

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

June 5, 2022

Pentecost Day

A Service of the Word and Holy Communion



Pentecost

by Jen Norton,

from San Jose, CA - United States

uploaded on Aug. 8th, 2020

"I can only imagine what it must have been like to be in that upper room, Mary and the other disciples still unsure of what their mission would be. And then to receive, as promised, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Fear is turned into a spirit of love and courage for evangelizing the world!" – Jen Norton – Fine Art America <https://fineartamerica.com>

Jen's Catholic originals are represented by The Sacred Art Gallery, Scottsdale, AZ. <http://www.thesacredartgallery.com>



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a just world for all

June 5, 2022

Pentecost Day

A Service of the Word and Holy Communion

*"Without Pentecost the Christ-event - the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus - remains imprisoned in history as something to remember, think about and reflect on. The Spirit of Jesus comes to dwell within us, so that we can become living Christs here and now."
Henri Nouwen*

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

**please stand as you are able*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL OPENING SENTENCE – There Is a Spirit in the Air

Choir: Bob Bucklew, Keith Konet, & Barbara Rossington

Accompanist: Betty Funk

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Divine Teacher, whirl around us with your wisdom,

Many: Divine Comforter, encircle us with the peace that comes only from you.

One: As the Holy Winds fill our lives with dreams, empower us to live God's hope in this world.

Many: As the Holy Fire fills our hearts with visions, empower us to create a world of justice and peace.

One: May the Divine Gales of this day move us to know the love of God.

*GATHERING PRAYER

Holy Winds of Mystery,
As the dawn breaks forth,
your Spirit exhales your intentions for our world.
As new chapters and eras arise in our lives,
your Spirit invites us to wisdom that only comes from you.
Open our souls to the wonders of your being.
Settle our hearts when questions surround us.
Fill our minds with the knowledge
that your Spirit will lead us forward. Amen.

***HYMN – 42 NCH - O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing**

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Author: Charles Wesley, 1740; alt.

Tune: AZMON C.M.

Composer: Carl G. Gläser, 1828

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**1 O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories ever echoing
the triumphs of God's grace!**

**2 My gracious Savior and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honors of your name.**

**3 Jesus! the name that calms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease
is music in the sinner's ears,
is life, and health, and peace!**

**4 Glory to God, and love and praise
be ever, ever given
by all the saints in every age,
the church in earth and heaven.**

A READING OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: Genesis 11:1-9

This is the last of the “prehistory” stories, before Genesis turns to Abraham and Sarah and the ancestors of our faith. In this story, positioned after the great flood, all the people of the earth were one people, with one language, who migrated to Shinar and decided to build a great tower so they wouldn’t scatter but stay together. This tower was built into the heavens, the place where divine beings were thought to dwell, and God saw it and wasn’t pleased. God spoke to the heavenly beings and determined that humanity was dangerously close to having power and determination, and so God scattered the people so they would be confused and speak different languages, so they called the city Babel. In this story, speaking different languages is confusion and disunity, as contrasted to the story of Pentecost, where speaking and understanding other languages is the work of unity through the Holy Spirit.

11 1 Throughout the earth, people spoke the same language and used the same words. 2 Now, as they moved eastward, they found a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 They all said to one another, “Let us make bricks and bake them in the fire.” They used bricks as building stones, and bitumen for mortar. 4 Then they said, “Let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top can reach to heaven. Let us make a name for ourselves, to keep us from being scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

5 YHWH came down to see the city and the tower these mortals had built. 6 “They are a single people with a single language,” YHWH said. “And this is but the beginning of their undertakings! Now there will be nothing too hard for them to do. 7 Come, let us go down and baffle their language so that they can no longer understand one another.” 8 So YHWH scattered them over the face of the earth, and they had to stop building the city. 9 It was named Babel, because YHWH made humans babble different languages throughout the world. It was from there that YHWH scattered them over the whole earth.

A READING FROM THE PSALMS: Psalm 104:24-35 (Responsively)

This is a song about creation, praising God for the wisdom of all God’s works. God’s spirit is sent forth in creation, and the breath is the life of creation. When God takes away their breath, they die. Breath, Spirit, and wind are all the same word, ruach in Hebrew, and pneuma in Greek. The song praises God for all of God’s work to bring life in creation.

