



**May 31st, 2020**  
***Pentecost Sunday***

*Twin Towers United Methodist Church*  
1411 Oak Street, Alameda, CA 94501

## WORSHIP GUIDE

*Before you begin your time of worship, find a comfortable place to be and gather whatever you might need: your Bible, some paper or a notebook, something to write with, your computer/connected device (if you intend to listen to music online), etc. Feel free to adapt this worship guide in any way that makes best sense to you and those you might be gathered with. (Consider inviting someone – a friend, a family member – to worship with you.) Commit to spending the next hour with God.*

**PRELUDE** - “Breathe on Me Breath of God” UMH 420

*Listen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rlyo3neR6xg>*

**WELCOME** – The day of Pentecost has come! Over the last two weeks, we have been pointing towards the promise of the Holy Spirit. She is the one who Jesus promised would come after him and live in us, dwell with us, abide with us always. She is the Comforter, the truth-teller, our guide. She is our empowerer, the one gifts us with courage, with boldness, with conviction. And so we join with those first disciples who prayed, “Come, Holy Spirit, come.” And She did – like a mighty rushing wind, like tongues of fire. She ignited those first disciples. That is what we remember and celebrate on Pentecost. This morning, some 2000 odd years later, we pray for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit, to melt us, mold us, fill us, and use us. We pray for a fresh outpouring that will ignite us, empowering a holy boldness and courage as we live out our shared purpose.

**OPENING PRAYER** – *You are invited to take a deep breath as you pray:*

Come, Spirit, like rain - refresh, renew, revitalise.

Come, Spirit, like fire - embolden, enlighten, enable.

Come, Spirit, like a mighty wind - move, challenge, enkindle.

Come, Spirit, like wave - move, tear down, lift up.

Come, Spirit, come Breath, draw us close, make song, bring intimacy.

Come, Spirit, come Love, make one, make justice, make peace.

Come, Spirit, come Kingdom, come Love.

Amen.

-written by *Martin Brown*

**CENTERING HYMN** - “Spirit of the Living God”, UMH 393

Listen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhEU26c2p8A>

*Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.*

**SCRIPTURE - Acts 2:1-21 (NRSV)**

*Last week, we heard Jesus instruct his disciples to remain in Jerusalem, to wait there for “the promise of the Father.” He said, “[Y]ou will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses right here in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” And so they waited. Luke tells us that they did so by constantly devoting themselves to prayer. And now, it’s 9 days later.*

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.<sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup> And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.<sup>7</sup> Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?”<sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?<sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,<sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,<sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”<sup>12</sup> All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”<sup>13</sup> But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.<sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> ‘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.

<sup>18</sup> Even upon my slaves, both men and women,  
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;  
and they shall prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> And I will show portents in the heaven above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

<sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood,  
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.

<sup>21</sup> Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

## **REFLECT -**

- How do you understand that first Pentecost experience and the coming of the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to you?
- When have you experienced being empowered by God's Spirit? Recall the details of the experience(s).
- How are you longing for a fresh outpouring of God's Spirit in your life?

This week's sermon is shared by District Superintendent, Rev. Staci Current.

Her message is titled "Power for the Purpose". If you are able to watch and listen to it, you may find it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezXzxdtsqlc&feature=youtu.be>

Here are a few highlights for us to meditate on and ponder together:

- We get used to doing things the way we've always done them and sometimes forget why we do them in the first place. This Pentecost, exactly because we can't hold the pageantry and celebrate in the way we always have, we are forced to think carefully about what Pentecost is all about, who we are as the Church, and what our purpose is.
- Our purpose is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth and share the love of God.
- Most of us, when it comes to the Holy Spirit, are living without the knowledge of just how powerful the Holy Spirit is, and how God gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit

precisely so that we have power for the purpose, power to do that which we cannot do alone.

