

Liturgy
Eighth Sunday of Easter
Year C
Day of Pentecost

GATHERING

Bow Down

Bow down before the Lord,
Worship Him,
O worship Him.
Bow down before our God,
Enter in,
O enter in.

Consuming fire and sweet perfume,
His awesome presence fills this room.
This is holy ground,
So come and bow down.

CCLI Song #1222013 ©1993 Intergrity's Hosanna!
Music: David Baroni, Tony Sutherland

O LORD, how manifold are Your works!
In wisdom You have made them all.
You send forth Your Spirit –
 The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
 Of counsel and strength,
 Of knowledge and the fear of the LORD –
 And Your creation is renewed.
May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
May the LORD be glad in His works!
I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
 I will sing praise to my God
 while I have my being.
May our meditation be pleasing to Him,
For we rejoice in the LORD.
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
 Praise the LORD!

– from Psalm 104 and Isaiah 11:2

*LECTIONARY for the eighth Sunday
of Easter, Year C:*

*Acts 2:1-21
Genesis 11:1-9
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Romans 8:14-17
John 14:8-17, 25-27*

This eighth Sunday after Easter brings us to the end of the fifty-day liturgical period traditionally known as Easter-tide. In this season, we, the Church, have focused on the ongoing meaning and significance of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection for the redemption of all of God's creation.

On Pentecost Sunday—fifty days after Christ's resurrection from the dead—we commemorate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the gathered disciples in the Upper Room and what is often referred to as the birth of the Church. Remember that Jesus, just before His ascension into heaven in His glorified body, directed His followers to go to Jerusalem and wait there, because He would send upon them the Promise of the Father (Luke 24 and Acts 1). He went on to explain that they would be clothed with power from on high, when the Holy Spirit had come upon them. And they would be Christ's witnesses to the ends of the earth. Remember, too, what Jesus had taught them in His farewell discourse: "I am in the Father, and you are in Me, and I am in you" (John 14:20). In a very real way, Christ was among the disciples on the Day of Pentecost in His risen power through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

As we worship on this Pentecost Sunday, we are mindful that Pentecost symbolizes new beginnings filled with promise, power, hope and comfort.

The opening song/call to worship reflects these words from Acts 2: "And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit ..."

O For a Thousand Tongues

O, for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise;
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace.

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life and health and peace.

My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim;
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honors of Thy name.

Public Domain. Words: Charles Wesley, 1739; Music: Charles Collignon (1725-1785)

INVOCATION

Prayers of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving for God's presence

Breathe Upon Us

Come, and breathe upon us, God. (3x)
We pray.

Send Your fire, send Your wind,
Send Your Holy, Holy spirit;
We want You more and more.
(repeat)

Come, come like You promised;
Pour out Your Spirit on all flesh.

CCLI Song #5251382 ©2008 Forerunner Worship. Alisha Powell.

READING: Acts 2:1-21

O For a Thousand Tongues (sung)

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me.

He speaks, and, list'ning to His voice,
New life the dead receive;
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
The humble poor believe.

Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb,
Your loosened tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Savior come,
And leap, ye lame, for joy.

We sing the first three verses of this classic hymn, so reflective of the narrative of the Day of Pentecost, after the Gathering responsorial reading. Three more verses are sung as a response to a scripted reading of Acts 2 (below), with the third verse ("My gracious Master ...") and a final doxological verse sung as a joyful prayer and declaration at the end of the service.

There are many wonderful hymns and songs that work well for Pentecost Sunday services. You'll find several of them in this liturgy.

Some other suggestions include:

- Holy Spirit, We Now Wait On You (CCLI Song #3383287 ©2002 Harvest Fire Music, by Clarence McClendon)
- The classic hymn, Fill Me Now (public domain. Elwood Stokes, John Sweeney)
- Another classic hymn, Spirit of the Living God (by Daniel Iverson; CCLI Song #23488 ©1935/1963 Birdwing Music)
- Holy Spirit (CCLI Song #6087919 ©2011 Capitol CMG Genesis | Jesus Culture Music. Bryan Torwalt, Katie Torwalt)
- Holy Spirit, Come (CCLI Song #5110557 ©2007 Universal Music | Brentwood Benson Songs. Tommy Walker)
- Holy Spirit Come (CCLI Song #1177979 ©1992 Geoff Bullock Music. Geoff Bullock)
- Holy Spirit, Thou Art Welcome (CCLI Song #12994 ©1977, 1983 Bridge Building Music | New Spring. Dottie Rambo, David Huntsinger)

A scripted version of this reading, written for several readers (a Narrator, the Crowd, and Peter), is available as a free resource in the Liturgy Folio. You'll find it just below the link for this liturgy (Easter 8C) on the Liturgy Folio home page. It is labelled "Easter 8 Acts Reading_Script."

To avoid a feel of repetition, it is good to modulate the key from verse to verse or every other verse.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Let us express our unity with the church of all ages on this Pentecost Sunday
by professing our faith in the words of the Heidelberg Catechism:

**In his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit,
Christ is not absent from us for a moment.**

**By the Spirit's power
we make the goal of our lives not earthly things,
but the things above, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.**

**Through the Holy Spirit,
Christ pours out his gifts from heaven upon us his members.**

The Spirit, as well as the Father and the Son, is eternal God.

**The Spirit has been given to us personally,
so that by true faith
the Spirit makes us share in Christ and all his blessings,
comforts us, and remains with us forever.**

—from Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A's 47, 49, 51, 53

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Jesus said, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper,
that He may abide with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, who abides with you and will be in you.

He will teach you all things ... and He will guide you into all truth."