104 24 God, what variety you have created,
arranging everything so wisely!
the earth is filled with your creativity!
25 there’s the vast expanse of the sea,
teeming with countless creatures,
living things large and small,
26 with the ships going to and fro
and Leviathan whom you made to frolic
there.
27 All creatures depend on you
to feed them at the proper time.
28 Give it to them—they gather it up.
open your hand—they are well satisfied.
29 Hide your face—they are terrified.
take away their breath—they die and return to dust.
30 send back your breath—fresh life begins
and you renew the face of the earth.
31 Glory forever to God!
May you find joy in your creation!
32 You glance at the earth and it trembles;
you touch the mountains and they smoke!

33 I will sing to you all my life,
I will make music for my God as long as I live.
34 May these reflections of mine give God
as much pleasure as God gives me!
35 May those who are corrupt vanish from the earth
and those who are violent exist no longer!
bless God, my soul!
Alleluia!

SECOND READING – Acts 2:1-21

These verses in Acts 2, tell the story of how the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples. The disciples had gathered together in Jerusalem for the celebration of Moses receiving of the Torah at Sinai, along with the first fruits of the garden. Because Jewish people who lived all over the Roman Empire had made pilgrimage to Jerusalem, there were Jewish people who spoke all different languages. Yet suddenly they heard the disciples speaking in their language, after the disciples experienced the Spirit like the rush of a violent wind, and its appearance like divided tongues of fire. While some bystanders were confused (and some thought the disciples were simply drunk), Peter quoted from the prophet Joel that this was the work of the Holy Spirit, God among all the people. Following this passage, Peter continues his speech that it was Jesus, crucified and raised, who poured out the promise of the Holy Spirit.

2 1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they all met in one room. 2 Suddenly they heard what sounded like a violent, rushing wind from heaven; the noise filled the entire house in which they were sitting. 3 Something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each one. 4 They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as she enabled them.

5 Now there were devout people living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, 6 and at this sound they all assembled. But they were bewildered to hear their native languages being spoken. 7 They were amazed and astonished: “Surely all of these people speaking are Galileans! 8 How does it happen that each of us hears these words in our native tongue? 9 We are Parthians, Medes and Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, as well as visitors from Rome—11 all Jews, or converts to Judaism—Cretans and Arabs, too; we hear them preaching, each in our own language, about the marvels of God!”

12 All were amazed and disturbed. They asked each other, “What does this mean?”
13 But others said mockingly, “They’ve drunk too much new wine.”

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd: “Women and men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem! Listen to what I have to say! 15 These people are not drunk as you think—it’s only nine o’clock in the morning! 16 No, it’s what Joel the prophet spoke of:

17 ‘In the days to come—
it is our God who speaks—
I will pour out my Spirit
on all humankind.
Your daughters and sons will prophesy,
your young people will see visions,
and your elders will dream dreams.
18 Even on the most insignificant of my people,
both women and men,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.
19 And I will display wonders
in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below:

blood, fire and billowing smoke.
20 The sun will be turned into darkness
and the moon will become blood
before the coming of the
great and sublime day of our God.
21 And all who call upon the name
of our God will be saved.'



Pentecost, 2013
James Lynch, Oil –
Hurtado Jesuit Centre, <http://hurtadocentre.org.uk>

GOSPEL READING –John 14:8-17, 25-27

During Jesus's final discourse in John 14, after Thomas told Jesus that he didn't know the way and Jesus declared "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one gets to Abba God except through me," Philip then demanded, "Rabbi, show us Abba God and that will be enough for us." Though Philip and the others had been with Jesus all along, they began to question him and not understand that he and God were one. They didn't understand how God and Jesus abided in each other, and that Jesus was returning to God, whom he called in Aramaic, Abba, or Father/Papa. Those who believed in Jesus would do greater works than the ones they had experienced. Jesus taught that if they loved him, they would keep the commandments, and the Parent God would send the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who would remind them of all Jesus taught and would continue to teach them. Though Jesus would be leaving them soon, the Advocate would remain with them forever.

14 8 "Rabbi," Philip said, "show us Abba God, and that will be enough for us."

9 Jesus replied, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and still you don't know me? Whoever has seen me has seen Abba God. How can you say, 'Show us your Abba'?

10 Don't you believe that I am in Abba God
and God is in me?
The words I speak are not spoken of myself;
it is Abba God, living in me,
who is accomplishing the works of God.

11 Believe me that I am in God and God is in me,
or else believe because of the works I do.
12 The truth of the matter is,
anyone who has faith in me
will do the works I do—
and greater works besides.
Why? Because I go to Abba God,
13 and whatever you ask in my name I will do,
so that God may be glorified in me.
14 Anything you ask in my name
I will do.
15 If you love me
and obey the command I give you,
16 I will ask the One who sent me
to give you another Advocate, another
Helper
to be with you always—
17 the Spirit of truth,
whom the world cannot accept
since the world neither sees her nor recognizes her;
but you can recognize the Spirit
because she remains with you
and will be within you.

