

ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH, CANTERBURY



## The Liturgy of the Feast of Pentecost



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## Welcome to our worship at St Stephen's today

**P**entecost (from the Greek *pentekoste*, 'fiftieth' of fifty days of celebration) has its roots in the Jewish Feast of Weeks, which was completed on the fiftieth day after Passover. On the fiftieth day of Easter, God sends his Holy Spirit to empower the Church to perform the mission which the risen Christ has entrusted to it; and he inaugurates the messianic community of perfect communication. Pentecost celebrates both the Holy Spirit and the Christian Church. It was originally the crown and completion of the Easter season; only later, in the medieval West, did it become a new festival season of its own. After the Easter Vigil, the time of Pentecost was a preferred occasion for baptism in early Christian centuries, and the services of Pentecost also reflect this baptismal theme. Christ's disciples are born again of water and the spirit. There is some evidence that the ascension was first celebrated on the fiftieth day of Easter, but it was soon moved to the fortieth day in faithfulness to Luke's chronology. Ascension and Pentecost are closely linked. The risen Lord is no longer present to the Church in the body of his flesh; the Church is now to be the new body of Christ, filled with his life through the gift of the Spirit.

# ¶ *The Gathering*

*At the entry of the ministers we STAND for the hymn*

**Come down, O love divine**

*NEH 137*

*The president says*

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

*All* **Amen.**

## **The Greeting**

*The president greets the people*

Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

*All* **And also with you.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*All* **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

## **Introduction**

*The president introduces the service*

Jesus Christ, whom we worship, is our crucified, risen and ascended Lord  
and we have walked with him through his journey of love.

We have faced the agony of his suffering and death on a cross.

We have rejoiced at his bursting free from the bonds of death.

We have enjoyed his risen presence with us and his revelation of himself  
through the breaking of bread.

We have seen his return to the throne before which every knee shall bow  
and every tongue confess that this Jesus is Lord.

And now, with the followers of his own time, we await the coming of  
the promised Holy Spirit, his gift to his people, through whom we make  
Christ known to the world.

## Responsory

*All* As we wait in silence,  
**fill us with your Spirit.**

*All* As we listen to your word,  
**fill us with your Spirit.**

*All* As we worship you in majesty,  
**fill us with your Spirit.**

*All* As we long for your refreshing,  
**fill us with your Spirit.**

*All* As we long for your renewing,  
**fill us with your Spirit.**

*All* As we long for your equipping,  
**fill us with your Spirit.**

*All* As we long for your empowering,  
**fill us with your Spirit.**

*Silence is kept.*

## The Pentecost Reading

*Acts 2.1–13*

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they 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.’

*The reader says*

The Lord is here.

*All* **His Spirit is with us.**

## Prayer for Personal Renewal

*Oil may be brought forward, the bearer saying*

Oil for the renewal of God’s people.

*The president says*

Be with us, Spirit of God;

*All* **nothing can separate us from your love.**

Breathe on us, breath of God;

*All* **fill us with your saving power.**

Speak in us, wisdom of God;

*All* **bring strength, healing, and peace.**

Blessed are you, sovereign God and eternal Father.

Daily your Spirit renews the face of the earth,

bringing strength out of weakness,

hope out of despair

and life out of death.

By the power of your Spirit,

may your blessing rest upon those anointed with this oil in your name.

Let it be for them

a sign of your acceptance and adoption,

your equipping and empowering.

Form in them the likeness of Christ,

that they may be witnesses of your astonishing love,

and fill them afresh with life in all its fullness.

Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*Those who wish to receive this ministry of prayer may come forward, during which we sing the ancient hymn*

## **Come, Holy Ghost**

*NEH 138*

*After the hymn, and when the prayer is ended the president says*

Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

*All*

**Let us praise and bless God for ever.**

## **Gloria in Excelsis**

*All*

**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.**

# The Collect

*The president introduces a period of silent prayer with the words*

Let us pray that the Spirit will work through our lives  
to bring Christ to the world.

