

Pentecost

Someone once said that of all the liturgical holidays, Pentecost was the most frustrating to understand and embrace. After all, what are we supposed to do with the Spirit's arrival that led to the birth of the Church?

On Easter we celebrate new life. There are dyed eggs and fragrant lilies. On Christmas we have the birth of hope. There are lots of lights and festively wrapped presents. On Palm Sunday we remember how fickle we can be in our faith, waving palm branches one minute then shouting crucify him the next. But on Pentecost we never really hit the mark as to how to welcome God's Spirit moving among us.

Pentecost, which is the Greek name for the Jewish harvest festival of Shavuot, which is celebrated 50 days after Passover, was the time when many devout Jews were in Jerusalem to celebrate. God used this festival to usher in a new harvest of believers in the Risen Lord. With great show, God sent the Holy Spirit that was likened to a rush of mighty wind. Jesus' followers, who were in Jerusalem, poured out onto the streets speaking in a multitude of languages, ensuring that those out-of-towners from foreign lands could understand the Good News of Christ Risen. Some accused the followers of being drunk, but Peter set the naysayers straight saying they were in fact full of the Spirit. He then echoed the words of the prophet Joel saying that the young will see visions and the old will dream new dreams.

I can see why Pentecost might be a frustrating liturgical holiday to observe. For if Pentecost is all about receiving the Spirit, who then would really dare to gather around a table and share those Holy Spirit visions, dreams and hopes for the Church today?

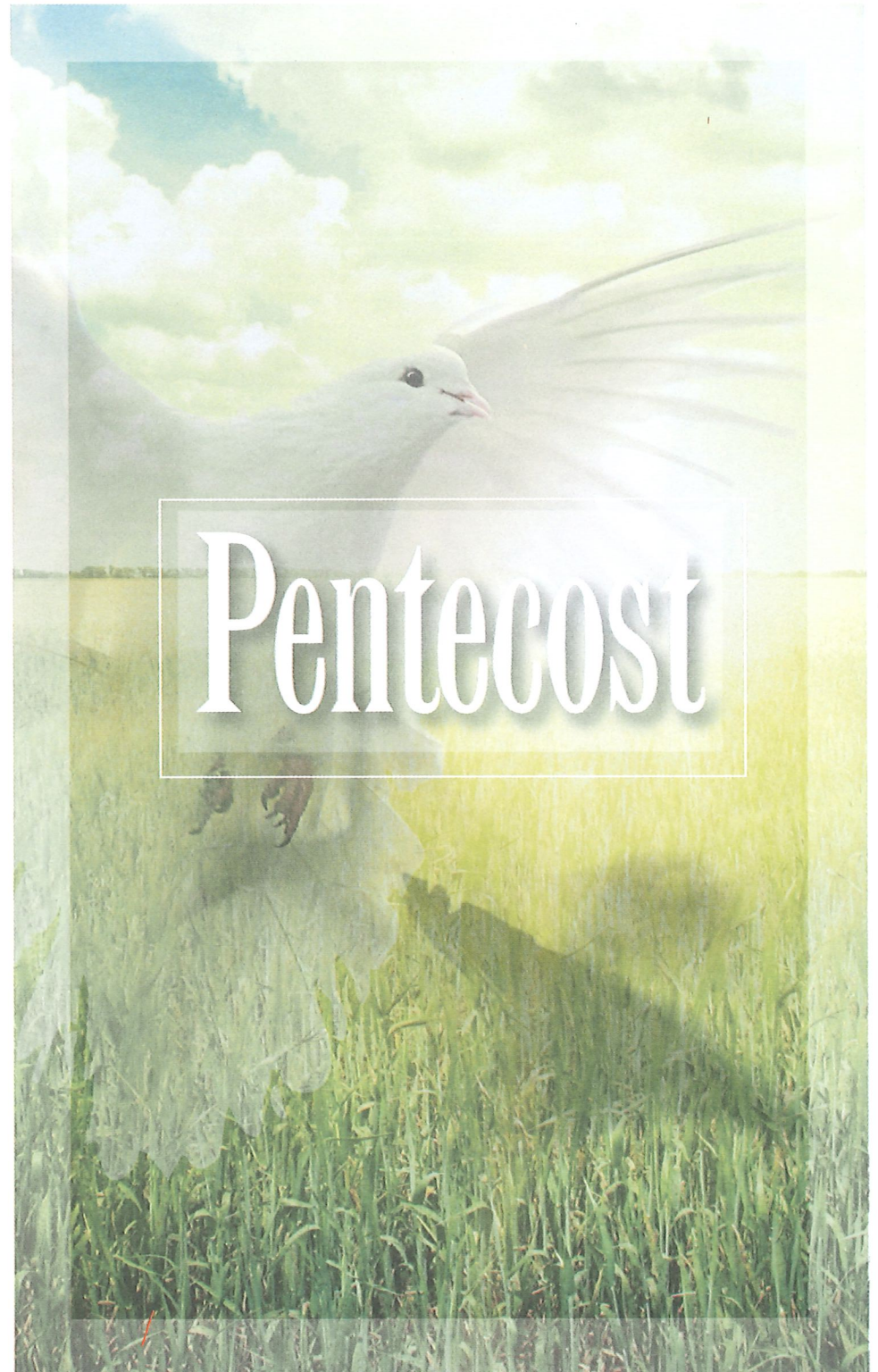
We all have our own visions of what church should be. There is a running joke within the United Church of Christ that there is no shortage of opinions and because of the abundance of views, it seems sometimes impossible to move forward.