25 This much have I said to you while still with you;
26 but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit
whom Abba God will send in my name,
will instruct you in everything
and she will remind you of all that I told you.
27 Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you;
but the kind of peace I give you
is not like the world's peace.
Don't let your hearts be distressed;
don't be fearful.

CHORAL RESPONSE – 283 NCH – Spirit of the Living God

*Choir: Bob Bucklew, Keith Konet, & Barbara Rossington
Accompanist: Betty Funk*

REFLECTION – To Press In, Linger, Listen, and Listen Some More - The Rev. Scott Rosenstein

WE RESPOND

***PRAYER OF RESPONSE**

Loving God, Divine Comforter,
Peace is absent from our hearts.
From pain to grief,
and from turmoil to frustrations,
we yearn for what we lack.
We ache for the pains and injustices
of this world to cease.
What we forget is to pause
and voice our concerns to you.
How can we better integrate
your presence in our lives?
When have we forgotten
to include you
in our joys and heartaches?
Move us to seek you
and speak the burdens of our hearts to you.
May your Spirit refill our souls with peace.
Amen.

*** HYMN – On Pentecost They Gathered (tune of All Glory, Laud, and Honor [216 NCH])**

On Pentecost They Gathered

Author: Jane Parker Huber, 1981; rev. 1993

Tune: ST. THEODULPH (VALET WILL ICH DER GEBEN) 7.6.7.6 D

Composer: Melchior Teschner, 1615

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1 On Pentecost they gathered
quite early in the day,
a band of Christ's disciples,
to worship, sing, and pray.
A mighty wind came blowing,
filled all the swirling air,
and tongues of fire a-glowing
inspired each person there.

2 The people all around them
were startled and amazed
to understand their language,
as God in Christ they praised.
What universal message,
what great good news was here?
That Christ, once dead, is risen
to vanquish all our fear.

3 God pours the Holy Spirit
on all who would believe,
on women, men, and children
who would God's grace receive.
That Spirit knows no limit,
bestowing life and power.
The church, formed and reforming,
responds in every hour.

4 O Spirit, sent from heaven
on that day long ago,
rekindle faith among us
in all life's ebb and flow.
O give us ears to listen
and tongues aflame with praise,
so folk of every nation
glad songs of joy shall raise.

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Because of our love for the Divine Giver, we seek ways to share our love through our treasures, talents, and time. Whether we give in this hour or throughout this week, may we remember that God's Spirit encircles these gifts with hope.

THE OFFERTORY – *Betty Funk*

***PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS – DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***BLESSING OF THE GIFTS**

Holy Winds of Excitement,
May the gifts we share today
and throughout this week
nudge us to dream your dreams.
May our giving inspire us
to embrace your visions for our world.
Holy Spirit, enliven our souls
to create your realm of justice
and peace on earth. Amen.

***CALL TO RECONCILIATION**

We still don't get it - this gift called grace, this mercy called forgiveness. So, we want more signs, more proof, more evidence that God loves us. Yet, all we have to do is what Jesus did - trust in God: completely, foolishly, daringly. Let us pray, telling God how hard such trust is for us, hoping that God's gracious Spirit will dance in our hearts.

***PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS**

We look for tongues of fire to dance upon us, God of Pentecost, but hold only the ashes of our broken promises. We long to speak simply and clearly so that everyone, everywhere, might understand your love for them, but we scatter our words to the wind with our inability to care for others. We want you to show us the secrets of the kingdom, never noticing they are revealed in the songs of children, the memories of older folks, the dreams of the young all around us.

Have mercy on us, and pour out your Spirit, God of amazing days. When we pull the shutters of our souls shut, fling them open with the breath of wonder. When we turn out all the lights and huddle in the shadows of fear, illumine our hearts with the dancing flames of the Spirit's joy. When we find it impossible to come up with the language of love, pour your Word, Jesus Christ, into our emptiness so we may fill others.

- *Silent Prayer*

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

One: Hear the good news for us. God pours the Spirit upon us in these moments –
the Spirit which comforts us, which encourages us, which transforms us through God's grace.
Many: Thanks be to God! The Spirit brings us peace, comforts our hearts, and fills us with hope.
We are forgiven and made new. Amen.

