

Unsettled but Unafraid: A Liturgy for Worshipping at Home
Week of May 31, 2020 (Pentecost Sunday)
St. Simons Presbyterian Church

Although we are not able to gather in-person for worship, we are able to gather in spirit. This week's liturgy is designed to be used alongside the worship video, although it can be used on its own. Use it individually or as a family. If you are using it in a family setting, consider giving each person one part to lead. If using individually, try to carve out 10-minutes to quietly read, reflect, and pray through. No matter how you worship, God will show up. Liturgy this week was compiled by Rev. Annie Franklin Arvin with a reflection written by Frieda Warner, Director for Christian Education and Children's Ministry.

Opening Psalm - Psalm 104:24-35

Lord, you have done so many things!
You made them all so wisely!
The earth is full of your creations!
And then there's the sea, wide and deep,
with its countless creatures—
living things both small and large.
There go the ships on it,
and Leviathan, which you made, plays in it!
All your creations wait for you
to give them their food on time.
When you give it to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled completely full!
But when you hide your face, they are terrified;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to dust.
When you let loose your breath, they are created,
and you make the surface of the ground brand-new again.
Let the Lord's glory last forever!
Let the Lord rejoice in all he has made!
He has only to look at the earth, and it shakes.
God just touches the mountains, and they erupt in smoke.
I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I'm still alive.
Let my praise be pleasing to him;
I'm rejoicing in the Lord!
Let sinners be wiped clean from the earth;
let the wicked be no more.
But let my whole being bless the Lord!
Praise the Lord!



Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer (included in video)

By Kate Buckley

Eternal God,
You are with us.
You made us.
You love us, and you sustain us.
We are so grateful for the gift of belonging to you.
Remind us when we get tired or weary that you are our rock and our refuge.
You are the one that refreshes, revitalizes, sustains and redeems us.

We thank you for your good earth.
We are grateful, despite this horrific time for humanity,
for fresh air and the rest you have given to your creation-to pause, to breathe, to
recover from pollution.
We thank you for your oceans and your stars,
and for the ways that you watch over us and inspire us.

God when we get worried or frustrated or lonely,
give us the gift of noticing where our feet are planted-on solid ground.
Let us notice our hands,
and think of ways they can be of service for you,
even if that is clasping them in prayer for our neighbor.

We thank you for all the good ways you pop up with joyous, creative ideas in our midst.
It is a stressful time for our world, our country,
but we trust that you are working within us, through us, and despite us even.

God we lift up to you those who are overwhelmed,
feeling isolated, those who are sick, those whose lungs hurt to breathe.
We lift up to you a medical community that is exhausted.
Give us your grace that we may heap it up on our leaders by the bucket full.

God you know what we need before we know how to ask for it.
Guide us during this time as we figure out how to re-enter some semblance of
normalcy,
but continue to stir in us lessons so that we go forward different,
transformed, humble and grateful for every single breath we breathe.

God we give you these prayers trusting in your Spirit that flows in the world as we say
together the prayer your son taught us, praying:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Scripture - Acts 2:1-12 (included in video)

When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

There were pious Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered. They were mystified because everyone heard them speaking in their native languages. They were surprised and amazed, saying, “Look, aren’t all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one of them? How then can each of us hear them speaking in our native language? Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; as well as residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the regions of Libya bordering Cyrene; and visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the mighty works of God in our own languages!” They were all surprised and bewildered. Some asked each other, “What does this mean?” Others jeered at them, saying, “They’re full of new wine!”

Questions for Reflection

1. In this story they saw individual flames of fire and they heard a sound like the howling of a fierce wind. They saw and heard something spectacular. When was the last time you saw or heard something spectacular. How was the Spirit moving in that moment?
2. How has God surprised you or bewildered you lately?
3. The sermon talks about how at Pentecost “the Spirit shows up and something new is born.” What is the one new thing you think the world is most in need of right now? How can you pray for the Spirit to use you to help that new thing be born?
4. Where is the Spirit moving in your life?

Affirmation of Faith and Benediction (included in video)

On the day of Pentecost, the church learned of God’s Spirit. We invite that same Spirit to move within us as we say aloud, listen to, and read together the words of the Apostle’s Creed. If saying the creed aloud in your home isn’t comfortable, we invite you to read the creed slowly to yourself taking time to let every word sink in.

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;
and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell;
the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic church; the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.

On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit came like a fierce wind.
That same Spirit blows within us.
It moves among us.
It guides us out of our comfort zones,
It fills us with God's abundant love.
Let us go out into the world
guided by the Spirit now and forevermore.
Amen.

Fifty Days

A Pentecost Reflection By Frieda Warner

It had been fifty days.
Fifty days since Jesus had risen.
Fifty days since Jesus had overcome death.
Jesus had appeared to them. For forty days he had appeared.
And before Jesus had ascended, He told them to wait. Go wait in Jerusalem.

The believers were waiting.
In the upper room, they were hiding and waiting.
They were hiding and waiting but not quite sure for what.
Jesus told them to wait for the promise, the gift, from the Father.

They knew they had a job to do.
They knew they had a job to do but were not quite sure how to do it.

They were waiting. They were praying.
Their hearts were filled with anxiety.... confusion... fear.

Would Jesus appear to them again as he did after his resurrection?
Would Jesus breathe the gentle breath of the Spirit on them again?

The promise, the gift, came suddenly.
A mighty wind filled the room where they were.
Was this the same mighty wind from the beginning?

In the beginning, the Spirit hovered over the waters of the formless, empty darkness.

The promise, the gift, came suddenly.

Tongues of fire and light danced around them.

Was this the true light that gives light to everyone flickering above each of them?

The promise, the gift, was here!

The Spirit poured over, filling them up.

They were filled with comfort and peace.

They were filled with patience and forgiveness.

They were filled with wisdom and understanding and courage.

They were filled with the love of God and the love for their neighbor.

Full of the Spirit, they began to speak.

They declared the wonders of God in many tongues.

They proclaimed the wonders of God so ALL could hear and know.

They were drunk with the Spirit!

Then they went out and told their story...

The story of the power of God and the new power they found within.

It's been more than fifty days since our lives were interrupted with the pandemic.

We have been hiding. We have been waiting. We have been praying.

We are filled with anxiety, confusion and fear.

Like the believers long ago, we are not quite sure how or what we are to do.

But, like the believers, we can put our trust and hope in Jesus.

We, too, have received the promise, the gift, of the Spirit.

We are part of the story.

May Pentecost remind us that the power of the Spirit is at work in the world.

A Spirit that binds us together as one body of Christ, the Church.

A Spirit that breathes God's strength and comfort into our lives.

A Spirit that kindles the light of Christ within us.

A Spirit that guides and assures.

A Spirit that gives us peace.

Amen.