

Christ Congregational United Church of Christ

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The Rev. Candace Thomas, Designated-Term Pastor

Jay Harragin, Director of Music

Joan Campagna, Liturgist

Our Vision: A church that listens, praises God, inspires, and serves others.

May 23, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.

Pentecost Sunday

Strengthen the Church Special Mission Offering

Preparation for Worship: “Too many churches have become mausoleums for the dead rather than coliseums of praise for a living God. They have lost the spirit of Pentecost! They have lost their enthusiasm. They have lost their joy for Jesus and find themselves suffering from what William Willimon calls ‘Institutional and spiritual Dry Rot.’ If the Church is to survive the next millennium it must recapture some of the praise and enthusiasm it had two millennia ago.” — Carlyle Fielding



PRELUDE:

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (*responsive*)

Leader: Here we gather for song and scripture, seeking comfort and hope, seeking to be inspired as well as challenged.

People: Here we gather to retell the ancient tales and wonder how God's story continues to unfold.

Leader: Today we tell the story of Pentecost, the story of the Holy Spirit rushing in like a wild wind

and dancing like flames upon each of the disciples,

People: And we ask ourselves where we see the Holy Spirit present our world today.

Leader: Today we tell a story of the Holy Spirit igniting hope again.

We will hear Peter claim his identity, tell his story, and inspire others to see the Holy at work in the world.

People: And we will ask ourselves if we are ready to share our own stories.

Leader: May we be open to the Spirit. May we be open to learning and learning from one another. May we grow in faith, hope, and love. Amen.

HYMN: "Fill Me Now" (No.153, HFG)

1 Hover o'er me, Holy Spirit,
Bathe my trembling heart and brow.
Fill me with Thy hallowed presence;
Come, O come and fill me now.

Refrain:

Fill me now, fill me now,
Jesus, come and fill me now;
Fill me with Thy hallowed presence;
Come, O come and fill me now.

**2 Thou canst fill me, gracious Spirit,
Tho' I cannot tell Thee how.
But I need Thee, greatly need Thee;
Come, O come and fill me now. [Refrain]**

**3 I am weakness, full of weakness;
At Thy sacred feet I bow.
Blest, divine, eternal Spirit,
Fill with pow'r and fill me now. [Refrain]**

**4 Cleanse and comfort, bless and save me;
Bathe, O bathe my heart and brow.
Thou art comforting and saving;
Thou art sweetly filling now. [Refrain]**

***THE COMMANDMENT OF JESUS (*John 15:5, 12*)**

I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Gather us in as those who want to know you more deeply, Holy Spirit. Speak to us in ways that reach each heart and mind. Light the fires of your life in us, then scatter us into the world as bearers of your sacred word, and of a joy that cannot be restrained. Encircle us with your grace and gather in all that we have received and become, we pray. Amen.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

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.’

Peter Addresses the Crowd

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."

YOUTH MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC: "Spirit of Gentleness" James Manley *arr. B&H*

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: *(Responsive)*

Leader: Spirit of God, our prayers often ask You to be present in our lives and in our world. But we confess that we are terrified that You might actually show up!

People: We remember the stories of You appearing as a burning bush, and then Moses and Sarah leaving everything familiar.

L: We remember the stories of You kindling the imagination of the prophets, and then each putting their lives on the line.

P: We remember the stories of You igniting courage within Deborah and Esther, Elizabeth and Mary, Paul and Peter, and then each challenging the status quo.

L: We remember the stories of You sparking action within the early Church, compelling them all to embrace something completely foreign and new.

All: We confess, Dear Spirit, we are afraid You will call us to move outside our comfort zones. We are afraid You will kindle a passion within us we will be unable to ignore. We are afraid that You will rearrange our lives beyond recognition. Forgive us for the fears that have been holding us back from inviting You truly into our lives.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE-Pastor

**Beloved people of God, find comfort in the news
that the Spirit of God may be a formidable force, but She moves
alongside people and equips those who are open to the work ahead.
Peter, known more for his denial and disbelief than his bravery,
suddenly had courage with the Spirit alongside him.
The disciples, not known for being gifted communicators,
suddenly broke down barriers with the Spirit alongside them.
Beloveds, do not be afraid. Remain curious. Be open to the
surprise. Celebrate that God is indeed about to do a new thing with you
and with the church of Jesus Christ.**

PRAYER SONG: “Spirit of the Living God” (No 283, NCH)

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me: (2X)

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

PASTORAL PRAYER

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THE PRAYER OF JESUS (*Unison*)

We join our hearts together as we pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION

As people of God, we are called by the Spirit to continue the work of Jesus and the disciples who sought to build up beloved community. We are each equipped by the Spirit with particular skills, gifts, passions, abilities, and experiences to continue that work.

In these moments of quiet and reflection: what is it that you have been gifted with and are open to offering this day to bring about God's beloved community on Earth?

