

Pentecost Liturgy



PITTSBURGH
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

PENTECOST LITURGY

USING THIS RESOURCE

This Pentecost Liturgy resource was written by the Rev. Kendra Buckwalter Smith '12/'13, director of the Seminary's worship program. Throughout this resource you'll see portions with a gray background giving information and direction for the worship leader. Sentences in blue provide direction to the congregation. In your Pentecost service, we invite you to use this liturgy in whole or part.

The cover art, painted by the Seminary's Marketing and Communications Specialist Robin Menard, is also free to use in your Pentecost worship materials.

IMAGINING COMMUNITY

On the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending in a mighty rush of wind and flame to inspire the church's proclamation of Christ's resurrection and to empower its mission and ministry in the world. The Revised Common Lectionary readings for Pentecost Year A give us two accounts of the disciples' receiving the Holy Spirit in the midst of waiting. The Gospel reading—John 20:19-23—tells of the disciples gathered together, waiting and fearful, on the day of resurrection. Their fear turns to rejoicing when our risen Lord appears to them, speaks peace into their hearts and breathes the Holy Spirit upon them. After his resurrection, Jesus stayed with the disciples for 40 days. He instructed them to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father—the gift of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1:4). In the second chapter of Acts, just days after Jesus' ascension, we find the disciples gathered together in one place, waiting, as Jesus had told them to, when the Holy Spirit comes upon them.

It is by the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit that the disciples find new life—freedom from the old life and the ability to live according to the Kingdom that Christ brought into our midst. There is a clarity that comes with the gift of the Spirit. God's promise is fulfilled—the Holy Spirit draws us together as one people, helps us to understand what God is doing in the world, and empowers us to participate in God's work by proclaiming the Good News of the gospel in word and deed.

The disciples, along with all creation, have just experienced a radical paradigm shift. Death no longer holds dominion; we are no longer held captive to sin. Now we, along with the first disciples, again ask what all this means for our everyday life. And we find that the answers we seek are only made available to us in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is only when we have received the Holy Spirit that we are able to reorient to a new reality—Kingdom reality. We are able to see division and find unity; we are able to see death and find new life; we are able to see sin and brokenness and find forgiveness; we are able to see need and find fulfillment. Because God's Spirit enables us all to prophesy, to see visions, to dream dreams.

Consider helping your congregation to enter into this paradigm shift once again by seeking renewed awareness of the Spirit's work in and through us even in the midst of our waiting for the fullness of the Kingdom. This liturgy moves from quiet waiting to assurance in the promise of Joel 2:28-29/Acts 2:17-18 as we reflect on the dreams we have for our particular community, the Church, and the world and then to celebration and thanksgiving for the gift of the Holy Spirit as we remember our baptism and are sent out with renewed trust in the power of God's Spirit in and through our lives.

Gathering

*All are invited to gather in silence.
Out of our quiet waiting, we join our voices in an invocation of the Holy Spirit.*

Sung Prayer of Invocation

Holy Spirit, Come to Us/Tui amoris ignem

Glory to God #284

*Holy Spirit, come to us; kindle in us the fire of your love.
Holy Spirit, come to us. Holy Spirit, come to us.
(Veni Sancte Spiritus, tui amoris ignem accende.
Veni Sancte Spiritus. Veni Sancte Spiritus.)*

This song works best when repeated many times. Begin with soft and sparse accompaniment and, if possible, add different instruments for each repetition so that the prayer builds as it takes root in the hearts of worshipers.

Call to Worship

based on the words of James M. Boice

Leader: To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest,

People: the Holy Spirit is given.

Leader: To all who mourn and long for comfort,

People: the Holy Spirit is given.

Leader: To all who struggle and desire victory,

People: the Holy Spirit is given.

Leader: To all who sin and need a Savior,

People: the Holy Spirit is given.

Leader: To all who are strangers and want fellowship,

People: the Holy Spirit is given.

Leader: To all who hunger and thirst after righteousness,

People: the Holy Spirit is given.

Leader: and to all who will come,
the church opens wide her doors
and offers welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

People: In the power of the Holy Spirit, let us worship God.