*Silence is kept.*

God, who as at this time  
taught the hearts of your faithful people  
by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit:  
grant us by the same Spirit  
to have a right judgement in all things  
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort;  
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*All*

**Amen.**



# ¶ *The Liturgy of the Word*

## Reading

*We SIT for the reading.*

*Year A: 1 Corinthians 12.3b–13*

*Year B: Romans 8.22–27*

*Year C: Romans 8.14–17*

*At the end the reader says*

This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

*We all STAND, and while the Gospel procession moves to the centre of the nave,  
the choir sing the canticle*

The Spirit of God fills the whole world. Alleluia.

- 1 I will take you from the nations,  
and gather you from all the countries.
- 2 I will sprinkle clean water upon you,  
and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses.
- 3 A new heart I will give you,  
and put a new spirit within you,
- 4 And I will remove from your body the heart of stone  
and give you a heart of flesh.
- 5 You shall be my people,  
and I will be your God.

*Ezekiel 36.24–26,28b*

The Spirit of God fills the whole world. Alleluia.

## Gospel Reading

*The acclamations heralds the Gospel reading*

Alleluia, alleluia.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people  
and kindle in them the fire of your love.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*When the Gospel is announced the reader says*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

*All* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Year A: John 20.19–23 or John 7.37–39*

*Year B: John 15.26–27; 16.4b–15*

*Year C: John 14.8–17[25–27]*

*At the end*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*All* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon

# The Creed

*We STAND for the Creed.*

*All*

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.**

**Amen.**

# Prayers of Intercession

*The President introduces our period of prayer*

We pray for God to fill us with his Spirit.

*We SIT or KNEEL*

Generous God,  
we thank you for the power of your Holy Spirit.  
We ask that we may be strengthened to serve you better.  
Lord, come to bless us  
*All* **and fill us with your Spirit.**

We thank you for the wisdom of your Holy Spirit.  
We ask you to make us wise to understand your will.  
Lord, come to bless us  
*All* **and fill us with your Spirit.**

We thank you for the peace of your Holy Spirit.  
We ask you to keep us confident of your love wherever you call us.  
Lord, come to bless us  
*All* **and fill us with your Spirit.**

We thank you for the healing of your Holy Spirit.  
We ask you to bring reconciliation and wholeness  
where there is division, sickness and sorrow.  
Lord, come to bless us  
*All* **and fill us with your Spirit.**

We thank you for the gifts of your Holy Spirit.  
We ask you to equip us for the work which you have given us.  
Lord, come to bless us  
*All* **and fill us with your Spirit.**

We thank you for the fruit of your Holy Spirit.  
We ask you to reveal in our lives the love of Jesus.  
Lord, come to bless us  
*All* **and fill us with your Spirit.**

We thank you for the breath of your Holy Spirit,  
given us by the risen Lord.  
We ask you to keep the whole Church, living and departed,  
in the joy of eternal life.  
Lord, come to bless us  
*All* **and fill us with your Spirit.**

Generous God,  
you sent your Holy Spirit upon your Messiah at the river Jordan,  
and upon the disciples in the upper room:  
in your mercy fill us with your Spirit,  
*All* **hear our prayer,  
and make us one in heart and mind  
to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.**

## **The Peace**

*We STAND.*

God has made us one in Christ.  
He has set his seal upon us and, as a pledge of what is to come,  
has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts. Alleluia.

*cf 2 Corinthians 1.22*

*All* The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*All may exchange a sign of peace.*

## **Preparation of the Table**

## **Taking of the Bread and Wine**

*We sing the Offertory Hymn*

**O thou who camest from above**

*NEH 431*

*During the hymn, the gifts of the people are gathered and presented.*

*The table is prepared and bread and wine are placed upon it.*

Blessed be God,  
who feeds the hungry,  
who raises the poor,  
who fills our praise.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*The president takes the bread and wine.*

# The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here.

*All* **His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

*All* **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*All* **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and everlasting God,  
through Jesus Christ, your only Son our Lord.