Maybe this year, we should step away from rushing wind Spirit metaphor of Pentecost and try to see it a little differently. St. John Vianney used gardening to explain the work of the Spirit, viewing it as a gardener who cultivates our souls. He also described Pentecost as the moment when "a heart of stone is shattered, and heart of flesh takes its place."

Perhaps a shattering of stone hearts is what we need this year at Pentecost so that fledgling visions and dreams can take root and grow.

Renewing God, You sent the Spirit so long ago to bring Your church to life. May this Pentecost find ourselves renewed by new visions and dreams for how to be Your children. Soften our hearts to new ways of being Your body here in our communities. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



Bismarck-Mandan Area
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501

701-223-2915 www.uccbismarck.org

May 24, 2026 at 10 AM Worship

Pentecost & Sabbatical Return

Pastor: Rev. Gretchen Deeg | Guest Preacher: Carly Retterath

Worship Leaders: Tamara Waters-Wheeler & Pat Grossman

Video: Kirby Kruger | Music: Connie Sjostrom

*Rise in body or in spirit.



WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

*NO MATTER

Sing! 35

No matter who, no matter what
No matter where you are on the journey of life;
You're welcome, welcome in this place.
Accepted and welcomed by God's grace.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

All: Come, Holy Spirit, make us one.

*OPENING PRAYER

*HYMN On Pentecost They Gathered

NCH 272

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 104:24-34

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Tamara Waters-Wheeler

Children are invited to remain in worship Sunday School will resume in the fall.

OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, our heavenly host;
Creator, Savior, Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Great Spirit, your holy wind shakes our foundations, yet we hold tightly to illusions of control. Your purifying fire seeks to free us, yet we fear the change often required. Forgive us for the walls we build, the voice we ignore, and the hope we silence in ourselves and in one another. Breathe your courage into our hesitation. Set our hearts alight with compassion. Loosen our tongues to speak truth in love. Make us a people alive with your power, ready to be sent wherever your wind may carry us. Amen.

*GLORIA

Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Numbers 11:24-30 & Acts 2:1-21

SERMON

Carly Retterath

HYMN

Breathe on Me, Breath of God NCH 292

SABBATICAL RETURN

Moderator: Over the past month... Pastor Gretchen, are you prepared to return to ministry with this congregation?