CHORAL HYMN – Sweet, Sweet Spirit

*Choir: Bob Bucklew, Keith Konet, & Barbara Rossington
Accompanist: Betty Funk*

COMMUNION LITURGY

A CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

*(We pause to invite those at home who have not already prepared elements to do so.
Even an English muffin can become a sacrament, even a cup of water or tea
can become a remembrance of God's redeeming love)*

INVITATION

Friends, this isn't Zion Chapel's table. It's not the United Church of Christ's table. But it's Christ's table. And because it's Christ's table, all of us are welcome here. At this table, you don't have to worship a certain way, look a certain way, or love a certain way. You don't have to believe what

I believe, or what, the person sitting next to you believes. You just have to come, exactly as you are, seeking the one who is seeking you. So come, all of you, not because you must, but because you may, and here find healing and wholeness for your journey.

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: On this day of Pentecost,
may the Spirit dance with you!

Many: May the Spirit dance with you as well!

One: May God's grace be poured into your hearts.

**Many: Come, Holy Spirit,
to fill our hearts with love.**

One: May God's Word become your language of praise.

**Many: Come, Holy Spirit, to teach us
new songs of thanksgiving.**

(Allow silence to speak for a few moments.)

One:

With a Word, you scattered chaos,
God of wonder and joy,
creating everything imaginable,
and those things only you could envision.

Pouring out your Breath of life,
dolphins frolicked in seas,
dogs chased their tails in circles,
songbirds twittered to welcome the sunrise,

and we were shaped in your image,
so we might enjoy life with you in goodness.

But we tried to build a tower
to reach those temptations just out of our reach,
convinced they would make us happier than your joy.

Old men and women, young girls and boys,
those we call prophets and those we call meddlers,
came speaking your words of invitation
so we might return to you,
but we thought they were drunk,
or foolish, or didn't have a clue
as to what is really important in life.

So you chose to send us your Child,
who spoke of your whispers to his heart,
calling us to trust in you once again.

With those who dare to imagine your wonder,
with those who wonder what is going on,
we offer the thanksgivings filling our hearts:

**Many: Holy, holy, holy are you, God who would gather us.
All creation joins in praising you this day.
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who sends the Advocate to us.
Hosanna in the highest!**

**One: As we come to this Table, we remember
the Spirit which was poured out at our baptism,
the Spirit which fills us with new hope and life,
the Spirit which transforms us into faithful people,
and so we share that mystery we call faith:**

**Many: Jesus gave his life, entering the silence of death;
Jesus was raised, as resurrection's new song was sung;
Jesus will come, and so we sing as long as we can,
with the breath of the Spirit filling us.**

***TABLE PRAYER**

**Once again, as you did so long ago,
pour out your Spirit upon those
gathered in this space, as called by you,
and upon the gifts gracing our Tables.
With the bread, you feed us,
as you feed all creation,
so we can go forth, each day,
to offer hope to those who are forgotten,
to share joy with those who grieve,
to be the words of love for those who hear
only judgment and hate.**

**With the cup, you nourish us,
as you fill all of creation,
so we can be poured out, each day,
for the children bullied in schools,
for the seniors mistreated by society,
for the most vulnerable who bear the brunt
of budget and tax cuts.**

**And when your Spirit comes at the end
of all time and space, gather us
with our sisters and brothers
around the Table of grace and wonder
where we will be filled with the Spirit's breath
so we can offer your praises for all eternity,
God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.**

***THE LORD'S PRAYER – using “debts” and “debtors”**

**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,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE

Leader: Gathered with his friends, Jesus took bread, broke it and said:
“This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat.”

And pouring the wine:
“This is my blood, spilled out for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

CALL TO THE FEAST

Leader: This is the feast prepared for you.
Come and share for all is ready.

***SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS**

Leader:
Let us in our places receive the gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

Unison:
We are one in Christ in the bread we share.

Leader:
Let us in our places receive the gift of God, the Cup of Blessing.

Unison:
We are one in Christ in the cup we share.

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**Thank you, Divine Spirit,
for this meal of remembrance,
and for coming to us as we have shared it.
May the love we find at this table**

be reflected in our lives;
May the power we receive at this table
make us peacemakers and healers;
And may the Spirit who fills us again at this table
lead us to be those who proclaim God's Reign
in the words we speak
and in the things we do. Amen.

GOING FORTH

***PARTING HYMN – 286 NCH – Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness**

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

Author: James K. Manly, 1978; alt.

Tune: SPIRIT Irr.

Composer: James K. Manly, 1978

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Refrain:

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow through the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness,
wind, wind on the sea.