This day we give you thanks  
because in fulfilment of your promise  
you pour out your Spirit upon us,  
filling us with your gifts, leading us into all truth,  
and uniting peoples of many tongues in the confession of one faith.  
Your Spirit gives us grace to call you Father,  
to proclaim your gospel to all nations  
and to serve you as a royal priesthood.  
Therefore we join our voices with angels and archangels,  
and with all those in whom the Spirit dwells,  
to proclaim the glory of your name,  
for ever praising you and saying:

*All* **Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.  
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

*All*

**Christ has died:**

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with St Stephen, [N,] and all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

*All*

**Amen.**



*We SIT or KNEEL*

## The Lord's Prayer

Being made one by the power of the Spirit,  
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

*All*

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

## Breaking of the Bread

*The president breaks the consecrated bread.*

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.

*All*

**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

*The Agnus Dei is sung.*

*All*      **Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.**

## **Giving of Communion**

*The president says this or another invitation to communion*

*All*      Alleluia. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

*The president and people receive communion.*

*Authorized words of distribution are used and the communicant replies*

**Amen.**

*During the distribution a hymn and anthem are sung by the choir.*

## Prayer after Communion

*Silence is kept.*

*This Post Communion or another suitable prayer is said*

Faithful 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:  
open our lips by your Spirit,  
that every tongue may tell of your glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All*

**Amen.**

## Blessing of Light

*We STAND and the ministers go to the Easter Candle.*

*A minister says*

Blessed are you, sovereign God, overflowing in love.  
With Pentecost dawns the age of the Spirit.  
Now the flame of heaven rests on every believer.  
Strong and weak, women and men tell out your word;  
the young receive visions, the old receive dreams.  
With the new wine of the Spirit  
they proclaim your reign of love.  
Amid the birth pangs of the new creation  
the way of light is made known.  
Source of freedom, giver of life,  
blessed are you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*Each member of the congregation has a candle which is lit during the singing of the hymn*

### Father, Lord of all creation

*Tune: ABBOT'S LEIGH (NEH 185)*

- 1 Father, Lord of all creation,  
Ground of being, life and love;  
Height and depth beyond description  
Only life in you can prove:  
You are mortal life's dependence:  
Thought, speech, sight are ours by grace;  
Yours is every hour's existence,  
Sovereign Lord of time and space.
- 2 Jesus Christ, the man for others,  
We, your people, make our prayer:  
Help us love, as sisters, brothers  
All whose burdens we can share.  
Where your name binds us together  
You, Lord Christ, will surely be;  
Where no selfishness can sever  
There you love the world may see.

- 3 Holy Spirit, rushing, burning  
Wind and flame of Pentecost,  
Fire our hearts afresh with yearning  
To regain what we have lost.  
May your love unite our action,  
Nevermore to speak alone:  
God, in us, abolish faction,  
God, through us your love make known.

STEWART CROSS (1928–1989)

## Commission

*When all the candles are lit the president says*

For fifty days we have celebrated the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ over the powers of sin and death. We have proclaimed God's mighty acts and we have prayed that the power that was at work when God raised Jesus from the dead might be at work in us.

As part of God's Church here in Canterbury, I call upon you to live out what you proclaim.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, will you dare to walk into God's future, trusting him to be your guide?

*All* **By the Spirit's power, we will.**

Will you dare to embrace each other and grow together in love?

*All* **We will.**

Will you dare to share your riches in common and minister to each other in need?

*All* **We will.**

Will you dare to pray for each other until your hearts beat with the longings of God?

*All* **We will.**

Will you dare to carry the light of Christ into the world's dark places?

*All* **We will.**

## Conclusion

*The president says*

The Lord is here.

*All* **His Spirit is with us.**

Today we have remembered the coming of God's power on the disciples and we invite that same Spirit to drive us out into the wild places of the world.

## The Blessing

*The president blesses the people, saying*

May the Spirit,  
who hovered over the waters when the world was created,  
breathe into you the life he gives.

*All* **Amen.**

May the Spirit,  
who overshadowed the Virgin when the eternal Son came among us,  
make you joyful in the service of the Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

May the Spirit,  
who set the Church on fire upon the Day of Pentecost,  
bring the world alive with the love of the risen Christ.

*All* **Amen.**

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

*All* **Amen.**

*A minister says*

Filled with the Spirit's power,  
go in the light and peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

*All* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

*Please join us for tea, coffee and fellowship in the church hall after this service.*



Cover image: Detail from the East window of St Stephen's Church, Canterbury.

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