Opening Hymn

Come Down, O Love Divine

Glory to God #282

*Come down, O Love Divine; seek out this soul of mine,
and visit it with your own ardor glowing.
O Comforter, draw near; within my heart appear,
and kindle it, your holy flame bestowing.*

*O let it freely burn, till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming.
And let your glorious light shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.*

*And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,
shall far out-pass the power of human telling.
For none can guess God's grace, till Love creates a place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.*

Call to Confession

Leader: We know that through Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit,
we have been given new life.
Therefore it is with confidence that we approach the throne of grace.
Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession

People: **O Lord our God, have mercy on us.**
You have united us in diverse community,
yet we allow our misunderstanding of one another
to bring division and exclusion.
You have given us gifts and resources for the good of all people,
yet we hoard our gifts for our own comfort and success
while ignoring the needs of others.
You have filled us with the power of your Holy Spirit,
yet we continue to lead timid lives,
relying only on our own efforts.
You have shown your majesty in our midst,
yet we fail to proclaim your transforming work
and the hope that we have in you.

Silence is kept for personal confession.

Assurance of Pardon

Romans 8:15-17

Leader: Hear the good news!
"You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,
but you have received a spirit of adoption.
When we cry, 'Abba! Father!'
it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God,
and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."
Know that through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit,
God forgives you and strengthens you to live a renewed life.
Believe the good news of the Gospel:

***People:* In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**
Thanks be to God!

Passing of the Peace

Leader: As we embrace renewed life in Christ,
let us extend signs of peace and unity to one another.
The peace of the Lord be with you all.

***People:* And also with you.**

All may exchange signs of Christ's peace and reconciling love.

The Word

Sung Prayer for Illumination

Open My Eyes, That I May See
(Stanzas 1 and 2)

Glory to God #451

*Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!*

*Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wave-notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!*

Gospel Reading: John 20:19-23

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

^{3b}No one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Refrain:

Send forth your Spir - it, O Lord, and re - new the
face of the - earth, Send forth your Spir - it, O
Lord, and re - new the face of the earth.

Words: Steven C. Warner © 1996 World Library Publications

Music: Steven C. Warner; arr. Steven C. Warner and Shirley Luttio © 1996 World Library Publications

Psalms for All Seasons: a complete Psalter for worship #104D

²⁴ O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

Refrain

²⁵ Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.
²⁶ There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.
²⁷ These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;
²⁸ when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
²⁹ When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.

Refrain

³⁰ When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.
³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works —
³² who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
³³ I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the LORD.
^{35b} Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!

Refrain

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1-21

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they 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.
¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.
²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response

Open My Eyes, That I May See
(Stanza 3)

Glory to God #451

*Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!*

Proclamation: Dreams of Community

The minister may offer the proclamation. In this Pentecost celebration, however, it is appropriate to allow space to hear the proclamation of God's manifold works in the voices of different members of the congregation. Consider asking a few congregants to imagine what they think God wants for your church and/or the community surrounding your church and to share their thoughts in the service. (Give them ample time to prepare beforehand.) Encourage them to describe with vibrant language where they see God at work in your community and where they see God calling your community. Ask, What can the community look like when the gospel is truly heard and lived in the power of the Holy Spirit? They may wish to share an instance in which they have seen the Kingdom made clear in the midst of your church/community. Where have they seen reconciliation and unity? Where have they seen Christ-like service? Where have they found assurance that the Holy Spirit is in fact moving in their midst?

Invite these congregants to write a brief statement that paints such a picture of these dreams of community. Then have each congregant share what they have written—what they imagine—in worship. As the minister in service to this particular community, you may wish to offer the final dream in a way that affirms the Holy Spirit's work in your midst and encourages the congregation to trust boldly in the Spirit's power and guidance for the future.

Each of these offerings may be punctuated with a brief sung refrain such as:

Holy Spirit, Come to Us/Tui amoris ignem

Glory to God #284

(used previously as a sung prayer of invocation)

Send Forth Your Spirit O Lord

Psalms for All Seasons #104D

(used previously as the Psalm refrain)

Spirit of the Living God

Glory to God #288

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

Glory to God #291

Remembrance of Baptism

Book of Common Worship

1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27

Leader: Hear these words from Holy Scripture:

Just as the body is one and has many members,
and all the members of the body, though many, are one body,
so it is with Christ.