1 You moved on the waters,
you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains
from the valleys of sleep;
and over the eons you called to each thing:
"Awake from your slumbers
and rise on your wings."
[Refrain]

2 You swept through the desert,
you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people
with a law and a land;
and when they were blinded with idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets
to open their eyes.
[Refrain]

3 You sang in a stable,
you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence
when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,

when you blew through your people
on the rush of the wind.
[Refrain]

4 You call from tomorrow,
you break ancient schemes.
From the bondage of sorrow
all the captives dream dreams;
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions
your people arise.
[Refrain]

***COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

One: We have heard the voice of God,
who scatters us to gather the world
into the community of grace and hope.

**Many: We will go to fill the emptiness of others,
to bring fresh air into all the stagnant places
of our neighborhoods and world.**

One: We have heard the words of Jesus,
who calls us to share the whispers
of healing, of reconciliation, of renewal.

**Many: We will go to comfort those hiding in shadows,
to be the breath of kindness to those who are ridiculed,
to share in the silence of those who are broken and grieving.**

One: We have heard the rush of the Spirit's wind,
who would shatter our complacency,
and give us voices for justice and righteousness.

**Many: We will go to sing songs of strength to those who are weak,
to whisper words of love to those who know only hate,
to shout for the renewal of all people everywhere. Amen.**

POSTLUDE – Betty Funk

* * * * *

Credits

- (1) The Call to Worship, Gathering Prayer, Prayer of Response, Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings, and the Blessing of the Gifts, are adapted from *Ask God: Service Prayers for Pentecost Sunday C*, written by the Rev. Michelle L. Torigian, Senior Pastor of St. Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois. Copyright 2022 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.
- (2) The Call to Reconciliation, Prayer of Confession, Assurance of Grace are adapted from *Liturgy w/communion for June 5, 2022 (Pentecost - C)*, written by the Rev. Thom M. Shuman, and posted May 30, 2022 on his blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>

- (3) The Invitation for Communion is adapted from *Easter Communion: Words of Resurrection*, by the Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, 2016, posted on Worship Well, a ministry of the Vermont Conference United Church of Christ. <https://worshipwell.church/2016/03/23/easter-communion-words-of-resurrection/>.
- (4) Portions of the Communion Liturgy – Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Table Prayer - are adapted from *Liturgy w/communion for June 5, 2022 (Pentecost - C)*, written by the Rev. Thom M. Shuman, and posted May 30, 2022 on his blog, *Lectinary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>
- (5) Portions of the Communion Liturgy - Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine and Call to the Feast - are adapted from *Liturgy w/communion for December 5, 2021 (Advent 2 - C)*, written by The Rev. Thom Shuman, and posted December 1, 2021 on the blog, *Lectinary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>
- (6) A portion of the Communion Liturgy - the Sharing of the Elements - is adapted from Online Communion for Palm Sunday, written by The Rev. Maren C. Tirabassi. ©2020 Maren Tirabassi, all publishing rights reserved. Permission for congregations to use in worship or educational settings, including streaming
- (7) The Prayer of Thanksgiving following Communion is adapted from *Prayers After Receiving in A Communion Liturgy for Pentecost Sunday*, written by John van de Laar © Sacredise Publishing (Sacredise.com). Posted on the website, *ProgressiveChristianity.org*. <https://progressivechristianity.org/resources/a-communion-liturgy-for-pentecost-sunday/>
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Ministers, *All of Us*
 Scott Rosenstein, *Pastor*
 Betty Funk, *Pianist and Music Director*
 Keith Konet, *Council President*



NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

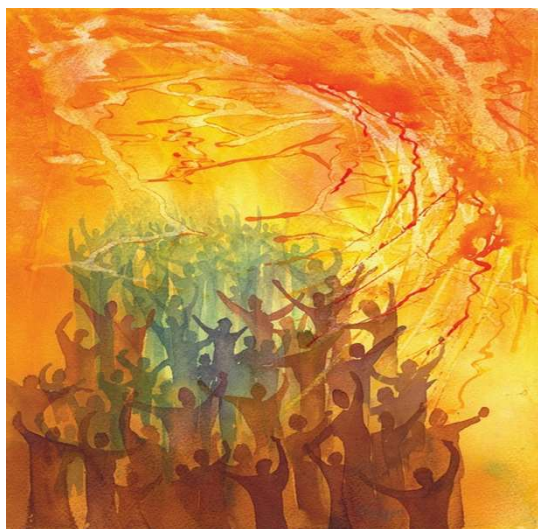
God is Still Speaking...

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you will find a spiritual home in this United Church of Christ congregation. WELCOME!

