

SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2025
DAY OF PENTECOST
JOHN 14:8-17, 25-27



**ST. JOHN UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Ushers –

(NCH) New Century Hymnal - CCLI LICENSE #11164431

*Please stand if comfortably able.

Respond with words in bold print

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS:

THE BELL IS RUNG:

PRELUDE: “The Church Is One Foundation”

James Denton

PENNIES FOR MISSION:

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

(Inspired by Acts 2:1 and Psalm 104)

One: When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

Many: We join for worship online and onsite, in real time and sometimes days later, and yet,

One: The Holy One sends forth the Spirit.

Many: Who unites us, connects us, and forms us as a community.

One: We were created in spirit and in truth, wonderfully and fearfully, in the image of Holy Love.

Many: God renews the face of the earth and the cosmos, this faith community and the church.

One: May the glory of God the Fire endure forever!

Many: Bless the Holy One, oh my soul. Praise God!

***INVOCATION:**

Spirit of Unity, you knit us together with all of our connections and distinctions. You make us one and yet

unique. We gather to hear your voice and to attune ourselves to the language of the other, to celebrate the diversity of your creation and to immerse ourselves in compassionate care, to give you glory and to recognize the gift of community. May our hearts be opened and our lips declare your praise. Inhabit our worship with your abiding presence and inflame us with your love. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN: 288 “Let It Breathe on Me”**

***PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE:**
Spirit of God Amen, fall fresh on us. Let your refining fire bring impurities to the surface for the fullness of who we are to shine through. Forgive us for the ways we allow our diversity to be a reason for divisiveness and exclusion rather than a celebration of your wondrous work in us. Enable us to overcome and eradicate the barriers that we create in the name of our convenience and comfort that push your beloved to the margins. Awaken in us a desire to know and share space with neighbor, enemy, and kin. Amen.

***WORDS OF GRACE:**

Beloved of God, you have not received a spirit of fear, divisiveness, animus, or hate. Receive the true gift of God—the spirit of adoption—that binds us together as

one and unique, connected and distinct, unified yet not uniform. The Spirit of God delights in you as the individual you are and are becoming as a co-heir with Christ of the kingdom as well as in the global human community that declares the creative breadth of the Holy One’s creative acts and surpassing love.

***GLORIA:**

Glory to the Creator, and the Christ and the Spirit so near. As it was from the start so it shall be forever, One God always here. (repeat twice)
(end) One God always here. One God always here.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: Acts 2:1-21

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 104:24-34 Page 889-890

EPISTLE: Romans 8:14-17

***GOSPEL: John 14:8-17 (25-27)**

MESSAGE: Do I have news for you? Easter is over. You probably knew that. Actually and officially, Easter is completed at Pentecost. Let’s think about that. Without Pentecost Easter means the departure of Christ, leaving behind the confused and uncertain disciples who can do no better than return to fishing. With Pentecost, Jesus’ promise not to leave his disciples orphaned in the world is kept.

You might wonder, where did Pentecost actually come from? Good question. Pentecost was Jewish festival celebrating the early harvest, but it came in time to be the commemoration of God's giving Israel the law at Sinai. The festival came fifty days after Passover. The author of the Gospel of Luke, who paid attention to the history of the events of the Christian faith, says Jesus revealed himself to his disciples for forty days after the resurrection.

Following Jesus' ascension (which we talked about last Sunday) his followers continued in prayer and expectation. At Pentecost, the promise of power from on high was fulfilled. This festival, for the Jews a celebration of the giving of the law, became for the Christians a celebration of the giving of the Holy Spirit. Beyond that, the word does not specify a date or season but symbolizes the coming of the Spirit, which gathers, constitutes, and empowers the church, whether that story is told by Luke or Paul or John. Now we know the history of Pentecost. That's why Pentecost is also celebrated as the "birthday of the church".

When researching for today's lesson, I came across an essay written by Rev. Carl R. Holladay in 1994 concerning our Epistle lesson in today's liturgy; Romans 8:14-17 which was written by the Apostle Paul. I think it's worth sharing with all of you.

"If Acts 2:1-21 speaks of the Spirit as the possession of the church, Romans 8:14-17 speaks of the Spirit as the possession of us as individuals. With this Pauline text, Luke's narrative account beomes personalized for all of us.