For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—

Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—

and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Profession of Faith

Leader: Trusting in the gracious mercy of God,
do you turn from the ways of sin
and renounce evil and its power in the world?

People: I do.

Leader: Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior,
trusting in his grace and love?

People: I do.

Leader: Will you be Christ's faithful disciple,
obeying his Word and showing his love?

People: I will, with God's help.

Affirmation of Faith

Leader: Do you believe in God the Father?

People: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Leader: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Leader: Eternal and gracious God, we give you thanks.
In countless ways you have revealed yourself in ages past,
and have blessed us with signs of your grace.
We praise you that through the waters of the sea
you led your people Israel out of bondage,
into freedom in the land of your promise.
We praise you for sending Jesus your Son,
who for us was baptized in the waters of the Jordan,
and was anointed as the Christ by your Holy Spirit.
Through the baptism of his death and resurrection
you set us free from the bondage of sin and death,
and give us cleansing and rebirth.
We praise you for your Holy Spirit,
who teaches us and leads us into all truth,
filling us with a variety of gifts,
that we might proclaim the gospel to all nations
and serve you as a royal priesthood.
We rejoice that you claimed us in our baptism,
and that by your grace we are born anew.
By your Holy Spirit renew us,
that we may be empowered to do your will
and continue forever in the risen life of Christ,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all glory and honor,
now and forever.

People: Amen

*The minister may place a hand into the water of the font, lift up some water,
let it fall back into the font, and then make the sign of the cross over the people while saying:*

Leader: O Lord, uphold these your servants by your Holy Spirit.
Daily increase in them your gifts of grace.

People: Amen.

*Or, congregants may be invited to come to the font. With water from the font,
the minister may trace the sign of the cross on the forehead of each person while saying:*

Leader: O Lord, uphold *N.* by your Holy Spirit.
Daily increase in *him/her* your gifts of grace.

People: Amen.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Offering

Leader: As we have offered gratitude for God's grace upon this community,
let us now offer our gifts to the Lord,
trusting that by the power of the Holy Spirit,
we will be led to ever more faithful fellowship and service.

Doxology

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Glory to God #606-609

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Leader: Almighty and most merciful Lord,
all that we have and all that we are comes from you.
Accept these humble gifts and even our whole selves
that they and we may be a blessing to all those whom you love.
Continue to make us mindful of the great need in our midst
as we participate in your unifying, transforming work in the world.

People: Amen.

Sending

Sending Song

Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us

Glory to God #280

*Come, O Spirit, dwell among us; come with Pentecostal power;
give the church a stronger vision; help us face each crucial hour.
Built upon a firm foundation, Jesus Christ, the cornerstone,
still the church is called to mission that God's love shall be made known.*

*We would raise our alleluias for the grace of yesteryears;
for tomorrow's unknown pathway, hear, O Lord, our humble prayers.
In the church's pilgrim journey you have led us all the way;
still in presence move before us, fire by night and cloud by day.*

*Come, O Spirit, dwell among us; give us words of fire and flame.
Help our feeble lips to praise you, glorify your holy name.
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three in One: what mystery!
We would sing our loud hosannas now and through eternity.*

Charge and Benediction

Leader: Go forth knowing that God's Spirit unites us,
as we seek to love and serve the Lord;
God's Spirit inspires us,
giving an ever stronger vision of God's promises for the world;
God's Spirit empowers us,
even as we await the fullness of those promises.
May the blessing of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and always.
Amen.

PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rooted in the Reformed tradition and in relationship with Christ-followers from other traditions, Pittsburgh Seminary forms and equips people for ministries familiar and yet to unfold and communities present and yet to be gathered.

The Seminary offers degree and certificate programs, or take a class for personal enrichment. Our resource programs include Church Planting Initiative, Continuing Education, Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology, Metro-Urban Institute, Miller Summer Youth Institute, and World Mission Initiative.

Additionally, we encourage you to visit The Clifford E. Barbour Library, invite a faculty member or program director to your church or conference to preach and teach, and see our YouTube channel for video of recent events.

Learn more:

www.pts.edu | info@pts.edu | 412-362-5610

