

## ***Pentecost at Home***

This Sunday is the feast of Pentecost! Pentecost is sometimes referred to as “the birthday of the Church.” “Birthday,” however, refers not to the birth of the institutional church, but rather to our birth into the new life of the Risen Christ--the new creation that comes from the Holy Spirit. Pentecost brings the Easter season to an official end, but it also marks the beginning of our new life together. Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we are guided and supported in our attempts to live out our baptismal promises.

There are significant meanings in the Acts of the Apostles description of Pentecost (Acts 1:1-5; 2:1-21). The name ‘Pentecost’ comes from the Jewish feast commemorated the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. The gift of the Spirit to the Church on this feast fulfills the words of Jeremiah, “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts” (Jeremiah 31:33). Pentecost also symbolizes the reversal of Babel in Genesis 11. At Babel, confusion, in the form of diverse languages, confound the understanding of the builders. On Pentecost (in Jerusalem), the apostles understood every language being spoken by the crowds (Acts 2:1-4 and John 20:22). At Babel, the human city is scattered. On Pentecost, the City of God is drawn together as 3,000 believers are added to the Church.

Symbols of the Pentecost and the Holy Spirit include:

- **Dove:** The Holy Spirit descended “like a dove” at Jesus’ baptism
- **Wind:** Wind represents God’s breath, which has been with us from the very beginning, breathing creation into being, and serving as our life force.
- **Fire:** Representing the all-consuming nature of the Holy Spirit which filled our ancestors then, and us today, with passion, power, strength and beauty.
- **Red:** The color red represents the energy and life of the Holy Spirit and the fire that burns in our hearts when we open ourselves to the Spirit.

After Easter, Pentecost is the most important day of the Church year. Though we can’t celebrate together this year, Pentecost can still be celebrated at home! Here are some suggestions:

### **Things to Do:**

- Wear Red to remember the story and the gift of the fire of the Holy Spirit.
- Make a Pinwheel to give you a visual reminder of the wind that brings us life. (here are some easy instructions: <https://www.auntannie.com/FridayFun/Pinwheel/> ).
- Make a dove and hang it in your window, on your door, from your rear view mirror, or some other place where you’ll see it and remember that the Holy Spirit was given to you at your baptism. Here are some easy origami instructions:

<http://easyorigamiinstructionsforkidscrafts.blogspot.com/2014/10/origami-dove-printable-instructions.html> and a video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7xtcoibkd4>

(Over)

**Things to Wonder About:**

Read Acts 2:1-21, and remember the story. Watch this video: *The Bible Project: Holy Spirit* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNNZO9i1Gjc>. Light a candle, and reflect on the following questions in your journal or with another person:

How have you witnessed the Holy Spirit in your own life? How do you know when the wind of the Spirit is blowing?

The lives of the disciples were changed by the experience of the Holy Spirit. How has your life been changed? Are there ways you're being changed now? How might you cooperate with the Spirit in your life today?

**Pray:**

Give thanks for the Spirit's work in your life, and offer one of these prayers:

**Pentecost Prayer**

*God of power,  
may the boldness of your Spirit transform us,  
may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,  
may the gifts of your Spirit  
be our goal and our strength,  
now and always. Amen.*

(As printed in the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship)

**Come, O Holy Spirit by John Henry Newman**

*Come, O Holy Spirit.  
Come as Holy Fire and burn in us,  
come as Holy Wind and cleanse us within,  
come as Holy Light and lead us in the darkness,  
come as Holy Truth and dispel our ignorance,  
come as Holy Power and enable our weakness,  
come as Holy Life and dwell in us.  
Convict us, convert us, consecrate us,  
until we are set free from the service of ourselves,  
to be your servants to the world. Amen.*