak hearts. Jesus promises his disciples that they will be accompanied by the Holy Spirit, and that this Spirit reveals the truth. We celebrate that we too have been visited with this same Spirit. Guided by the truth, we join together in worship, and then disperse to share the fullness of Christ's love with the world.

Order for Worship

Pentecost falls on a 4th Sunday this year; it's a communion Sunday. Pr David Penman preaches and presides. The reading from Acts will be the video version of Acts 2 read in various languages put together as a ZOOM recording, attached as a file to the worship planning email, if it is possible that Sunday for someone to project it. (If NOT, the lector could read it, as usual.)

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

The assembly stands. Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Mighty God, you breathe life into our bones, and your Spirit brings truth to the world. Send us this Spirit, transform us by your truth, and give us language to proclaim your gospel, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Readings

[Acts 2:1-21](#)

Filled with the Spirit to tell God's deeds

[John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15](#)

Christ sends the Spirit of truth

First Reading: Acts 2:1-21

Originally Pentecost was a Jewish thanksgiving-type festival celebrated seven weeks after Passover. On this particular Pentecost, however, the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the entire community of believers just as Jesus had promised and the scriptures had prophesied. Empowered by the Spirit, the entire community bears witness to God's activity in multiple languages.

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, [the apostles] were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷"In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.

¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women,

in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
¹⁹And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.
²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' ”

Gospel: John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

While speaking to his disciples before his death, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as “the Helper” and describes the difference the Spirit will make in their lives and in the world. [Jesus said,] ²⁶“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. ²⁷You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

^{16:4b}“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; ¹¹about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

¹²“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

Prayers of Intercession

When I say, “Hear us, O God,” you respond, “**Your mercy is great.**”

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you give the Holy Spirit to your church, filling it with many and varied gifts. In the church throughout the world, strengthen us in our visioning and dreaming, that it may discover anew the Spirit's creative work.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of life, your mighty works are too numerous to count. The earth is full of your creatures, living things both great and small. Open your hand and give them the necessities of this life. Send your fresh Spirit over the face of the earth.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of the nations, like the sound of a rushing wind, people gathered in Jerusalem spoke different languages, yet all proclaimed and heard together your deeds of power. Inspire your people in every time and place by their example.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of faithfulness, you tend to the needs of your people, even the sighs of our hearts that have no words. Remember those whose cries of distress find no human ears. Restore to wholeness all who seek healing.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of love, Grace be filled with gratitude for all your gifts, great and small. Renew our ministries, heal us where we are frayed or divided, and open us to the needs of our neighbors.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of hope, those who have died in you raise their eternal song of praise. We give you thanks for the many gifts of your people and rejoice in the witness of your saints, naming our loved ones before you in our hearts *pause*

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

God of love,

you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;

for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Wellspring of joy,

through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.

Satisfy the hunger still around us,
and send us as joyful witnesses,
that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life,

Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

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Prayers adapted by Interim Pastor Janet S. Peterman

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