

Worship in the Home: Day of Pentecost, May 23, 2021

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Worship in the Home

Day of Pentecost, Year B

May 23, 2021

In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While you cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer. We offer this brief resource as an aid for prayer in the home. As with our prayers in the gathered assembly for worship, you are encouraged to prepare or adapt them locally for your context.

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.

Find a peaceful place to pray, perhaps a table. You may wish to light a candle and place a bowl of water in remembrance of your baptism. One person may lead this acclamation and then pray the Prayer of the Day.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Amen.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

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.

First Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

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.

¹The hand of the LORD came upon me, and brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²The LORD led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³The LORD said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." ⁴Then the LORD said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD."

⁷So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then the LORD said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰I prophesied as the LORD commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹Then the LORD said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' ¹²Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

²⁴How manifold are your ^l works, O LORD!

In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full ^l of your creatures.

²⁵Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too man- ^l y to number, living things both ^l small and great.

²⁶There go the ships ^l to and fro, and Leviathan, which you made for the ^l sport of it.

²⁷All of them ^l look to you to give them their food ^l in due season.

²⁸You give it to them; they ^l gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled ^l with good things.

²⁹When you hide your face, ^l they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return ^l to their dust.

³⁰You send forth your Spirit, and they ^l are created; and so you renew the face ^l of the earth.

³¹May the glory of the LORD endure forever;

O LORD, rejoice in ^l all your works.

³²You look at the earth ^l and it trembles;

you touch the mountains¹ and they smoke.

³³I will sing to the LORD as long¹ as I live;
I will praise my God while I¹ have my being.

³⁴May these words of¹ mine please God.

I will rejoice¹ in the LORD.

^{35b}Bless the LORD, ¹O my soul.

Hallelujah!

Second Reading: Acts 2:1-21

By pouring the Holy Spirit into our hearts, God gives us the promised first fruit of eternal life so that we await God's future in hope. In the meantime, the Spirit also intercedes for us by carrying the prayers of our weak human hearts to God.

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 Jewish-born 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, "You Judeans 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:

¹⁷In 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 youth shall see visions,
and your elders 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.'" "

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

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

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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,] ²⁶When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, the Advocate 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 the one 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 the Advocate to you. ⁸And having come, the Advocate 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.

¹²I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, you will be guided into all the truth; for the Spirit will not speak out of the Spirit's own authority, but will speak whatever the Spirit hears, and will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴The Spirit will glorify me, taking what is mine and declaring it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that the Spirit will take what is mine and declare it to you."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Having read these readings, think on this:

After this long time of the pandemic and continuing national and international troubles, we may feel like the people in exile: bones dried up, hope lost, cut off completely. The death of Jesus may seem like another sad story, far away from helping us. But on this fiftieth day of the Easter feast — Pentecost — the Spirit of God that bears witness to God's victory in the cross is poured into our hearts. With that Spirit comes the whole Easter gospel: Christ is alive; we are raised up with him to no longer be afraid; and the Spirit empowers us to join the witness to Jesus' resurrection. This Spirit puts life and hope and new breath within us — in the word we read today; in the remembrance of our baptism into Christ; and in the holy supper when we can safely receive it in the assembly. In faith, we see the face of the weary earth being renewed, and we join the renewal by turning in love to our neighbors.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 395), "Eternal Spirit of the Living Christ" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 402). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord](#)

Then pray these intercessions:

Today is Pentecost, the fiftieth day of Easter, and we ask God to send the Holy Spirit on the church, the earth, and all who are in need, responding to each petition with the words "Come, Holy Spirit!"

A brief silence.

God of life, we pray for the church around the globe:

for the church in Africa, we pray: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

for the church in Asia, we pray: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

for the church in Australia and all the islands, we pray: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

for the church in Europe, we pray, **Come, Holy Spirit!**

for the church in North, and Central, and South America, we pray: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

for our congregation Name , we pray: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

and for all who search for you, we pray: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

Bless the lands, the seas, and all your creatures, too numerous to count. Send your lively Spirit to renew the face of the whole earth.

A brief silence.

For the earth we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Inspire the leaders of nations to strive for justice and equality for all. Bring peace to Jerusalem, to Israel, and to Palestine. Provide a home for refugees.

A brief silence.

For the nations of the world we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Instill in our legislators and judges a passion for truth. Grant your Spirit to all who make political decisions in our land, that they discern and walk the way of righteousness.

A brief silence.

For our government we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Unite all peoples around the globe into one humankind of cooperation and care. Teach us respect for those whose language or skin color or culture is different from our own.

A brief silence.

For the end of prejudice we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Bring an end to the pandemic. Restore those who have contracted the virus. Uphold healthcare workers, and supply vaccines to all countries and peoples.

A brief silence.

For worldwide health we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Visit all who are suffering, all who feel hopeless, and all who face death. Feed all who hunger. Grant jobs to those who are unemployed. Send healing to those we name here before you. . . .

A brief silence.

For all who are in need we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Breathe your life into each of us, and receive the cries of our own hearts.

A longer time of silence.

For ourselves we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Receive our praise for all the faithful who have gone before us, from the first Pentecost, throughout Christian history, and up to this week.

A brief silence.

That at the end we join with all the saints to rejoice in your presence, we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit!