Tithes and Offerings - Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and mailed to:

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c/o Keith Konet
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 Questions: Contact Keith Konet at 330.604.6939

Eastertide –Festival Season in the liturgical calendar of Christianity, celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ – and our new resurrected life in the realm of God. It begins on Easter Sunday, which initiates Easter Week in Western Christianity, and Bright Week in Eastern Christianity. Traditionally lasting 40 days to commemorate the time the resurrected Jesus remained on earth before departing (the period between Easter Day and the Ascension), 20th century liturgical revision has led some western churches to expand Eastertide to 50 days to conclude on Pentecost.



Pentecost by Mark Wiggin

Espoused to Him - <http://hcikfs.blogspot.com/2016/05/>

Pentecost – June 5, 2022

The Christian holiday of Pentecost is celebrated on the 50th day from Easter Sunday. It commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1–31).

Pentecost is one of the Great feasts in the Eastern Orthodox Church, a Solemnity in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church, a Festival in the Lutheran Churches and the United Church of Christ, and a Principal Feast in the Anglican Communion. Many Christian denominations provide a special liturgy for this holy celebration.

The term Pentecost comes from the Greek Πεντηκοστή (Pentēkostē) meaning "fiftieth". It refers to the Jewish harvest festival of Shavuot celebrated on the fiftieth day after Passover. It is also known as the "Feast of Weeks" and the "Feast of 50 days" in rabbinic tradition.

The events of Acts Chapter 2 are set against the backdrop of the celebration of Pentecost in Jerusalem. The author begins by noting that the disciples of Jesus "all met in one room" on the "day of Pentecost" (ἡμέρα τῆς Πεντηκοστῆς).[Acts 2:1] The verb used in Acts 2:1 to indicate the arrival of the day of Pentecost carries a connotation of fulfillment.

There is a "violent, rushing wind" (wind is a common symbol for the Holy Spirit) and "something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire" [Acts 2:3]. The gathered disciples were "all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as she enabled them" [Acts 2:4]. Some scholars have interpreted the passage as a reference to the multitude of languages spoken by the gathered disciples [Acts 2:6–11], while others have taken the reference to "tongues" (γλῶσσαι) to signify ecstatic speech [1 Corinthians 14]. In Christian tradition, this event represents fulfillment of the promise that Christ will baptize his followers with the Holy Spirit [Acts 1:5; John 14:16–17].

The main sign of Pentecost in the West is the color red. It symbolizes joy and the fire of the Holy Spirit. Clergy and choirs wear red vestments, and in modern times, the custom has extended to the lay people of the congregation wearing red clothing in celebration as well. Red banners are often hung from walls or ceilings to symbolize the blowing of the "mighty wind" and the free movement of the

Spirit. Other congregations have incorporated the use of red balloons, signifying the "Birthday of the Church". These may be held by the congregants, decorate the sanctuary, or released all at once.

Help for Ukraine

Gifts made to UCC **Ukraine Emergency Appeal** will provide shelter, food, and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people.

Donate online with the link below:

<https://support.ucc.org/global-h-o-p-e/ukraine-emergency-appeal>

Or designate a check for Ukraine Relief and mail to:

United Church of Christ,
P.O. Box 71957
Cleveland, OH 44194.



Gifts made to **Sharing America's Resources Abroad (S.A.R.A)** provide food, clothing, and sanitary items for refugees fleeing to Hungary.

Donate online with the link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=QC5P9F6Z9LT32

Or designate a check for **S.A.R.A. - Donations for Ukraine Emergency Fund** and mail to:

SARA
c/o Heartland Conference UCC
P.O. Box 1230
Worthington, OH 43085.

Please know that your gifts of any size make a difference in this critical time.

Please Remember in Prayer

- The Universal Church, its members and mission,
- The nation and all in authority, the leaders of our nation - federal, state, and local.
- For democracy and our democratic institutions and norms in the United States.
- The welfare of the world and the concerns of the local community,
- The interrelationship of Gospel values and civic engagement
- Our 155th Anniversary as a community of faith of Zion Church on May 15th, 2022.
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including our Living Water Association UCC, Association General Minister, The Rev. Nayiri Karjian, and Association Faith in Action Minister, The Rev. Michael Howard.
- The ministers and missionaries of the world.
- Those who are refugees and immigrants.
- For children separated from their parents at detention camps along our southern border.

