

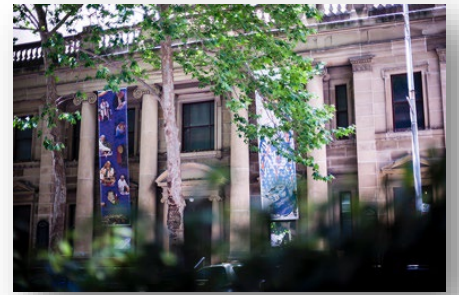
# Pitt Street Uniting Church

*A Congregation of the Uniting Church in  
Australia*

*Founded 1833*

## Sunday Gathering

24 May 2026



## *Pentecost Sunday*





## **Welcome to Pitt Street Uniting Church**

This is a place of welcome for all people regardless of race, sex, creed, age, cultural backgrounds, sexuality, gender identity or intersex status.

Wherever you are on your journey, where you have come from and wherever you are going to, whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here.

All we ask for is mutual respect.

Please join in the congregational responses printed in **bold**.

We will sing hymns without announcement. Stand if you are able. but feel free to remain seated if that is more comfortable

## **MUSICAL PRELUDE**

*A gong sounds – centring prayer/meditation.*

*Please stand as you are able*

## **We gather as the people of God**

### **GATHERING**

The celebration of Pentecost beckons us to keep breathing. It challenges us to keep ourselves open to the Spirit who seeks us. The Spirit that, in the beginning, brooded over the chaos and brought forth creation;

the Spirit that drenched the community with fire and breath on the day of Pentecost.

The same Spirit that breathes within us and among us. At this very moment and always.

Let us celebrate life in the presence we name God.

Let us join in singing the great traditional Pentecost hymn, a hymn that reaches back into the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

*Please stand as you are able.*

Come down, O Love divine,  
seek now this soul of mine,  
and visit it with your own  
ardour glowing;  
O Comforter, draw near,  
within my heart appear  
and kindle it, your holy flame  
bestowing.

There let it freely burn,  
till earthly passions turn  
to dust and ashes, in its heat  
consuming;  
and let your glorious light  
shine ever on my sight  
and clothe me round, the while  
my path illuming.

Let holy charity  
my outer garment be,  
and lowliness become my inner clothing:  
true lowliness of heart,  
which takes the humbler part  
and for its own shortcomings weeps  
with loathing.

And so the yearning strong  
with which the soul will long  
shall far outpass the power of human  
telling;  
for none can guess its grace  
till we become the place  
in which the Holy Spirit makes his  
dwelling.

*Please be seated.*

## COLLECT FOR PENTECOST

Spirit of truth  
whom the world can never grasp,  
touch our hearts  
with the shock of your coming;  
fill us with desire  
for your disturbing peace;  
and fire us with longing  
to speak your uncontainable word  
through Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

## LIGHTING OF PENTECOST CANDLES

*Liturgist*

We light candles in recognition of  
the many colours and forms of the Spirit  
at work in our world  
and in our own lives –  
her dancing, moving,  
struggling, risk taking, challenging  
presence among us.

*Reader 1*

The Spirit of faithfulness  
in the gift of constancy, courage and care,  
a blessing  
binding us one to another.

*Reader 2*

The Spirit of creativity and imagination  
in the gift of story-telling,  
of art and music,  
dance, corroboree and poetry,  
enabling us to discern our own giftedness  
and bringing us together in delight  
and wonder.

*A candle is lit.*

*Reader 1*

The Spirit of hope  
in the passion for justice,  
energising and focusing  
our work to bring about change,  
renewing our commitment  
to build a future for everyone,  
especially when the challenge seems overwhelming.

*A candle is lit.*

*Reader 2*

The Spirit of freedom  
reminds us of all who have gone before,  
who gave everything  
in order to secure freedom for others,  
freedom from oppression and from fear,  
and the freedom to stretch our minds  
and our hearts.

*A candle is lit.*

*Reader 1*

The Spirit of joy, of generous and embracing laughter,  
that never demeans or excludes;  
of whimsy and humour,  
that lifts our hearts  
and strengthens us in dark and bitter times.

*A candle is lit.*

*Reader 2*

The Spirit of love  
is the gift of God to the Church  
in every age,  
and a gift for each of us,  
companion upon the way,  
resources for our own journey.

*A candle is lit.*

**We experience the many coloured Spirit of God  
in our midst,  
daring us to be fully alive,  
daring us to love,  
daring us to celebrate  
and filling us with gratitude and wonder.**

*Please stand as you are able.*

**HYMN**

Loving Spirit, loving Spirit

TiS 417

Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,  
you have chosen me to be –  
you have drawn me to your wonder,  
you have set your sign on me.

Like a mother you enfold me,  
hold my life within your own,  
feed me with your very body,  
form me of your flesh and bone.

