



First United Methodist Church of Hanford

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



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Sunday 31st May 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Holy God, thank you for sending your Spirit, the Spirit of the risen Christ, from heaven. Help us to be like the early disciples, praying patiently as we wait for your guidance and power. Fill our hearts and minds with your gifts of faith, hope, and love. May our conversations with people of every language and culture around us witness to your grace and mercy. We dedicate ourselves and our offerings to your good purposes in the world through our church's mission by the power of your Spirit. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. (Acts 2:1-21)

Song: "Holy Spirit Rain Down"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnwauhAE7SA>

Holy Spirit, rain down, rain down
 Oh, Comforter and Friend
 How we need Your touch again
 Holy Spirit, rain down, rain down

**Let Your power fall
 Let Your voice be heard
 Come and change our hearts
 As we stand on Your word
 Holy Spirit, rain down**

No eye has seen, no ear has heard
 No mind can know what God has in store
 So open up Heaven, open it wide
 Over Your church and over our lives

Hillsong Worship

Let us pray together

Gracious God, in all places and at all times you are loving, generous, kind and compassionate. From the beginning of time, your Spirit has hovered on the surface of the deep and in that Spirit you have formed us; cherished and valued us. Let this be my song of praise; I love because you first loved me.

Generous God, give me a heart of gratitude for all those things that speak of your love. For friends and family, for the gifts of your creation, and for all the places I have witnessed something of heaven. *(we call to mind those things for which we are grateful this week)* Amen.

Living and loving Lord, have mercy on me. Pardon and deliver me from all my sins, strengthen and renew me for your service, that I might live and work to your

praise and glory, and the coming of your Kingdom on earth. Amen.

Christ tells us that we are saved not condemned by God. God is love; we are forgiven, and forgiven to the full. Amen.

Today's Reading from the Acts of the Apostles Acts 2:1-21

Today's Gospel Reading: John 20:19-23

Time to Reflect

Both our Pentecost reading from Acts and our Gospel are stories from the life of the early Church.

The reading from John reminds us that this was a time of fear and uncertainty for the disciples, who had to lock their doors in fright. In the midst of this, Christ appears to them and gives them the gift of the Holy Spirit, offering them His peace. In our own time of being shut away, and of living in fear and uncertainty, we are invited to know that Christ appears in the midst of us as well, saying "peace be with you."

Our Acts reading is full of celebration and excitement and perhaps those are alien emotions for us at this time. Pentecost is considered to be the birth of the Church. It might feel like a cruel celebration when we can't be in our church buildings. But at its core, the reading reminds us that God's Kingdom is radically inclusive; those from all nations are able to hear the Good News, and all who call on the name of Lord will be saved. Let us remind ourselves that the Church is alive and blossoming in our hearts, even when we can't meet; the message of Pentecost is still as true as it ever was. Our lives may look different to their normal pattern but

we are still part of God's people, welcomed into God's love.

God's peace and Good News are still with us. Wherever we are, we are included. Take a time to sit quietly and receive God's gifts.

A time of prayer

Holy and living God, In you "we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:28) In you we find our shelter and strength, In you our hearts are being filled with joy each morning, In you we sing praises with a new song, In you we trust that your promises are the way. Like those disciples in Acts 1 experiencing the time in between, Witnessing Ascension of Jesus Christ and awaiting the descent of the Holy Spirit, A time in between staring into heaven and staying in one place.

During our time in between, We wait with hope for you are the source of every hope, We wait with patience for your timing is always perfect, We wait with prayer for you are listening intently, We wait with praise for you take all our anxieties as we cast them on you.

During this time, we pray especially for... Those who are graduates with uncertainty hindering their future, Those who lost their jobs and are finding ways to meet their financial needs, Those who lost their loved ones, and their funeral services are limited or postponed, Those who are fighting against addiction and are unable to meet with their recovery groups, Those who feel fear as hate crimes and incidents arise.

During this time, O God, Enter into our sorrows, worries, addictions, financial burdens, fears, and

injustices, Fill us with your grace, hope, and joy abundantly, Turn each home into a place of peace, unity, and love for each other, Renew our hearts and minds to seek the knowledge of your mercy and love, Help our souls to be united in incessant prayer.

Let us receive this prayer of Apostle Paul: "I ask—ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing [God] personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is [God] is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life [God] has for [you], oh, the utter extravagance of [God's] work in us who trust [the Lord]—endless energy, boundless strength!" Let it be so. Amen.

By Rev. Taesung Kang

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: "ON EAGLE'S WINGS"

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,
who abide in His shadow for life,
say to the Lord: "My refuge, my rock in
whom I trust!"

**And He will raise you up on eagles'
wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of His hand.**

The snare of the fowler will never capture
you,
and famine will bring you no fear:
under His wings your refuge,
His faithfulness your shield.

**And He will raise you up on eagles'
wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of His hand.**

You need not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day;
though thousands fall about you,
near you it shall not come.

**And He will raise you up on eagles'
wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of His hand.**

For to His angels He's given a command
to guard you in all of your ways;
upon their hands they will bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.

**And He will raise you up on eagles'
wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of His hand.**

Michael Joncas

A prayer of blessing

Holy God, guard me and guide me and
hide me in your heart. Bless me and all
those made in your image in the name of
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
now and forever. Amen.

Based on Liturgy by Jessica Dalton
Adaptation by Rev. Pablo Rovere
and Cat Barclay

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Acts 2:1-21

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.'

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."

John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'