- The families of Ruth Whitfield, 86; Roberta Drury, 32; Aaron Salter, 55; Heyward Patterson, 67; Pearl Young, 77; Geraldine Talley, 62; Celestine Chaney, 65; Katherine Massey, 72; Margus Morrison, 52; and Andre Mackneil, 53 killed last week in a racist-inspired mass shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York.
- The family and friends of John Cheng, 52, killed in a mass shooting at a church reception in Laguna Woods, California on May 15th.
- The families and friends of the 19 children (3rd & 4th graders) and two teachers murdered in the massacre at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas: Alexandria Aniyah Rubio, 10; Alithia Ramirez, 10; Amerie Jo Garza, 10; Annabell Guadalupe Rodriguez, 10; Eliahana Cruz Torres, 10; Eliana “Ellie” Garcia, 9; Eva Mireles, 44 (fourth grade teacher); Irma Garcia (fourth grade teacher); Jackie Cazares, 10; Jailah Nicole Silguero, 10; Jayce Luevanos, 10; Jose Flores, 10; Layla Salazar, 10; Makenna Lee Elrod, 10; Maite Rodriguez; Miranda Mathis, 11; Nevaeh Bravo; Rojelio Torres, 10; Tess Marie Mata; Uziyah Garcia, 10; and Xavier Lopez, 10.
- The families and friends of the those killed in the mass shooting at a medical center in Tulsa, Oklahoma on June 1st: two doctors, Preston Phillips, 59 and Stephanie Husen, 48; a receptionist, Amanda Glenn, 40; and a visitor/patient, William Love, 73.
- **May God be revealed in their stories and the tears of all who mourn. May their memory be a blessing and their life in God’s good care last forever.**
- For racial and religious justice and reconciliation in the United States and around the world.
- Mother Earth and the global reflection on climate disruption.
- For peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world and particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and the United States.
- The people of Afghanistan, Venezuela, Syria, Yemen, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Kurdish people and the Christians of northern Syria - for peace, nutrition, and justice.
- The people of Tonga affected by the eruption of an undersea volcano and tsunami flooding.
- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive, a total of 233 mass shooting incidents have occurred in the US as of June 1st, 2022. In 2021 a total of 693 mass shooting incidents occurred across the US, in 2020 a total of 611, in 2019 a total of 417, with 337 incidents in 2018. While we pray for the families and friends of those whose lives have been taken in violent acts – and we pray for those injured in body, mind, soul, and spirit – and for their neighborhoods and communities across the United States - We know that our words and prayers are not enough. We must repent for our collective inaction and commit to tirelessly working toward meaningful gun violence prevention.
- For those affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the omicron variant surge: for all those who are infected and/or sick, and those who are grieving, for all who are affected, all around the world, for essential workers and frontline workers...we pray for comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- For those affected by recent wildfires around Boulder, Colorado, in California, and in the panhandle of Florida.
- The residents and management of the San Sofia Apartments who share a campus with us.
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living or in a nursing home
- Those who are homebound and those who are caregivers
- Those who suffer or are in any trouble, and the departed.

- Those on our church prayer list:
 - Patti Augustine and family
 - Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) in Alliance, Ohio
 - Betty Funk (*our Minister of Music*)
 - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob; friend of Elaine – health concerns*)
 - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara, and Michael Reed.
 - Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet
 - Keith Konet
 - Marcia Leslie (*neighbor and friend – health concerns*)
 - Elaine Lukacs (*fell at home and injured her knee and leg, presently at O'Neill Healthcare, Room 103, 7250 Old Oak Blvd., Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130 – 440.863.5624*)
 - Linda and James Mortach (*Elaine Lukacs' sister & brother-in-law*) & Linda's daughter
 - Patricia Matheny (prayers also for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray)
 - Lee Matsos and family
 - Barbara Rossington (*move to a new senior housing community*)
 - Henry Senyak (*resident community leader – cancer*)
 - The family of Michael O'Brien particularly his wife, Debbie Webb (*following Michael's death last Fall. Our love and sympathy to Debbie and Michael's family*).
 - Beverly Wurm (*recovering*)
 - Kim (*friend of Bev Wurm – cancer*)

Open Doors — A Community of Faith Co-hosted by West Park UCC and Church of the Redeemer UCC

Open Doors, a new ministry for, by, and to the LGBTQIA+ community of Northeast Ohio, has **its initial meeting Saturday, June 11, from 4 to 6 p.m.** A ministry of Church of the Redeemer United Church of Christ in Westlake and West Park United Church of Christ in Cleveland, **Open Doors will meet at West Park UCC, 3909 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland.**

The Church has caused harm to LGBTQIA+ people for centuries, failing to reflect God's love for all. Open Doors is here to remind us that we, too, are God's beloved. From music to Christian education, from preaching to fellowship, our time together will focus on issues of faith that are relevant and important to the LGBTQIA+ community.