- We often celebrate Pentecost by reading the scripture in different languages and celebrate that all could hear and understand. We focus on how the Holy Spirit empowered those first disciples to speak in other languages. But the point of Pentecost is not just that we can speak and hear in new languages, but that when we do so, we ensure that no one is left out of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that everyone hears clearly the love of God for them. Speaking in different languages wasn't the "big deal." The "big deal" was that no one was to be left out of the reign of God.
- When you receive power for the purpose you become bold like Peter, the man who 53 days earlier had denied Jesus but is here seen preaching a magnificent sermon and witnessing to Jesus. The Holy Spirit changes us from the inside and gives us the power to do and say that which we were never able to do and say before, to go from timid to bold.
- DS Staci ends with lifting up something she calls "Holy Spirit arithmetic" - the mystery and wonder of how things get added or multiplied through the Holy Spirit. We can think of how Jesus multiplies fish and bread, for example. She then invites us to read Acts 2:43 - 47 as a witness to this. At Pentecost, for the first time it seems, God takes people, opens their heart, and empowers them to share all that they have so that **no one's** need goes unmet. As a result, "day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." (Acts 2:47) The Holy Spirit takes what we have, empowers us to multiply it, and use it to meet needs. When we do so, Pentecost happens. When Jesus hands the responsibility for the purpose over to the disciples, and disciples are able to multiply the movement by their action, that's power for the purpose, DS Staci then points to the many examples in and around our Bay District where we, the Church, have been empowered to share boldly, meet needs, and draw the circle of God's love wider and wider.
- We may not be in the church this Pentecost, but we have been empowered to be the Church, the hands and feet of Jesus, the body of Christ!

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE** – *Spend time in prayer. What did you hear for yourself through today's scripture and reflection? Talk to God about it. Then lift up the joys and concerns that are in your heart. You might write them down, speak them aloud, or pray them in silence.*

Joys –Where are witnessing God’s power and movement in yourself and in the world?  
Concerns – Where are you yearning for God’s power and movement...in yourself and in the world?

*I would be honored to pray with you and for you.*

*Please send a note via text, mail, or email or give me a call if I can do so.*

*When you are ready, pray the words that Jesus taught his disciples beginning, “Our Father...”*

**SHARING OUR GIFTS**– *How might you offer yourself and all that you have to God this week? How are you being invited to practice generosity? Spend a moment listening for God’s direction.*

*You are invited to contribute financially towards the purpose and ministry of TTUMC. We are a congregation committed to being conduits of God’s healing in our neighborhood and beyond, and in so doing, impact the last and the least. You can contribute by mailing in a check, dropping off cash, or giving online via PayPal (visit [www.twintowersumc.org](http://www.twintowersumc.org)). Take a moment and do that now.*

**CLOSING HYMN** - “Living Spirit, Holy Fire” W&S 3109

Listen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgpeLGMm7y0>

Living Spirit, holy fire, burning bright to light our way,  
blaze among us and inspire lives that praise you day by day.

Warm us, draw your people near when our love draws weak or cold.  
Free our frozen hearts from fear, that each story may be told.

Melt away the masks we wear, hiding what we know and feel.  
Risking growth, we want to share love in action, love that’s real.

Open hearts; affirm us all, many splendored, one in you,  
we embrace the work, the call: you are making all things new.

Veni sancte spiritus!



## **BENEDICTION -**

*So now we leave this time of worship  
And while so much of the road ahead is uncertain,  
the path constantly changing,  
we know some things that are as solid and sure as the ground beneath our feet,  
and the sky above our heads.  
We know God is love.  
We know Christ's light endures.  
We know the Holy Spirit is here,  
found in the space between all things,  
closer to us than our next breath,  
binding us to each other,  
and empowering us for the purpose,  
until we meet again.*

## **NOW GO AND PASS CHRIST'S PEACE!**

You are invited to spend the next stretch reaching out. Pick up our directory and consider calling someone you don't yet know well or someone who might not know others. It doesn't need to be complicated. Perhaps something as simple as, "Hi! I'm calling to say 'hello'. How have you been?"



If you are on Facebook, please like and follow our page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ttuncAlameda/>

## Scripture for Sunday, June 7th - **Psalm 8**

This week, please pray for **Dine & Connect** - our guests, our volunteers, and our continued ministry.