Pastor: I am, with the help of God.

All: We welcome you back as our pastor.

Pastor: It is a joy to be back in your midst... I return prepared to walk through this with you and I am dedicated to the continued and new ministries we will live into with God's guidance.

All: As we enter into this new beginning, we pledge to continue to care for one another and ground ourselves in God's love.

*HYMN

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant

NCH 539

*CARRY GOD'S LOVE

Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from [ONE LICENSE](#), License #732302-A.



Thank You for Worshiping with Us!

Your offerings are essential for the ongoing ministry of this congregation. Donations can be made using this QR code, online at www.uccbismarck.org/donate, mailed to the church, or placed in the offering box.

Sponsored in Honor of Memorial Day

“Ceremonies are important. But our gratitude has to be more than visits to the troops, and once-a-year Memorial Day ceremonies. We honor the dead best by treating the living well.” - Jennifer M. Granholm, Former U.S. Sec. of Energy 2021-2025.

Sponsored Anonymously

May 31, June 7, and June 28 are available. If you would like to sponsor a Sunday, contact the church at 223-2915 or visit uccbismarck.org/donate. Sponsorships are \$500.

Summer Service Opportunities

Contact the Church Office or Sign Up at the Bulletin Board

Feed hungry families at the largest daily meal in Bismack!



Bismarck UCC is sponsoring and serving the Banquet at the Dream Center on **June 3**. We need 10-14 volunteers to make it happen! The food preparation shift is from 1-4pm and the serving shift is from 4:30-7:30pm.

Offer a Warm Welcome at Capitol City Pride!

Bring your smile to the Bismarck UCC booth at Capitol City Pride on **June 13**. 2-hour shifts are available from 11am – 4pm. We'll have facepainting, bracelet making, and more at our UCC booth.

Have a blast with the kids at Vacation Bible School!



Be a teacher, a craft leader, a story time reader, or a snack expert at this year's True North Vacation Bible School from Aug. 9-12, 5:30-7:30pm at Lutheran Church of the Cross.

Party Plan the Highland Acres Block Party!

This is your official invitation to join the Block Party planning team! Mark your calendars for this year's party on **August 12** and check out the queen size quilt in the fellowship hall available at this year's Block Party quilt raffle. Contact the church office if you'd like to be a party planner.

THIS WEEK'S OPPORTUNITIES: May 24 - 31

- Sunday:** 11 AM Fellowship
12 Noon [Online](#) Fellowship
- Monday:** Church Office Closed
- Tuesday:** 10 AM NPC Clergy Zoom
1 PM Quilting/Knitting
- Wednesday:** 1:30 PM Edgewood Ministries
- Thursday:** 6 PM Bible Study (in-person & [online](#))
- Friday:** 9 AM Bible Study (in-person & [online](#))
- Sunday:** 10 AM Sunday Worship – Baptism & Grad Recognition
11 AM Fellowship
11 AM Christian Education (in-person & [online](#))
12 Noon [Online](#) Fellowship

Strengthen the Church - A special offering the National UCC

How can we follow the Spirit to bless emerging ministries in the United Church of Christ? Through the Strengthen the Church Offering you support the formation of new congregations and the renewal of existing ones, fund new programs for youth and young adults and sponsor leadership development in UCC churches across the United States. Thank you for your gifts!

It's Pentecost! Spread Good News

Sometimes sharing good news can be as easy as putting on a t-shirt. UCC T-Shirts are available for \$15 each. We have sizes from youth M to adult 3X in red and black. Available at the table in the narthex.