Join us June 11! Questions? E-mail OpenDoorsChurch777@gmail.com. Learn more at opendoorschurch.org.



OPEN DOORS

A Community of Faith



From Nayiri Karjian, General Minister, Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast, UCC | June 2, 2022

I don't know how to make sense out of the senselessness around me.

The human brain is the most complex system in the universe. In fact, write J. B. & C. L. Ashbrook in their book *The Humanizing Brain*, the human brain is an organizer especially because humans like to make sense of things. Our brains perceive, collect data, categorize, prioritize, remember, and put all these in order. Our brains orchestrate the information they gather with an inner world of imaginative symbols. In this process, our brains do not allow disconnection and randomness. They always try to connect, interpreting experiences to make sense of them. And, because we humans are relational creatures, our brains have a huge capacity to adapt, to harmonize new information with the old, to create sensible ones and actively adapt creating new situations.

So why all the senselessness?

- When someone shoots and kills indiscriminately, for no reason, in a school, in a shopping mall, or anywhere people do their living especially in a country that is not at war, it does not make sense
- When those under 21 cannot drink alcohol but can buy shotguns, automatic rifles, machine guns, and more, it does not make sense
- When those on "no fly lists" cannot get on planes but can buy assault guns, it does not make sense
- When we insist that we want guns for hunting and "play," therefore anyone over 18 should be able to buy a gun, it does not make sense
- When people call for gun safety and gun control and others argue "it's my right to own guns," it does not make sense
- When preachers speak against violence and injustice and parishioners object saying, "that's politics and should not be addressed from the

pulpit," it does not make sense

- When the most powerful, advanced country in the world professes to be helpless at the face of violence and declares that there is nothing to be done, it does not make sense
- When the most powerful, the wealthiest country in the world, cannot protect and provide safety to its citizens, especially the most vulnerable, it does not make sense
- When politicians insist that "guns don't kill people, people do," and that schools should have armed guards at the only entry way, turning them into prisons, it does not make sense.
- When we, a people of faith, resign to what is, feel helpless and hopeless because we cannot do anything, it does not make sense
- When we don't know the difference between what we need accept, what we need to adapt to, and what we need to struggle with to change, it does not make sense.

We are profoundly confused and lost.

God has gifted us with complicated brains that are wired to make sense. Our brains consist of the reptilian, the limbic, the cerebellum, and the cerebrum, each of which has its own unique function. I suggest we use them all, especially since many are stuck in their reptilian brains where fear rules. My hope and prayer is that we pay attention to our cerebrums, the most advanced spiritual area in the brain, where the seeds of faith, compassion and love are planted.

God has gifted us the Holy Spirit, whose coming we celebrate on this Sunday of Pentecost, who is the power and the courage within us to make sense, to vision, to heal and to mend our broken world. So, what's our excuse?



UCC churches receive June call to stand with transgender, nonbinary people

*Saying “the stakes have never been higher,” a letter from the national setting of the United Church of Christ is calling the entire denomination to a special focus during Pride Month, June 2022. It urges all “UCC communities to center trans experience, advocacy and care in your Pride celebrations this year.” It cites an uptick in anti-trans legislation in many U.S. states and harm already done to “the mental health of LGBTQIA+ communities, and, in particular, youth.” It offers links to existing resources and promises more — including a toolkit and worship resources — to be posted at the UCC’s [Transgender-Nonbinary](#) page in early June. The May 30 letter, being distributed via the Conferences of the UCC, is signed by the Revs. Tracy Howe and Mike Schuenemeyer of **Justice and Local Church Ministries** and Andy Lang of the **Open and Affirming Coalition**. The text of the letter can be viewed at:*

<https://www.ucc.org/ucc-churches-receive-june-call-to-stand-with-transgender-nonbinary-people/>.

The Letter calls us to:

- 1) **Center trans** advocacy - connect with local organizers and get involved. Seek out LGBTQIA+ groups working to create affirming and life-giving policies. Be public and vocal as an ally.
- 2) **Center trans experience** - share the incredible educational resources the UCC offers. Resources are being posted at ucc.org/trans, which will include a toolkit by the first week of June.
- 3) **Center trans care** - engage the Open and Affirming (ONA) process as a way to learn more about people of trans and nonbinary experience, and strategies to strengthen the welcome, inclusion and justice experienced in your church and community. Whether your church has been ONA for a long time, has just adopted its ONA covenant, or has not yet been through the process, there’s always another step on the journey: