

# twelvebaskets



## PENTECOST A

A complete Sunday service ready to use  
for worship and inspire ideas in your church

Produced by **twelvebaskets**. Subscription available from **theworshipcloud.com**

**Pentecost Sunday - Year A**  
28th May 2023



## **Order of Service**

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**38 STF – Come, O Holy Spirit, come (Wa wa wa Emimimo) OR**

**167 STF – Colours of day dawn into the mind**

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**151 STF – This is the day the Lord has made OR**

**564 STF – O thou who camest from above**

Readings: Acts 2:1-21; 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13; John 7:37-39

**Hymn:**

**393 STF – She sits like a bird, brooding on the waters OR**

**372 STF – Come down, O love divine**

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**370 STF – Breathe on me, breath of God OR**

**396 STF – Spirit who broods**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**503 STF – Love divine all loves excelling OR**

**411 STF – May the God of hope go with us every day**

Blessing

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The Vine Services are compiled and produced by twelvebaskets.

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## Call to worship

The Spirit is here,  
And we welcome her into the dance of worship, learning, love and prayer that is our  
Sunday gathering.

The Spirit is here,  
And we listen to the whispers and nudges she has for us in our time together.  
The Spirit is out there,  
Calling us beyond this time, into the week ahead, with grace and peace and hope in  
our hearts.

Happy Pentecost!

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## Hymn:

38 STF – Come, O Holy Spirit, come (Wa wa wa Emimimo) OR  
167 STF – Colours of day dawn into the mind

## Opening Prayers

Eternal God,

We thank you for knowing that our words will never be enough to encompass our  
gratitude and love for you,  
and for giving us the Holy Spirit to intercede on our behalf,  
letting our groans and wordless prayers be welcomed into your presence.

Thank you for teaching us the power of sacrificial love.

Thank you for always being with us.

We give thanks today for the reminder that you are at work,  
within us,  
through us,  
around us,  
everywhere.

Help us to be your Pentecost people,  
declaring the power of the spirit,  
helping to bring justice,  
show mercy,  
walk humbly,  
and seek your will.

We are sorry for the ways in which we do not show the world your nature,  
when we lose sight of the gifts you have given us,  
when we forget to declare the good news of your love and salvation.

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<sup>1</sup> Call to worship written by Tim Baker

Lord Jesus,  
fill our hearts today with the fire that cannot be put out,  
quench our thirst that can only be satisfied by you,  
guide us on the path you have laid out before us.

Spirit of the living God,  
fall afresh on us,  
we pray.

Amen.<sup>2</sup>

## **We say together the Lord's Prayer**

### **All Age Talk**

*[To prepare beforehand: A few small, paper crowns with paper fire coming off it and a small sign saying "HOLY SPIRIT"]*

Today is the big finale of the Easter season! And it's a big one! We're going to talk about Pentecost, and for that we'll need some volunteers.

*[Invite children and the 'young at heart' to come forward: invite as many as the number of crowns you pre-made].*

You are all disciples. You've been gathered together for a few weeks now because Jesus told you something is coming. Think... you've had something ordered that's going to be delivered between this date and another, but no firm time, then today, you get a message saying it's going to be delivered between 1pm and 9pm. You are excited, but also nervous!

*[Encourage the participants to have nervous energy!]*

When suddenly, with no warning, there was an almighty wind!

*[Encourage the congregation to make the sound of a strong wind. If it's not that strong, encourage them to make it louder and stronger!]*

A gale force wind! The sound of freight trains rushing past you, the tables are vibrating, the pictures are falling off the wall! The disciples have no idea what happening! And in all this noise and confusion, what is described as "a wildfire spreads through the ranks of the disciples!"

*[Enter, Holy Spirit, placing paper crowns on the heads of the disciples]*

In some artwork of this bible passage it shows this spiritual wildfire settling and leaving small flames above the heads of the disciples. Some might say this left the disciples feeling "strangely warmed!"

And then: Silence (*everyone stops making noise*).

Outside the building where the disciples were, there are crowds of people from all over the known world in town. Romans, Arabs, Egyptians, Judeans, Libyan, and much more.

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<sup>2</sup> Opening prayers written by Sheila Matthews

All speaking different languages. Hearing the noise, they ran to see what the problem was. What they found were the disciples walking out of the building and praising God. But everyone could understand them. You could have a Roman, a Greek, and an Egyptian all listening to the same disciple and they could all understand them clearly in their own language.

Now... this did confuse people. Why wouldn't it!? Some people even thought this was a joke of some kind! But as people started to doubt and make jokes about what was happening, up steps Peter, supported by the other disciples, and he says this:

Read Acts 2: 14-21.

Take a moment to absorb that.

*[Pause].*

What Peter said to that crowd is as relevant then as it is today. The sons and daughters that are talked about are each one of us in this room. It was and is true then as it is now.

A prayer

Heavenly God, pour out your spirit on each one of us today, so that we may go from this place to declare your love to others.