"Who is a Christian? This question is asked and answered in many ways. For some, being Christian is adhering to the creed. It is a test of orthodoxy or right belief. We must ask what one believes and confesses before we can determine whether that person is a Christian. For others, being Christian is exhibiting a certain form of behavior. We are Christian if we behave like Christians. It is a test of orthopraxy (praxy means practice. "ortho" means orthodox) We must ask whether one's "Praxy" or practice, conforms to Christian standards. Still others locate the answer in liturgy. We can tell if we are Christian by whom we worship and how.

According to Rev. Holladay, " the answer of today's text is simple and straightforward: to be a Christian is to be led by the Spirit of God". (repeat)

Now we can all understand why Pentecost is so important to us if we call ourselves Christians. Its not enough to say, "well I wore a red shirt today for Pentecost". Can each of us say our every day lives are led or guided by God's Spirit; God's life force?

I invite you to pray about it. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC: “Come Down Lord”

Video by St. John Choir

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Almighty God, On this day of Pentecost, we celebrate the outpouring of Your Holy Spirit upon Your Church! We stand in awe of the mighty rushing wind and tongues of fire that descended, empowering the first disciples to boldly proclaim the gospel. *That same Spirit now dwells within us, the temple of the living God.* Holy Spirit, come and fill us afresh today. Ignite in our hearts a renewed passion for Jesus and a burning desire to see Your kingdom advance. Baptize us anew with power from on high, that we might prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams according to Your will. Revive us with the same supernatural boldness that transformed the disciples from cowering in fear to fearless proclaimers of the truth. Just as the Spirit led the early church into all truth, *lead us into a deeper revelation of Christ.* Open our eyes to behold the wonders found in Your Word. Illumine our understanding, that we may comprehend the breadth, length, height, and depth of Christ’s love which surpasses knowledge. *May the Spirit’s fruit be abundantly manifest in our lives – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

Empower us with gifts of the Spirit to build up the body of Christ and bring glory to Your name. Let prophetic utterances, words of wisdom and knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, and discernment of spirits flow freely amongst us. May our church assemblies be characterized by an atmosphere of supernatural enablement, just as in the days of Pentecost. *Above all, may we be filled afresh with the Spirit’s power to be bold witnesses of the gospel, unhindered by fear or intimidation.* Thrust us out as Your sent ones, empowered to turn the world upside down with the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. In the mighty, life-giving name of Jesus, we pray. Amen!

Almighty God, as we celebrate the birth of Your Church on the day of Pentecost, fill us with a missional zeal to fulfill the Great Commission. Empower us by Your Spirit to be bold witnesses, sharing the good news of salvation with the lost and the hurting. May our lives be instruments of Your love, compassion, and redemption, drawing all people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER:

PRAYER RESPONSE: 774 “Eagle’s Wings”
And God will raise you up on eagle’s wings,
Bear you on the breath of dawn,

**Make you to shine like the sun,
And hold you in the palm of God's hand.**

***INVITATION TO GENEROSITY:**

The Spirit of God has been poured out on us. For the gifts of God, we give thanks. For the grace of God, we extend our trust. For the love of God, we bring forth the gifts we have to give. May our offerings of time, talent, and treasure ignite and unite this community for the hope of the world around us, near and far.

OFFERTORY: "My Faith Is Firmly Found" J.S. Bach

***DOXOLOGY:**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.**

***UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND
DEDICATION:**

Spirit of the Living God, receive our gifts as tangible expressions of our belonging to your church and our commitment to the ministry begun in Christ and continued through this faith community. Magnify them in miraculous ways, and make our generosity a

demonstration of the love you have given us and we return to the world you love. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN: 284 "Joys are Flowing Like a River"**

***BENEDICTION**

Go, united as living testimonies of the Source of all love, the Embodiment of divine power, and the Spirit of truth and wisdom.

Go, in the assurance that the same flame that ignited the early disciples burns alive in the church today.

Go, with glad hearts and courage, as the Advocate guides and with the peace Christ provides.

BENEDICTION RESPONSE:

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"

THE BELL IS RUNG:

POSTLUDE: "Strength and Stay" Rob Roy Perry