Like a father you protect me,  
teach me the discerning eye,  
hoist me up upon your shoulder,  
let me see the world from high.

Friend and lover, in your closeness  
I am known and held and blessed:  
in your promise is my comfort,  
in your presence I may rest.

Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,  
you have chosen me to be –  
you have drawn me to your wonder,  
you have set your sign on me.

*Please be seated.*

## **WELCOME**

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY**

As we gather, we acknowledge the original custodians of this place, the Gadigal of the Eora nation, their elders past and present.

We grieve the unjust loss of their land, taken from them without consent or compensation.

From their beginnings, the Creator Spirit has dwelt with the First Peoples of this ancient land.

**We honour the Gadigal of the Eora nation, and offer respect as we gather this day.**

### **PRAYER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Come Holy Spirit, breathe down upon our troubled world,  
Shake the tired foundations of our crumbling institutions,  
Break the rules that keep you out of all our sacred spaces.  
And from the dust and rubble, gather up the seedlings of a new creation.

Come Holy Spirit, inflame once more the dying embers of our weariness,  
Shake us out of our complacency,  
Whisper our names once more,  
And scatter your gifts of grace with wild abandon.  
Break open the prisons of our inner being  
And let your raging justice be our sign of liberty.

Come Holy Spirit, and lead us to places we would rather not go;  
Expand the horizons of our limited imaginations.  
Awaken in our souls dangerous dreams for a new tomorrow,  
And rekindle in our hearts the fire of prophetic enthusiasm.

Come Holy Spirit, whose justice outwits international conspiracy;  
Whose light outshines spiritual bigotry,  
Whose peace can overcome the destructive potential of warfare,  
Whose promise invigorates our every effort  
To create a new heaven and a new earth,  
Now and forever. **Amen.**

*Remain seated to sing.*

## SUNG RESPONSE

Words and Music: Carolyn McDade  
sung twice

Spirit of Life,  
come unto me.  
Sing in my heart  
all the stirrings of compassion.

Blow in the wind,  
rise in the sea,  
move in the hand,  
giving life the shape of justice.

Roots hold me close,  
wings set me free;  
Spirit of Life,  
come to me,  
come to me.

6 Spir - it of Life, come un - to me. Sing in my  
10 heart all the stir - rings of com - pas - sion. Blow in the  
15 wind, rise in the sea, move on the land, giv - ing  
20 life the shape of jus - tice. Roots hold me close, wings set me  
free, Spir - it of Life, come to me, come to me.

## JESUS' PRAYER

*Remembering Jesus whose story shapes our stories, let us pray in hope for a new day and a new way of living.*

**God, you are life for us,  
holy be your name.  
Your new day come, your will be done,  
on earth as in your vision.  
Give us this day our bread for the morrow;  
and forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Strengthen us in the time of test,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the power and the splendour and fulfilment  
are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## PASSING THE PEACE

May the peace of God and God's abiding presence be with you!  
**And also with you!**

*You are invited to greet those around you,  
sharing the peace.*

## **We listen for God's Word**

### FOR WISDOM FOUND IN TEXTS

Listen for words of faith in the Acts of the Apostles Acts 2:1-21

For the witness of the early church,  
**Thanks be to God!**

Listen for words of faith in the Gospel of John 20:19-23

For the stories of Jesus and his friends,  
**Thanks be to God!**

*Please stand to sing.*

## RESPONSE

TiS 720  
sung twice

Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!  
Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!  
Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!  
hallelujah! Halle-lu-jah!

*Please be seated.*

Listen for words of wisdom in our time: A Blessing from Jan Richardson "What the Fire Gives".

For the word of God in scripture and story,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us.

**We give thanks.**

## A CONTEMPORARY REFLECTION

Rev Dr Rob McFarlane

*Please stand as you are able.*

## **We respond to God's love**

### HYMN

Words and music: Jim Manley

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness,  
calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.*

You moved on the waters, You called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
and over the eons you called to each thing  
awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.

You swept through the desert, You stung with the sand,  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
and when they were blinded with their idols and lies,  
then You spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness,  
calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.*

You sang in a stable, You cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence, when the whole world was still;  
and down in the city, You called once again,  
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

You call from tomorrow, You break ancient schemes.  
From the bondage of sorrow, the captives dream dreams;  
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions, your people arise.

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness,  
calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.*

*Please be seated.*

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Community-creating God,  
at Pentecost we remember  
that a group of fearful women and men  
gathered in Jerusalem  
after the resurrection.  
Your Spirit came upon them,  
changing them from a defeated band  
into a confident, empowered community open to you.

Spirit of God,  
as you inspired those first bewildered Christians  
with enthusiasm for Jesus' way,  
so guide us who are part of your perpetual Pentecost  
to speak to real needs  
and be an authentic voice for the voiceless.