Amen.<sup>3</sup>

**Hymn:**

151 STF – This is the day the Lord has made OR

564 STF – O thou who camest from above

**Readings:** Acts 2:1-21; 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13; John 7:37-39

**Hymn:**

393 STF – She sits like a bird, brooding on the waters OR

372 STF – Come down, O love divine

**Reflections on the readings**

Pentecost Sunday is one of those moments in the Church year that disturbs us, that takes us out of our comfort zone and invites us to think again about who we are as church, and how we are connecting with the Spirit of God that is at work in all things, inviting us to hear again God's call on our lives, God's invitation into mission.

So today, rather than listen to lots of teaching and reflection on the Bible readings, we are going to have a time of conversation and response. We've heard the readings, perhaps you already knew the Pentecost story, or perhaps not, but here as we remember the birthplace of the church, let's reflect on our own place as church, what

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<sup>3</sup> All Age Talk written by Tim Annan-Hood

we can do in our local community and how we can respond to the Spirit of God as she moves across the waters of this place.

To get us thinking, let's listen to this deliberately provocative poem that gets us thinking a bit about what Pentecost might mean:

What strange new thing is this story?  
In all our comfort and reflected glory,  
Sitting in our soft chairs and staring at the nice paintings,  
Thinking about how far we've come,  
How much we've done,  
How clever we are - cleverer by far than any of them 'out there'.

It's church and the urge to get out and meet people  
Has faded, over the years.  
Faded with the tears about how we'll never really grow,  
And we'll never really know  
What it would be like if we'd never built this place,  
Got comfy in this space,  
And drifted into a deep spiritual sleep.

Then, this strange story turns up, once a year,  
To make us all quake with fear,  
That maybe these days, and the ways we are playing  
At being church, and saying the same things we've always said:  
Those ways might be dead,  
Or need to be dead,  
So we can be alive,  
So we can fly on the wings of the Spirit,  
Out beyond our walls and the pitfalls of being church,  
To scratch the deep urge in people for connection,  
For hope,  
For love,  
For God,  
Descending as fire and taking us higher, no matter the cost.  
Welcome friends, to the revolution that is Pentecost.  
*[Pause].*

Firstly, in groups of 3 or 4, have some time taking initial responses to the poem, perhaps framed around these questions:

- How does the poem make you feel? Does it resonate with your experience of Pentecost, or not?
- Does it make you think differently about Pentecost? How do the lines about 'drifting into a spiritual sleep' and 'playing at being church' make you feel?
- Are there ways in which God is at work amongst 'sleepy' churches?
- How does it look when we, as a church, are 'flying on the wings of the Spirit'?

*After this conversation – which may last 10-15 minutes – bring people back together and invite them to join in this prayer, perhaps contributing words or sentences that came out of the conversation for them into the stillness.*

God of all grace,  
Thank you for the miracle of Pentecost, for the way it is an invitation into following you  
and seeing your Spirit at work in our lives.

Thank you for the conversation we've just had, and the way you are at work in that  
too, prompting us to know more of you, and to share your love with the world.

In the stillness, we call out some of the words and sentences that came to us or we  
shared during that conversation, offering them as part of this prayer:

*[Hold a period of quiet, you might like to share some of your own words and sentences  
to help people feel comfortable shouting out]*

God of all grace,  
Show us how to be a Pentecost people again today.  
Amen.

Finally, setting aside the poem and your responses to it, return to the Pentecost story,  
and invite everyone to have one last conversation – how would you respond to the  
question of the crowd in Acts 2, verse 12, where:

*Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"*

What does Pentecost mean to you? Have a 5 minute conversation with your little  
group again.

Then – if there is time – hear people's answers as they share with the whole  
congregation.<sup>4</sup>

### **Hymn:**

370 STF – Breathe on me, breath of God OR

396 STF – Spirit who broods

### **Prayers of intercession**

Pentecostal God,

God of wind and flame and fire and Spirit,

As we pray today, we pray for your Church today,

Especially for the witness of your people here in our community,

Breathe new life into us, and grant us a clear vision to be faithful.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Pentecostal God of healing,

We pray for those who suffer today,

All who suffer for their faith...

All who suffer in body, mind and spirit...

Reveal yourself to all in need with comfort and peace.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Pentecostal God of the whole world,

We pray for the nations in your world.

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<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Tim Baker

Grant to those in authority the gifts needed to speak clearly across divides, to bring healing and calm, where there are wounds and discord.

Lord, in your mercy,  
hear our prayer.

Pentecostal God of our homes and safe places,  
In quietness we offer to you the people and places on our hearts today.

*[Silence]*

Lord, in your mercy  
Hear our prayer.

In faith, and hope, we offer these prayers to you Holy God.  
We may see your work, vision, and kingdom come here on Earth.

We pray these, and all our prayers in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

### **We will now take up the offering.**

As we celebrate the story that began the church, we give thanks for the church across the ages, and we pray for the church of the future. Heavenly Father, by your mysterious Spirit, transform our gifts into the work of your Kingdom.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.<sup>6</sup>

### **Hymn:**

503 STF – Love divine all loves excelling OR

411 STF – May the God of hope go with us every day

### **Blessing**

Go in peace, Pentecost people, and may the Spirit of God go with you.

Go in peace, and build a better world, in Jesus' name,

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by Tim Baker

<sup>6</sup> Additional prayers by Tim Baker

<sup>7</sup> Additional prayers by Tim Baker