

Pentecost Local Arrangement Service

Waiting for the Holy Spirit

Readings:

- Acts 2:1–21
- 1 Corinthians 12:3b–13
- John 7:37–39

Theme:

Waiting for the Holy Spirit: not only in fire and power, but also in breath, water, silence, and the quiet movement of grace.

Before the Service

Prayer stations available as people arrive:

- Living Water
- Tongues of Fire
- Breath and Wind of the Spirit
- The Spirit in Silence

Quiet instrumental music playing.

Welcome and Introduction

Today we gather on Pentecost, remembering the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples.

Pentecost is often associated with wind and fire, with dramatic transformation and bold proclamation. Yet throughout scripture the Spirit also comes as breath, as living water, as silence, and as the quiet sustaining presence of God.

This morning there will be no sermon. Instead, we will listen together:

- to scripture,
- to one another,
- and prayerfully for the movement of the Spirit among us.

Members of the congregation were invited to bring a short reflection from the readings. Later in the service there will be space to share those thoughts together.

Let us begin in stillness.

Silence

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Living God,
at creation your Spirit moved over the waters.
At Pentecost your Spirit came as wind and flame.
In Christ your Spirit became living water for the world.

Come among us again today.

Where we are weary, renew us.
Where we are fearful, strengthen us.
Where we are distracted, quieten us.
Where we are thirsty, refresh us.

Teach us to recognise your Spirit
not only in power and certainty,
but also in silence, gentleness, and grace.

Open our hearts to your presence among us today.

Come, Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Hymn

Possible Choices

- “Spirit of God, Unseen as the Wind”
- “Breathe on Me, Breath of God”
- “Come Down, O Love Divine”
- “O Breath of Life, Come Sweeping through Us”

First Reading

Acts 2:1–21

After the reading:

“They were all together in one place.”

Brief Silence

Hymn

Possible Choices

- “There’s a Spirit in the Air”
- “O Thou Who Camest from Above”
- “Holy Spirit, Come Confirm Us”

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 12:3b–13

After the reading:

“There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.”

Brief Silence

Hymn

Possible Choices

- “Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You”
- “The Church’s One Foundation”
- “One More Step Along the World I Go”

Third Reading

John 7:37–39

After the reading:

“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.”

Brief Silence

Hymn

Possible Choices

- “Like the Murmur of the Dove’s Song”
- “Come, Holy Ghost, Our Hearts Inspire”
- “Spirit of the Living God”

Prayer Stations and Reflection

The congregation is invited to spend time at the prayer stations, remain seated quietly, or pray silently.

Invitation

The Spirit does not always come in the ways we expect.

Sometimes the Spirit comes like fire:
challenging, calling, transforming.

Sometimes like water:
refreshing, sustaining, renewing.

Sometimes like wind or breath:
moving gently yet powerfully through our lives.

Sometimes in silence:
quietly present beyond words.

As you move around the stations, reflect on this question:

How often do our expectations of what the Holy Spirit should be like prevent us from recognising or receiving the Spirit when God comes differently?

Quiet music continues during this time.

(Allow approximately 10–15 minutes.)

Shared Discussion

The congregation regathers.

Introduction to Discussion

Pentecost is not only about speaking.
It is also about listening.

You were invited to bring a sentence or two inspired by the readings. We now share those reflections together, listening for where the Spirit may be speaking through one another.

Possible Discussion Prompts

- Which image of the Spirit speaks most strongly to you today?
- Where do you notice the Spirit at work in ordinary life?
- Why do you think we often expect the Spirit only in dramatic moments?
- What might it mean to wait together for the Spirit?
- What does it mean for the church to be guided by the Spirit rather than by fear?
- Are there quieter ways God may be speaking that we often overlook?

The local preachers worship leaders or stewards gently facilitate and draw connections between contributions.

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray.

Come, Holy Spirit.

For places in the world torn apart by violence and fear,
bring peace and renewal.

Response

Come, Holy Spirit.

For your Church throughout the world,
that we may listen before we speak,
love before we judge,
and follow where your Spirit leads.

Response

Come, Holy Spirit.

For those whose lives feel dry, exhausted, or overwhelmed,
pour out your living water.

Response

Come, Holy Spirit.

For those who feel anxious or uncertain,
breathe your peace upon them.

Response

Come, Holy Spirit.

For those in darkness, grief, or despair,
let the light of your Spirit shine.

