



DAY OF PENTECOST

May 31, 2020

St. Stephen's is a Christian community in the making.

At the intersection of what was and what will be, we invite you to gather with us around prayer, food, and the simple conviction that nothing is wasted in God's economy.

All are welcome at St. Stephen's.

Whether you come with great faith or great doubt,
regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation or marital status,
whatever your financial status or housing situation –
we hope you can find a home with us
as we explore together what it means to follow Jesus.

Ministry Team

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ST. STEPHEN'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH, MAPLE

Preparation

*Whether you participate in worship in a small group or alone,
know that you are joined together with the whole St. Stephen’s community
and the wider church as we offer our prayers and praise to God.*

*Consider setting a candle or two out in the space you’re using for worship,
as a reminder of God’s presence. Light the candles, and say:*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

There is one body and one Spirit,
There is one hope in God’s call to us;

One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
One God and Father of all.

Almighty God,
to you all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hidden.
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Glory to God

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everliving God,
who fulfilled the promises of Easter
by sending us your Holy Spirit
and opening to every race and nation
the way of life eternal,
keep us in the unity of your Spirit,
that every tongue may tell of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

First Reading: Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, the apostles were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

‘In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day.
Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ ”

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

How manifold are your works, O LORD!

In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

**Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too many to number,
living things both small and great.**

There go the ships to and fro,
and Leviathan, which you made for the sport of it.

**All of them look to you
to give them their food in due season.**

You give it to them; they gather it;
you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.

**When you hide your face, they are terrified;
when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.**

You send forth your Spirit, and they are created;
and so you renew the face of the earth.

**May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
O LORD, rejoice in all your works.**

You look at the earth and it trembles;
you touch the mountains and they smoke.

**I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will praise my God while I have my being.**

May these words of mine please God.

I will rejoice in the LORD.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

Hallelujah!

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Gospel: John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Reflection – Jeff+

*The following reflection can be watched online by [clicking here](#)
or can be read in full below.*

*Please feel free to engage with either or both options,
and know that whatever you choose
will enable you to fully participate in the worship of our community.*

In the first part of the book of Genesis, which explores the origins of the world in sweeping, cosmic, poetic terms, there is a story about a tower. Well, it seems like a story about a tower. But it’s actually a story about technology and hubris. Really, it’s a story about how pride and selfishness lead to division.

In Mesopotamia, where this story takes place, stone is not readily available. At least, not the kind of stone you would use to build things. Simple mud bricks would be used instead, but these weren’t very strong or durable, and they were hard to work with. But, at some point, someone figured out that if you burn bricks in a kiln, you can make uniform building materials that are as strong as stone. Which means you can build large and impressive buildings – a stunning technological development in this area of the world.

So, with this newfound technology, these people say – let’s build a city and a tower, and make a great name for ourselves.

This seems like a simple idea, but it really isn’t. Because cities weren’t for people to live in at this time – a city was essentially a complex for public buildings, with a tower – a kind of temple or ziggurat – rising up in the middle of it. A city, in this context, is essentially a temple complex. But the god that this city and this tower were meant to glorify was the people who built it. This is all about building up dominance, seeking personal greatness. This is about empire.

This selfish pursuit of greatness leads God to come down into the middle of this temple complex, to scatter the people and confuse their language. They believed that they could rely upon themselves and their great technology to glorify themselves, but all of this actually leads to their downfall.

It's an ancient story about a tower. But if you listen carefully, it sounds an awful lot like the erosion of modern empire. The selfish pursuit of glory, on the basis of having the best technology and the most advanced government and military. Where trust in God has been replaced with trust in self, and the temple complex is all about making ourselves great again. Which leads to a broken, fractured society where no one is able to speak the same language.

The kind of society where George Floyd can be killed in the street.

But there is another story, recorded in a carefully curated book of ancient history, about the strange and unexpected coming together of a wide range of people around the overflowing of God's Spirit. Where the idea of the temple complex is taken to a whole new level, and is made available within each person. Where a movement that was all about a backwater Jewish rabbi confronting the might of the Roman Empire and being met with inevitable death as an enemy of the state has become a good-news story of resurrection and salvation and possibility.

When the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, they are empowered to speak out. The church is born. And God's Spirit spills over, boundlessly, endlessly, to allow the building up of something new and revolutionary. What began with the nation of Israel has spread, and the author of this story goes to great lengths to identify all of the different peoples that can hear and understand this message about Jesus in their own language. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and on and on.

It's important to understand that these different nationalities are not just about language. It is amazing and miraculous that they can all understand in their own tongue, but that's just the beginning of the incredible thing that is taking place. Because racism, tribalism, bigotry, xenophobia – these are not new. These things were present in this place, and in this story.

But the message about Jesus includes them all. On their own terms. In their own language.

It's as though God is extending an invitation to begin again. An invitation that is offered freely, to every people and place, that seeks to recognize the dignity and value of all. The birth of the church.

