



Day of Pentecost - Sunday May 24th, 2026 The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

All creation breathes with you, O God.
Your Spirit is life to us
and we are created anew.

Come, Holy Spirit – light up our hearts.
Come, Holy Spirit – fill us with wonder.
Come, Holy Spirit – enliven us with your love.
Amen!

As an alternative to the response in bold, you could sing TiS 711 'Come O Holy Spirit'.

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging



The Ancient of Days breathed life into this land and her peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the *(please name the people on whose land you gather)* People, the Traditional Custodians, have blessed this place through their law and customs, their care and life. We pay respects to their Elders and leaders past and present, and pray for the future of their communities. May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.

Singing - O breath of life come sweeping through us TiS 409

OR: Come down O Love divine TiS 398
OR: All things bright and beautiful TiS 135

Prayer



Spirit of God, you blow mysteriously in our world and in our lives.
We give thanks for the way you surprise and enliven us, just when we need it most.

Spirit of God, you bring light to our world. We offer our thanks for light shining in otherwise dark places. May your light inspire us to be people of light.

Spirit of God, your grace flows among us, within communities and especially where evil and hatred threaten to prevail. For this we are in awe and offer our thanks and praise.

May we know your Spirit deep within...

(pause)

But even as we desire to know your Spirit within us, we know our wilful nature.

Forgive us when we need to be right within our own strength, when we hurt or vilify others or your good creation.

Forgive us when we make a mockery of your grace and put ourselves at the centre of the universe of our own making.

Forgive us when we cast a deep shadow over your light because we have forgotten how to love and live in the very breath you give us.

(pause)

And yet the Spirit of God blows mysteriously, breaking through our walls and barriers, breaking down our wilful resistance to go our own way, until we discover that each breath we take is a gift of the Holy Spirit within.

So we breathe.
Breathe in, breathe out ...
Breathe in, breathe out ...
Breathe in, breathe out ...

As you breathe, the Spirit of God lives in you.
Breathe in God's grace and love,
breathe out God's grace and love,
and live!



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Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.

Listening

Read: Psalm 104:24-34, 35b &
Acts 2:1-21 &
John 20:19-23

For these words of faith
and for Jesus the Word

Thanks be to God.

Reflecting - Rev Heather den Houting

When I was a newly ordained minister, fresh out of theological college and preaching regularly, I was surprised by the number of times people would say "I've never heard that angle on that topic before". This really surprised me, as I was teaching and preaching from a reformed and evangelical theology that had been around for decades. I also thought about the ministers who had been in placements before me. People who I respected and knew would have provided well researched and grounded sermons.

However, eventually I began to realise that every time we gather to hear the word proclaimed, we find a new set of circumstances before us.

1. The preacher may bring a story in a manner or form that is unique to them. The spoken message is changed and delivered in new ways.
2. The listener is a different person every time they hear the Word proclaimed. They have had more life experience, more stories and are at least 7 days older and wiser than the last time they attended a Sunday sermon. The hearers' ears are changed.
3. The Holy Spirit uses the space and time when we are gathered together to allow wisdom to flow between the speaker and the listener. Through the Holy Spirit the miraculous can happen.

It is this realisation that means we can celebrate and rejoice in the birth of the church at Pentecost. Here in this ancient festival, we hear the story of the way that the spoken, the received and the Spirit can make a new thing true. The church is launched with a flourish.

There is something in this recognition of the transformative experience which can liberate us again into the revealed love and graciousness of God. The Psalm for today reminds us that everything is connected and that these moments of divine power are available to us in the whole of creation. Gathering together allows us to participate in this greater connectedness. This is a faithful and priceless gift that we should celebrate.

The Acts reading, focussing on the manner in which the Spirit was poured out into the crowd reveals changes in both the speaker and the listener. The words spoken were received in a new manner by the listener as a result of the mediation of the Spirit. You may have heard a sermon before about how this event can be compared to the story of the Tower of Babel, where through humanity's arrogance the world was divided by language. Here we read about the antidote. Through God's reconciling love and faithfulness, we learn again that we are connected in ways more powerful than our own efforts.

The new church is dynamic and fluid. There are no camps of different Christian sensibility as yet. Yes, there is tradition, but that has been broken open by the disciples proclaiming release from a strict observance of purity culture. What is being preached, heard and received is the news of freedom in the spirit vs. the discipline of the faith. Instead, the words of the ancient prophet Joel are used again to new effect. And the people's response was as if this was the first time they had heard that message.

As you listen to these stories again today, what is the Holy Spirit inspiring in you? Are your ears changed? Can you see a new thing arising from our deep connectedness and reconciliation



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through Christ? How might you speak about this?
What signs and wonders can you see?

My prayer for the inspired church is that:

- *the Holy Spirit changes our ears to hear with sensitivity;*
- *the Holy Spirit changes our speech from fear to love;*
- *the Holy Spirit changes us to act in a manner that is transformed through joy.*

This Pentecost, may we have new ears to hear the reconciling Spirit in our lives so that we are blessed again to be a blessing to others, Amen.

Singing - Filled with the Spirit's power ***TiS 411***

OR: Where the Spirit is there's freedom TiS 421

OR: God sends us the Spirit TiS 412

Offering

Holy Spirit of God, as we are blessed through your presence, bless these gifts we offer. May they be used in ways that make real your grace, light and love – in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Notices

May 26 is *National Sorry Day*.

May 27 is the start of *National Reconciliation Week*.

Prayers for World & Community

In places of darkness, where we long for light,
we pray come Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit, come.

In places of hatred, where we long for love,
we pray come Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit, come.

In places of death, where we long for life,
we pray come Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit, come.

In places of mistrust, where we long for grace,
we pray come Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit, come.

In places that struggle for air,
where we long for breath,
we pray come Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit, come.

In places of loneliness,
where we long for community,
we pray come Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit, come.

Come, O Holy Spirit, come.
For the sake of your creation,
for the sake of the world,
for the sake of all people, come.

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Singing - She sits like a bird TiS 418

OR: Holy Spirit, come confirm us TiS 413

OR: God who stretched the spangled heavens TiS 163



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Blessing

Be light where there is darkness,
be grace where there is none.
Be breath among the breathless,
Be hope and life and love.

Go to bless because you are blessed.
You are enlivened and animated
by the very breath of God in you.

Breathe and bless.
Breathe and love.

In the blessing of the
Creator,
Redeemer,
and Sustainer. Amen.

Sending out song - Send me Jesus TiS 749

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