Response

Come, Holy Spirit.

For ourselves,
that we may be open to your transforming presence,
even when you come differently from what we expect.

Response

Come, Holy Spirit.

Gathering our prayers together, we pray as Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Hymn

Possible Choices

- “Go Forth and Tell!”
- “Sent by the Lord Am I”
- “Lord, the Light of Your Love”
- “Forth in Thy Name, O Lord”
- “O Thou Who Camest from Above”

Blessing

May the Spirit who came as wind and fire,
as breath and living water,
guide our hearts,
renew our hope,
and lead us in the unforced rhythms of grace.

And the blessing of God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

After the Service

Prayer stations remain available during refreshments for anyone wishing to spend longer in prayer or reflection.

Prayer Station: “Living Water”

Theme

The Spirit as water:

- sustaining life,
- renewing creation,
- quenching thirst,
- cleansing,
- and flowing gently through ordinary life.

The central bowl or fountain reflects the waters of creation and the living water Christ promises. The glasses of water surrounding it invite people not only to look, but to receive and drink.

Suggested Readings

John 7:37–38

“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.”

John 7:39

“By this he meant the Spirit.”

Genesis 1:2

“The Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters.”

Isaiah 44:3

“I will pour water on the thirsty land...
I will pour out my Spirit.”

Revelation 22:17

“Let everyone who is thirsty come...
take the water of life as a gift.”

Matthew 11:28-30

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Suggested Invitation Text

The Spirit moves over the waters of creation.

Christ offers living water freely.

Come and drink without cost.

Listen for the Spirit
moving in the unforced rhythms of grace.

Or more simply:

“If anyone is thirsty, let them come to me and drink.”

Suggested Interactions

- Listen to the sound of the water.
- Touch the water as a reminder of God’s renewing Spirit.
- Drink a glass of water and give thanks for the gift of life.
- Sit quietly and breathe slowly.
- Pray for places in your life that feel dry or weary.
- Reflect on where you notice the Spirit flowing gently in your life.
- Pray for renewal, healing, or peace.
- Rest for a moment in the unforced rhythms of grace.

Optional Reflective Question

What thirst within us is God inviting us to bring to the living water of the Spirit?

Or:

If the Spirit comes gently like flowing water,
would we recognise it?

Prayer Station: “Tongues of Fire”

Theme

The Spirit as flame:

- bringing light,
- courage,
- calling,
- passion,
- renewal,
- and the presence of God.

The single central candle can symbolise:

- the presence of God,
- Christ the light of the world,
- or the one Spirit whose flame is shared among many people.

The surrounding tea lights reflect the Pentecost image of flame resting on each person and the sharing of light throughout the community.

Suggested Readings

Acts 2:3–4

“They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire...
All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Exodus 3:2

“The Lord appeared to Moses in flames of fire from within a bush.”

Exodus 13:21

“By night the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of fire
to give them light.”

Jeremiah 20:9

“His word is in my heart like a fire,
a fire shut up in my bones.”

2 Timothy 1:6–7

“Fan into flame the gift of God...
for God did not give us a spirit of fear.”

Suggested Invitation Text

The Spirit comes as flame:
bringing light in darkness,
courage in fear,
and warmth in weary hearts.

Come and pray in the light of God's Spirit.

Or more simply:

"Fan into flame the gift of God."

Suggested Interactions

- Light a tea light as a prayer.
- Pray for courage, wisdom, or renewed faith.
- Pray for someone who needs hope or strength.
- Reflect on where God may be calling you.
- Spend a moment watching the flames in silence.
- Ask the Spirit to rekindle passion, love, or hope within you.
- Pray for the church to be a light in the world.
- Reflect on what fears or doubts the Spirit may be inviting you to release.

Optional Reflective Question

What might the Spirit be trying to kindle within us?

Or:

Where do we need the courage and light of the Spirit today?

Those questions keep the station grounded not simply in emotional intensity, but in vocation, discernment, and transformation.

Prayer Station: “Breath and Wind of the Spirit”

Theme

The Spirit of God as breath, wind, movement, and unseen presence:

- giving life,
- stirring creation,
- guiding gently,
- and moving where it will.

The moving ribbons remind us that while we cannot see the wind itself, we can see what it touches and transforms.

Suggested Readings

Genesis 1:2

“The Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters.”

Ezekiel 37:9

“Come from the four winds, O breath,
and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”

John 3:8

“The wind blows wherever it pleases...
So it is with the Spirit.”