OUR PRAYER LIST

Louise Zuern, Family of Sharon Vanorny (Hannah's mother), Gayle Klopp, Ivan Sadlier (Autum's uncle), Lacy Peters (Dawn Archer's cousin), Jody Miller, Kayla Bruning, Bella Bruning, Gellsia (Oliver Gagner's daughter), Sandy Kirby (Autum's Sister), Matthew Nitschke, Nolan (Amanda Wilson's grandson), Tasha Hausauer (John Sauter's cousin), Hayes & Cooper (Brandon & Tasha Domagala's sons), Amanda Wilson, Frank Picard, Carla Christenson (Monica Klein's mother), Pam Crawford, Fredrick Krause (Kerri Kraft's grandfather), Colby (Janice & Gary Sather's son), Robyn Richter (Kyle Eisenbraun's aunt), Doretta Reule, Howard Etson, Camille Grothier, East Timor, Refugees

*Contact the church office to be added to our weekly prayer list.

On Pentecost They Gathered

Acts 2:1-24, 32-47

Jane Parker Huber, 1981; rev. 1993

1 On Pen - te - cost they gath - ered quite ear - ly in the day,
 2 The peo - ple all a - round them were star - tled and a - mazed
 3 God pours the Ho - ly Spir - it on all who would be - lieve,
 4 O Spir - it, sent from heav - en on that day long a - go,

a band of Christ's dis - ci - ples to wor - ship, sing, and pray.
 to un - der - stand their lan - guage, as God in Christ they praised.
 on wom - en, men, and chil - dren who would God's grace re - ceive.
 re - kin - dle faith a - mong us in all life's ebb and flow.

A might - y wind came blow - ing, filled all the swirl - ing air,
 What un - i - ver - sal mes - sage, what great good news was here?
 That Spir - it knows no lim - it, be - stow - ing life and power.
 O give us hearts to lis - ten and tongues a - flame with praise,

and tongues of fire a - glow - ing in - spired each per - son there.
 That Christ, once dead, is ris - en to van - quish all our fear.
 The church, formed and re - form - ing, re - sponds in ev - ery hour.
 so folk of ev - ery na - tion glad songs of joy shall raise.

Jane Parker Huber explained that she wrote this text in 1981 "to fill a gap in current hymnody" in that "many of the hymns

Tune: MUNICH 7.6.7.6.D. Neuvermohnten Gesangbuch, 1411, 1693

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

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Edwin Hatch, 1886; alt.

1 Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life a - new
2 Breathe on me, Breath of God, un - til my heart is pure,
3 Breathe on me, Breath of God, stir in me one de - sire:
4 Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I nev - er die,

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 3/4 time signature. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

That I may love the way you love and do what you would do.
Un - til with you I will one will, to do and to en - dure.
That ev - ery earth - ly part of me may glow with ho - ly fire.
But live with you the per - fect life of your e - ter - ni - ty.

The second system of music continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. It concludes with a double bar line. The treble staff ends with a quarter note G4, and the bass staff ends with a chord of G2, Bb2, and D3.

Between parish assignments in London, Edwin Hatch taught classics at Trinity College, Quebec, and lectured at Oxford. This hymn appeared in a leaflet "Between Doubt and Prayer"