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (*Unison*)

May all that we give of our time, talents, and treasure strengthen and renew your church, O God, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING: "Get All Excited" William Gaither arr. B&H

MEDITATION: "Pentecost People"

Pastor Candy

**COMMUNION HYMN “Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ” (No. 347,
NCH)**

- 1) Let us talents and tongues employ, reaching out with a shout of
joy:**

**Bread is broken, the wine is poured, Christ is spoken and seen and
heard. Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around,
loaves abound!**

- 2) Christ is able to make us one, at the table he sets the tone,
Teaching people to live to bless, love in word and in deed express.
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around,
loaves abound!**

- 3) Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
Gives us love to tell, bread to share. God (Immanuel) is
everywhere!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around,
loaves abound!**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Communion Prayer

Words of Institution

Breaking the Bread and Pouring the Cup

Sharing the Meal

Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

Holy Wind of God, Breath of Life, Joy of the Church—you created a new people and gave them the fruits of love, joy, happiness and peace. We thank you, Spirit of Creative Power, for this time of communion in which we have been filled with your energy, love, and joy. May we live from the gift, as energized and joyous witnesses of god's glory and Jesus' love. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "Sweet, Sweet Spirit" (No.159, HFG) *verses 1 & 2*

**1) There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place,
And I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord;
There are sweet expressions on each face,
And I know they feel the presence of the Lord.**

**Chorus: Sweet Holy Spirit, Sweet heavenly Dove,
Stay right here with us, filling us with Your love;
And for these blessings We lift our hearts in praise:
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived,
When we shall leave this place.**

**2) There are blessings you cannot receive
'Til you know Him in His fullness and believe;
You're the one to profit when you say,
"I'm going to walk with Jesus all the way."**

**Chorus: Sweet Holy Spirit, Sweet heavenly Dove,
Stay right here with us, filling us with Your love;
And for these blessings We lift our hearts in praise:
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived,
When we shall leave this place.**

COMMISSION

**That Pentecost day, with the Spirit in the air,
the disciples were suddenly clear about their stories
and their intention to share their stories with the world.
Maybe it was the rushing wind that had jolted them out of
complacency. Maybe it was the dancing tongues of fire that landed on
each one that ignited them to action.
Maybe it was the hope that comes with having the Companion, the**

Advocate, nearby. Whichever it was, the disciples found their authentic voices and soon after discovered they had a story to share with the world.

**Go forth into this day, with the Spirit in the air,
to share your stories of God's love with the world.**

**Go forth into the world in the name of God, the one who created you;
go in the name of the Jesus who shows us the way;
and go in the name of the Holy Spirit, who is with us now and always.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



Welcome to Everyone!

Whoever or whatever brought you to our Garden Chapel or our Facebook on-line worship service this morning, we believe that the Spirit of God had a hand in you joining us. We hope that you feel the Holy Spirit in our service of prayer and praise. At Christ Congregational Church we strive to love one another as God has loved us and welcome one another as Christ has welcomed us. Therefore, we are an Open and Affirming church, loving and welcoming all people in all of God's variety; including racial, ethnic, and economic diversity, gender diversity and expression, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities.

JOYS AND CONCERNS – Please let Pastor Candy know of any joys or concerns you would like lifted up in worship by notifying her by Sunday morning at 10 a.m. via phone, text or email.

TODAY WE SHARE IN THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION. ALL WHO LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ARE WELCOME AT HIS TABLE. YOU WILL EACH HAVE INDIVIDUAL, PREPACKAGED, DISPOSABLE JUICE AND WAFER CONTAINERS FOR YOUR USE.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRIME TIME is being recessed for the summer and will resume in September. Many thanks to Dr. Don Olson for his great leadership over the past months!

BIBLE STUDY

We will meet on Zoom at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 24th, then will take a break until fall.

To Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82547685992>

Meeting ID: 825 4768 5992

ONLINE GIVING - We invite you to use our online giving option as a quick, simple and secure method to make your pledges and any ancillary contributions. Clicking on the “Give Online Today” button at the bottom of this newsletter or going to our church website at christcongregationalucc.org and clicking “online giving” will bring you to the secured Moon Clerk site which will allow you to enter your credit card information.

PRAYER LIST:

Emmett Gainny, The Rev. David Christensen, Maria Saunders, Mirta Oramas, Michelle Simone, Joan Hansen, Margie Diaz, Magnus, Anita Smith, Barbara Parker, Linda Dalrymple, Barrett family, Sheryl Mattos, Maggie McDowell, Sonia Nunez, Amelia Canali, Wendy Olson, Roland Sibrie, Sonya Williams, Ava, Jeffrey Gordon, Jen Wood, Darius and Joy Reid, Jacquie Greene, and Duyen Le.

For Pastoral Care Needs, please call *Pastor Candy* at 925-640-9289 or you may call or leave a message at the Church Office, 305-235-9381, Monday-Friday, from 9:30 a.m –2:30 p.m