*Through the Spirit of Truth, who helps us in our weakness
and intercedes for us according to the will of God,
let us freely confess our sins to God.*

— from John 14:16-17, 16:13, and Romans 8:26-27

Almighty God,

**You poured out Your Spirit upon the gathered disciples
creating bold tongues, open ears, and a new community of faith.**

**Yet, we confess that we too often hold back the force of Your Spirit among us.
We do not listen for Your word of grace, speak the good news of Your love,
or live as a people made one in Christ.**

[Silence]

Have mercy on us, O God.

**Transform our timid lives by the power of Your Spirit
and fill us with a glowing desire to be Your covenant people,
doing Your will for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew.
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.

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*The prayer of confession can be found
in the Litany of Pentecost, Book of
Common Worship. Reprinted by per-
mission from Book of Common Wor-
ship, ©1993 Westminster/John Knox
Press.*

*"Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be
with you. As the Father has sent me,
so send I you.' When he had said this,
he breathed on them and said to them,
'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"
(John 20:21-22)*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you;
My peace I give to you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."
— John 14:27

*All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
For 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.**
— Romans 8:14-17a

Thanks be to God!

TIME OF OFFERING

Gracious and loving God, we acknowledge that You have opened up Heaven
and rained down Your blessings in amazing ways, over and over.

[Spontaneous words and prayers of praise and thanksgiving]

**And now we gratefully offer ourselves, all we are and all we have,
as a reflection of Your love and expressions of our worship. Amen.**

Holy Spirit, Rain Down

Holy Spirit, rain down, rain down;
O Comforter and Friend,
How we need Your touch again.
Holy Spirit, rain down, rain down;
Let Your power fall,
Let Your voice be heard;
Come and change our hearts
As we stand on Your word;
Holy Spirit, rain down.

No eye has seen, no ear has heard;
No mind can know what God has in store,
So open up Heaven, open it wide,
Over Your church, and over our lives.

CCLI Song No. 2405227. ©1997 Hillsong Publishing. Russell Fragar.

THE WORD

Acts 2:1-21

Genesis 11:1-9

Psalms 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:14-17

John 14:8-17, 25-27

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!

Our Father in Heaven (sung)

Our Father in heaven, Your name is holy,

Your name is holy, our Father.

Your kingdom come,

And Your will be done

Here on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us, we pray, our bread for today,

Our debts forgive and in turn we will live,

Forgiving of what others owe.

Keep us from trials;

Save us from our ancient foe!

As we sing the kingdom, we sing the power,

We sing the glory be Yours –

Forever. Amen. Amen. Amen!

Chris Alford and Ellen Koehler.

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Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, living Breath of God,

Breathe new life into my willing soul.

Let the presence of the risen Lord

Come renew my heart and make me whole.

Cause Your word to come alive in me;

Give me faith for what I cannot see;

Give me passion for Your purity;

Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me.

Holy Spirit, come abide within,

May Your joy be seen in all I do.

Love enough to cover ev'ry sin,

In each thought and deed and attitude.

Kindness to the greatest and the least,

Gentleness that sows the path of peace;

Turn my strivings into works of grace;

Breath of God show Christ in all I do.

Holy Spirit, from creation's birth,

Giving life to all that God has made,

Show Your power once again on earth,

Cause Your church to hunger for Your ways.

Let the fragrance of our pray'rs arise;

Lead us on the road of sacrifice,

That in unity the face of Christ

May be clear for all the world to see.

CCLI Song #4779872. ©2006 Thankyou Music. Stuart Townend and Keith Getty.

Music for this setting of the Lord's Prayer, Our Father in Heaven, is available in the sheet music catalog as a lead sheet, and as a solo/melody line with piano accompaniment on request.

Here's a link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/our-father-heaven>

Revelation Song (Chorus)

Holy, holy, holy
Is the Lord God Almighty
Who was and is and is to come;
With all creation I sing
Praise to the King of kings;
You are my ev'rything
And I will adore You.

CCLI Song #4447960; ©2004 Gateway Create Publishing; Jennie Lee Riddle

SENDING FORTH

The Life of the Body

O For A Thousand Tongues

My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim;
To spread through all the earth abroad the honors of Thy name.

Glory to God, and praise and love be ever, ever given,
By saints below and saints above, the church in earth and heaven.

Public Domain. Words: Charles Wesley, 1739; Music: Charles Collignon (1725-1785)

Benediction:

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**The love of God has been poured out within our hearts
through the Holy Spirit of promise,
who was given to us and who has sealed us in Him,
to the praise of His glory.**

Since we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit,
going forth into the world to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

—Romans 15:13, 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14; Galatians 5:25

A thought about worship...

“Pentecost Sunday ends the extraordinary season that began on the first Sunday of Advent. In approximately six months the church has been carried through all the saving events of God—his incarnation, manifestation to the world, life, death, resurrection, and ascension as well as the coming of the Holy Spirit. All these crucial events form faith and the spiritual life. . . . Broadly speaking, Pentecost brings understanding to the followers of Jesus, empowers them in ministry, establishes the church, and points to the end of history when the kingdom of Christ will be established over all the earth.” Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 163, 161.

Lectionary for next week: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
Psalm 8
Romans 5:1-5
John 16:12-15

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URL: <https://www.clerestorynotes.com>

We sing the chorus of this well-known and well-loved “contemporary classic” song as both a response of worship and gratitude nearing the close of the service, and as a fitting song for this last Sunday of the Easter season, when our ongoing meditation has been on the significance of the Person and Work of Christ for all of God’s creation.

These verses of the Gathering hymn bookend the service with both a prayer of dedication of ourselves as God’s joyful witnesses according to His promise and a joyful declaration of His glory and faithfulness.