Where pride and the pursuit of self-glorification once led to the scattering of people, the hope offered by resurrection leads to the transcending of racial, social, and linguistic boundaries. The door has been opened for the building up of a new kind of city, one in which justice reigns and the love of God governs all.

This story of Pentecost is our story. Even though we, as the church, have much to repent of, God's Spirit remains. The invitation to be part of the building up of a new kind of society remains open to us. And we even hear that invitation in our own language.

The only requirement is to be willing to make room for others. To love with reckless abandon, caring for those around you – no matter who they are or what they look like – and to give yourself away. To die to self, as Jesus did, so that you too can rise again. To seek the glorification of God, and not self.

This Pentecost, may the Spirit of God the Living Presence fall upon us. May we be inspired to rise up, to speak up, to seek the common good, and to extend love and dignity to all. Even when it is costly or dangerous to do so. Even when this movement takes us into painful places.

Because that is what the birth of the church is all about.

Affirmation of Baptismal Ministry

On this Feast of Pentecost, as we remember the fulfillment of God's promise in the sending of the Holy Spirit, we remember and give thanks for our own baptismal ministry.

Blessed are you, Lord God, ruler of the universe;
we praise you for your love and mercy
which you have shown to all your people.

Today we give you thanks and glory
as we celebrate the sending of the Holy Spirit,
and recall our own baptismal promises.
Give us all the grace to live in your love,

and help us to come closer to you through faith, prayer, and example.

All glory is yours, Father, through Jesus your Son,
in the communion of your Spirit, now and for ever.
Amen.

Apostles’ Creed

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again
to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

*As a community of people made one in Christ, we offer our prayers to God for ourselves,
our community, and the world. Feel free to adapt these prayers as you like,
and to make use of the spaces indicated to add your own prayers and petitions.*

Almighty God, you have promised to hear when we pray in the name of your Son.
Therefore in confidence and trust we pray for the Church and for the world.

Loving God, enliven the Church for its mission.
That we may be salt of the earth and light to the world.

Breathe fresh life into your people.
Give us power to reveal Christ in word and action.

Creator of all, lead us and every people into the ways of justice and peace.
That we may respect one another in freedom and truth.

Awaken in us a sense of wonder for the earth and all that is in it.
Teach us to care creatively for its resources.

God of truth, inspire with your wisdom
those whose decisions affect the lives of others.
That all may act with integrity and courage.

Give grace to all those whose lives are linked with ours.
May we serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us.

Let us now name before God those for whom we offer our personal prayers.

*A period of silence is kept as we offer silent prayer
and listen for the leading of the Spirit.*

Let us remember before God our selfish ways, the things we have done wrong,
the sorrows we have caused, the love we have not shown.

Most merciful God, forgive us our sins against you and against each other.

**Strengthen us to overcome our weaknesses,
that we may live in love as you would have us live,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.**

Amen.

Lord, you have called us to serve you.

**Grant that we may walk in your presence
and experience the present truth of resurrection:
your love in our hearts, your truth in our minds,
your strength in our wills, until, at the end of our journey,
we know the joy of our homecoming and the welcome of your embrace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

May joy and nothing less find us on our way.

May we be blessed and be a blessing.

And may light guide us, and countless others, all the way home.

Amen.

The Lord has made a promise to love us faithfully forever.


May we live with joy and be led with Peace. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.


MUSIC

Following are several hymns that you may want to sing and/or listen to.
Music and texts, as well as sample YouTube links, are provided.


Come Down, O Love Divine




1 Come down, O Love di - vine; seek thou this soul of mine
2 Oh, let it free - ly burn, till world - ly pas - sions turn
3 Let ho - ly char - i - ty mine out - ward ves - ture be,
4 And so the yearn - ing strong, with which the soul will long,



and vis - it it with thine own ar - dor glow - ing;
to dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing;
and low - li - ness be - come mine in - ner cloth - ing—
shall far out - pass the pow'r of hu - man tell - ing;




O Com - fort - er, draw near; with - in my heart ap - pear
and let thy glo - rious light shine ev - er on my sight,
true low - li - ness of heart, which takes the hum - bler part,
no soul can guess Love's grace till it be - come the place




and kin - dle it, thy ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.
and clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.
and o'er its own short - com - ings weeps with loath - ing.
where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes a dwell - ing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXO4rqBQOAU>


Here in this Place New Light Is Streaming




1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who
3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the
4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,




van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,
light years a - way— here in this place the new light is shin - ing,




brought here to you in the light of this day.
called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
now is the king - dom, and now is the day.



Gath - er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath - er us in, the
Gath - er us in, the rich and the haugh - ty, gath - er us in, the
Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, give us to eat the
Gath - er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath - er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,
bread that is you; nour - ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
make us your own; gath - er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.
lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.
fire . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBMHAfLXghA>

For other hymns, check out:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGLVPtOYRgM>



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