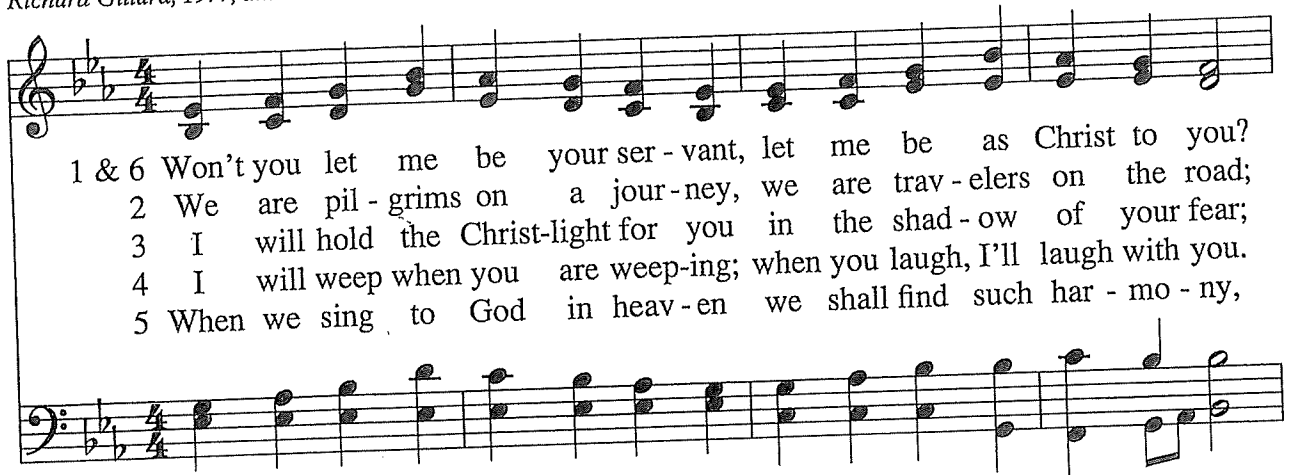
Tune: TRENTHAM S.M.
Robert Jackson, 1894

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?

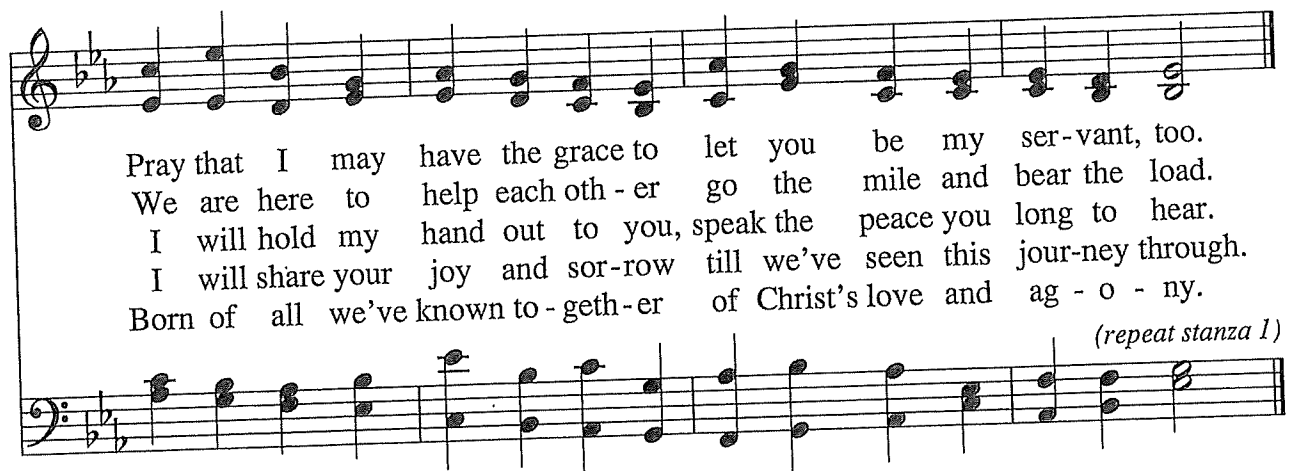
539

Rom. 12:9-18; Col. 1:24-29

Richard Gillard, 1977; alt.



1 & 6 Won't you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as Christ to you?
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - elers on the road;
3 I will hold the Christ - light for you in the shad - ow of your fear;
4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
5 When we sing to God in heav - en we shall find such har - mo - ny,



Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my ser - vant, too.
We are here to help each oth - er go the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
I will share your joy and sor - row till we've seen this jour - ney through.
Born of all we've known to - geth - er of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.
(repeat stanza 1)

Richard Gillard was born in England and later made his home in New Zealand. Largely self-taught, Gillard has described his musical style as "folk." This is the best known of his many songs in the United States.

Tune: SERVANT SONG 8.7.8.7.
Richard Gillard, 1977
Arr. Betty Carr Pulkingham, 1977; adapt.