And now let us pray for the earth and its people  
for particular people and places,  
as we seek the refreshing gift of God's spirit.

*Please offer your prayers in silence  
or, if online, use the chat facility on Zoom, if you choose.*

Holy Spirit, God in and with us,  
Empower us to be a community  
where people find hope and new life.  
Enable us to be a Pentecost people  
through the compassion which spills out from our faith  
and the way our lives reflect the way of Jesus.  
**Amen.**

## **OFFERING AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

*Please stand, as you are able, as the offering is carried  
forward.*

**Creative Spirit,  
as we bring our gifts of hand and heart,  
inspire us to bring to life your vision of a church where  
everyone has a place to stand  
a society where everyone is valued and understood  
where the gifts of the Spirit bud and flower  
and bear the Spirit's fruit.  
Amen.**

*We give thanks for the gifts of food for Wayside Chapel and  
money brought to the table.*

# We go out to the world God loves

**HYMN**

Great God, your Spirit like the wind

TiS 416

Great God your Spirit like the wind  
unseen but shaking things we see  
will never leave us undisturbed  
fulfil our dreams or set us free  
until we turn from faithless fear  
and prove the promise of your grace  
in justice, peace and daily bread  
with joy for all the human race.

Lord shake us with the force of love  
to rouse us from our dreadful sleep  
remove our hearts of stone and give  
new hearts of flesh to break and weep  
for all your children in distress  
and dying for the wealth we keep  
help us prevent while we have time  
the blighted harvest greed must reap.

And then in your compassion give  
Your Spirit like the gentle rain  
creating fertile ground from which  
Your peace and justice spring like grain  
Until your love is satisfied  
with all creation freed from pain  
and all your children live to praise  
Your will fulfilled your presence plain.

## SENDING OUT

When the tomb looms large before our eyes,  
let us remember who we are:

We are the children of the resurrection—

**We are held in life.**

the painters of the rainbows—

**inspired by diverse patterns of colour and life in creation**

the breakers of loaves and fishes—

**nourished by faith, moved to share life.**

the raisers of the dead—

**the power of death will not have the final word.**

We are the people of Pentecost—

**the spirit of life and love and peace and justice is in us!**

## BLESSING

Go in peace  
and may the Parenting and Befriending,  
Comforting and Recreating Spirit be with you  
inspiring in you the power and promise of resurrection  
today and always...

**Amen.**

## SUNG AMEN

African American Spiritual Amen

*Please be seated.*

## COMMUNITY GREETING

Welcoming newcomers and visitors

## RECESSIONAL SONG

TiS 421

*Where the Spirit is there is freedom  
Where the Spirit is there is life!*

Not by the world can our freedom be nourished  
Not by our things, only by Spirit  
Practice my children to live by the Spirit  
Drop all your masks, take freedom's clothing

Heaven on earth, here we live free to  
love and to share, carried by joy  
Practice my children to live by the Spirit  
Daring today to taste God's future

Wounds will be healed, eyes will be opened  
Imagining God, reflecting Jesus  
Practice my children to live by the Spirit  
Heaven is here, time made eternal.

*Those attending onsite are warmly invited to stay for  
morning tea.*

*Those attending on Zoom are warmly invited to stay online  
for community time.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

\*Christa is sometimes used in our liturgies to convey that the risen Christ is not defined or determined by gender.

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The Lighting Candles litany come from the Pitt Street Uniting Church service Pentecost 2012, with minor amendments

Gathering Words written by Jan Richardson sourced at

<http://paintedprayerbook.com/2008/05/05/pentecost-fire-and-breath/#.U46eWXKSyvQ>

The Collect for Pentecost, Janet Morley, *All Desires Known*, p.32

The Contemporary Reading "What the Fire Gives" from *Circle of Grace* by Jan Richardson, p.174-5, Wanton Gospeller Press, Orlando Florida, USA, 2015.

The prayer of the Holy Spirit was written by Dairmuid O'Murchu sourced at <http://www.tonyercolano.com/Pentecost%202008.pdf>  
Carolyn McDade, 'Spirit of Life' in *Singing the Living Tradition*, Unitarian Universalist Association (USA), 1994.

***BANK DETAILS FOR ELECTRONIC OFFERING***

*Account name: Giving Direct*

*BSB: 634-634. Account: 100025916*

*Reference: your name*

*Donation Tap Point is available at the back of the Church.  
Contact the Church Office if you would like information about  
planned giving.*



**Autumn Quarterly Luncheon  
Sunday 31 May**

The next Quarterly Luncheon will be held after our worship service on Sunday 31 May. Bring a plate to share and join in a time of community and sharing.

# PRECARIOUS



An exhibition of drawings  
by Simon Harris

Clara St Gallery, 1a Clara St, Erskineville, NSW  
Opening 4.00-6.00 pm, 23 May. Until 19 June