With confidence in your love and with trust in your mercy, glorious God, giver of life, we offer these prayers through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "Spirit of God, Descend upon my Heart" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 800), "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" (All Creation Sings 942), "When You Send Forth Your Spirit" (All Creation Sings 945). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart](#)

[Everytime I Feel the Spirit](#)

[When You Send Forth Your Spirit](#)

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating an earth of splendor and for making us into a people of your own.

With all the saints who have received your Word

we worship you, holy God.

We worship you, holy God.

We praise you for your eternal Word,
for conquering the force of death,
and for raising us up through the resurrection of our Lord.
For your Word alive among us,
we praise you, living God.

We praise you, living God.

Breathe the Spirit of the risen Christ on us,
that led by your Word
we may honor your earth and its many peoples
and serve all who are in need.
For your Word animating our Easter life,
we bless you, loving God.

We bless you, loving God.

All worship, praise, and blessing be to you,
Source of life, Ruler of life, and Power of life, today and forever.

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.**

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you. (Our mailbox has a lock on it, so is secure.)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Then speak the Blessing:

May our glorious God grant us a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.
The God of life,
Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.

Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Devotional Music Links: For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: "[Come, Holy Spirit, God and Lord](#);" "[O Spirit Bountifully Kind](#);" "[Now to the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray](#)."

Readings for the Week:

Monday (commemoration of Nicolaus Copernicus, 1543; Leonard Euler, 1783; scientists) Psalm 104:24-34, 35b. **Tuesday** 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. **Wednesday** Ezekiel 37:1-14. **Thursday** (commemoration of John Calvin, renewer of the church, 1564) Psalm 29. **Friday** Romans 8:9-11. **Saturday** (commemoration of Jiří Tranovský, hymnwriter, 1637) John 15:18-20, 26-27. **The Holy Trinity** Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17.

Daily Prayer Resources are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able to provide downloadable hymns that are in the public domain and selected hymns for limited use. To purchase copies of [Evangelical Lutheran Worship](#) and [All Creation Sings](#) for the home, visit the [Augsburg Fortress website](#) or call 1-800-328-4648. Selected hymns from [All Creation Sings](#) will be provided for limited use.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw.

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Thank you to those who clean the Church following worship.

Thank you to those who provide you with these worship services.

Thank you to everyone who helped clean the church and surrounding area.

"Our church is looking for an Administrative Assistant to replace Diane Eddy who is retiring on June 1. This position will support our future pastor, the Council and Congregation, by managing the Church office. This is a paid position working 15-18 hours a week. A full position description is posted on the fellowship hall bulletin board. If interested please contact Diane (426-3343) or any Council member. (Elizabeth Eddy, Walt Ford, Len Flesher, Joe Frauenshuh, Carole Holten, Lynette Maas, Dick Rohde, Ron Smith, Bev Streeter)"

Thank you to all who helped with the Community Meal.

Special Congregational meeting following worship on July 18th.

Please keep in your prayers this week: Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Carole Holten, Lois Goossen (Friend of the Newgard's), Les Johnson, Mary (Tammy Ford's Sister), Danny Vorbeck.

Pastoral Mid-week Message for May 19, 2021

Matthew 22:15-21

The Pharisees went off and began to plot how they might trap Jesus in speech. They sent their disciples to him, accompanied by Herodian sympathizers, who said: "Teacher, we know you are a truthful man and teach God's way sincerely. You court no one's favor and do not act out of human respect. Give us your opinion, then, in this case. Is it lawful to pay tax to an emperor or not?" Jesus recognized their bad faith and said to them, "Why are you trying to trip me up, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax." When they handed Him a small Roman coin, He asked them, "Whose head is this, and whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. At that He said to them, "Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but give to God what is God's."

The Palestine of Jesus's day was divided into two political factions. The Herodians were part of the puppet government that ruled in Roman's name. They owed their positions, and their fortunes, to the Roman Emperor's favor. To them, the Roman Empire was a benevolent force that provided peace, protection, and a measure of freedom to those living within its confines. The Jewish people,

for instance, were allowed to preserve their culture, and practice their religion without interference or hinderance.

The Zealots on the other hand, found Roman authority hateful and oppressive. To them, any presence of paganism or limitation of freedom was unthinkable. Armed revolt was the only answer. They were quite sure that God would deliver them. The party of the Pharisees sympathized with the Zealots, but did not believe in a violent solution to the problem.

The tricky question put to Jesus was more than an intellectual puzzle. It was invitation to make some powerful enemies; the might of Rome, on the one hand, or the hatred and revenge of a revolutionary army.

His answer amazed Jesus' hearers because it came out of a mindset, out of assumptions, out of principles completely different from their own. They divided the world up into us and them, good and bad, right and wrong, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, and the righteous man chose the correct side of every difference. Jesus transcended differences. He healed on the Sabbath, as well as other days. He spoke to women as well as men. Samaritans as well as Jews. He ate with sinners as well as Pharisees. He did not prefer the elder to the prodigal son or water to wine. Weeds grew in his garden right along with the wheat. He could follow common sense as well as the law of God. they said to Him: "Here is the unsolvable problem." He said: "Where's the difficulty - 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and render to God the things that are God's.' "

Jesus' response does more than answer a theological or political question. It shows us how we might "let that mind that was in Christ Jesus" also be in us. Once we truly render to God the things that are God's, what are burning issues and unbridgeable divides become as much non-problems as were life and death issues of His day to Jesus.

What does God ask us to render to Him? "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all our soul and with all your might." (Deut. 6:4-5). Jesus confirms this is indeed the great commandment.