John 20:22

“Jesus breathed on them and said,
‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

1 Kings 19:11–12

“The Lord was not in the wind...
and after the fire came a gentle whisper.”

Suggested Invitation Text

The Spirit comes as wind and breath.

Sometimes gentle.

Sometimes powerful.

Always life-giving.

Pause. Breathe. Listen.

Open yourself to the movement of the Spirit.

Or more simply:

“The wind blows wherever it pleases...
So it is with the Spirit.”

Suggested Interactions

- Sit quietly and notice the movement of the ribbons.
- Spend a moment focusing on your breathing.
- Tie a ribbon onto the tree as a prayer or hope.
- Reflect on where God may be gently moving in your life.
- Pray for openness to the movement of the Spirit.
- Ask for courage to follow where the Spirit leads.
- Rest in silence and simply listen.
- Reflect on what expectations or fears you may need to let go of.

Optional Reflective Question

What might it mean
to be moved by the breath of God
rather than driven by fear or certainty?

Prayer Station: “The Spirit in Stillness”

Theme

The quiet presence of God:

- not only in fire or rushing wind,
- but also in stillness,
- silence,
- listening,
- and rest.

This station offers space simply to pause in God’s presence without needing to speak or do very much.

Suggested Readings

1 Kings 19:12

“After the fire came a gentle whisper.”

Psalm 46:10

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

Psalm 131:2

“I have calmed and quieted my soul.”

John 14:27

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.”

Romans 8:26

“The Spirit helps us in our weakness...
the Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.”

Suggested Invitation Text

The Spirit is not always encountered in noise or certainty.
Sometimes God meets us in silence, stillness, and rest.

Pause here for a while.
Listen. Breathe. Be still.

Or more simply:

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

Suggested Interactions

- Sit quietly for a few moments.
- Listen to the music without rushing on.
- Watch the candle flame in silence.
- Spend time simply breathing slowly and deeply.
- Rest in God’s presence without needing words.
- Pray silently for peace, healing, or wisdom.
- Reflect on where you may need stillness in your life.
- Listen for the quiet movement of the Spirit.
- Let go of distractions, worries, or expectations for a moment.

Optional Reflective Question

If the Spirit came gently and quietly,
would we notice?

That question connects beautifully back to your wider Pentecost theme about expectation and attentiveness.

Resources Needed for Pentecost Prayer Stations

1. Water Station: “Living Water”

Core Items

- Bowl of water, small fountain, or flowing water feature
- Table covering (blue or neutral fabric could work well)
- Glasses or small cups of drinking water
- Jug or bottle for refilling water
- Towels or cloths for spills

Printed Materials

- Printed scripture verses
- Printed invitation/instructions
- Reflective question card

Optional Extras

- Pebbles or stones
- Shells or glass beads
- Candles
- Background sound of flowing water

2. Flame Station: “Tongues of Fire”

Core Items

- One large central candle
- Multiple tea lights or LED tea lights
- Lighter or matches (if using real candles)
- Fireproof trays or candle holders
- Sand tray or heatproof base

Printed Materials

- Printed scripture verses
- Printed invitation/instructions
- Reflective question card

Optional Extras

- Red, orange, and gold fabric

3. Breath / Wind Station: “Breath of God”

Core Items

- Small fan
- Small decorative tree or branches in a weighted pot/vase
- Ribbons or strips of lightweight fabric
- Pens for writing prayers or reflections

Setup Items

- Hooks, clips, or branches suitable for tying ribbons
- Extension lead if the fan needs power
- Tape or cable covers for safety

Printed Materials

- Printed scripture verses
- Printed invitation/instructions
- Reflective question card

Optional Extras

- Feathers
- Sheer fabric moving in airflow
- Wind chime (quiet/subtle)
- Cushions or prayer stool nearby

4. Silence Station: “The Spirit in Silence”

Core Items

- Single candle
- Small speaker
- Instrumental worship or contemplative music playlist
- Comfortable chair, cushions, or kneeler

Technical Items

- Extension lead / charger
- Phone or music player
- Volume checked beforehand

Printed Materials

- Printed scripture verses
- Printed invitation/instructions
- Reflective question card

Optional Extras

- Soft fabric backdrop
- Dim lighting
- Sand timer or small clock for quiet reflection
- Noise-reducing positioning away from busier areas