

PENTECOST SUNDAY

May 24, 2026

Acts 2:1-21

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.

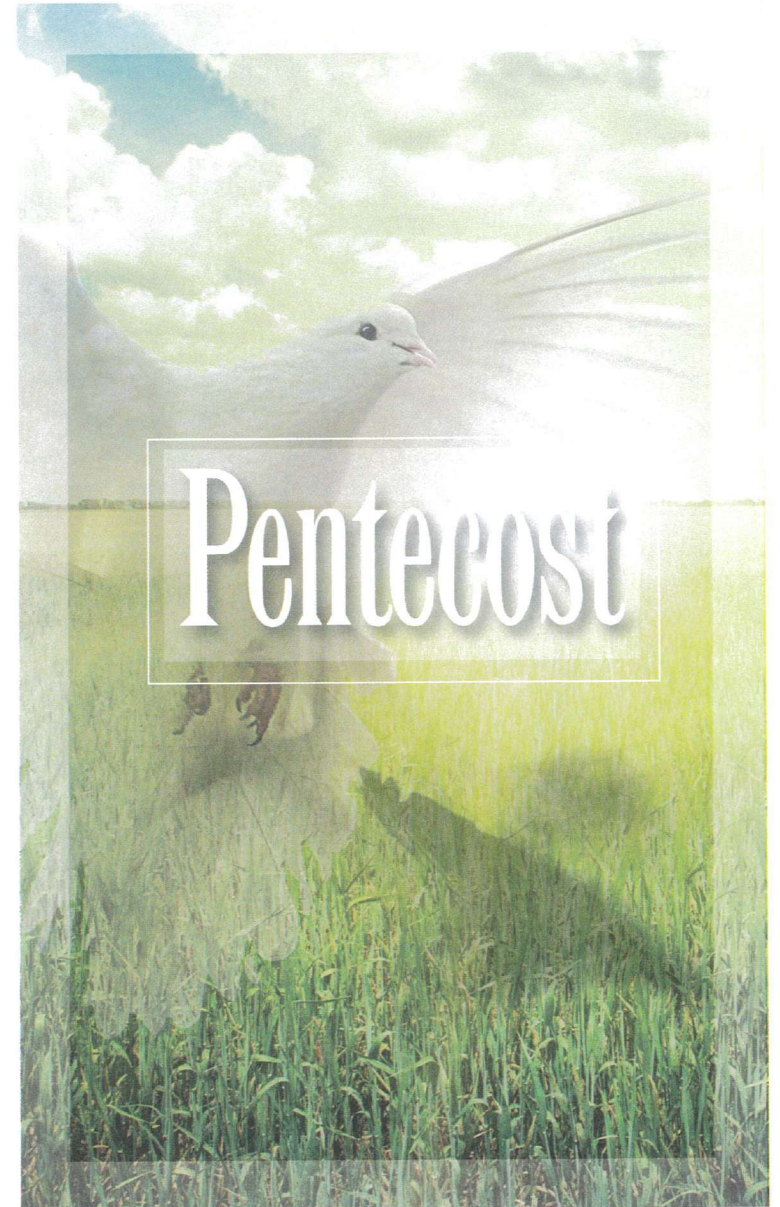
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



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St. John's United Church of Christ
Pentecost Sunday
 May 24, 2025



* Please stand if it is comfortable to do so.

Bold print is everyone in unison

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER (be seated)

PRELUDE

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP (responsively)

On this day of Pentecost, as we worship,

May God pour out the Holy Spirit upon us.

May the power and promise of that day long ago,

Renew us and our church on this Pentecost day.

:In our worship, may our hearts be set afire with enthusiasm,

And may our lives glow with energy and courage as we live the good news of new life.

* **OPENING HYMN** *On Pentecost They Gathered* #237

* **WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)

On Pentecost Day long ago, your great Spirit, O God, came upon the saints in Jerusalem. May your Spirit come upon us and this community of faith here this day. We welcome the flame and light of your Spirit here in this place today. Renew us with an energized faith and affirm us as your people here to worship and celebrate with strength, courage and hope in Christ. Amen.

* **RESPONSE** *Spirit of the Living God* #259

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (children come forward) *Jesus Loves Me*

OFFERING INVITATION**

God is so good and we are richly blessed. Let us give back to God with gratitude and thanksgiving.

* **DOXOLOGY**

#46

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Gracious God, Jesus promised the disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, a gift that remains as powerful and transformative today as it was on the first Pentecost. With generous and thankful hearts, we offer our gifts to you — our time, treasure and talent, but most of all, our hearts. Use us and these offerings for your purposes and glory. Amen.

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Congregational Response: *Spirit of God, Unseen as the Wind*

SCRIPTURE:

Old Testament: Psalm 104: 24-34

New Testament: Acts 2:1-8, 14-34

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God**

MESSAGE

Universal Charger

* **CLOSING HYMN** *Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song* #245

* **BLESSING** (responsively)

May the winds of the Spirit set your feet to dancing. May the fire of Pentecost fill you with holy energy.

May the mighty surge of God's power turn our world upside down. Amen.

* **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *Go In Peace* #445

* **POSTLUDE**

** You may place your offering in the plate at the back of the sanctuary or online at myucc.org and clicking on the *contribute* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.

Announcements

NURSERY SERVICES: Currently we do not have a nursery attendant, but small children are welcome (under parental supervision) to quietly utilize the *prayerground* at the back of the sanctuary. The nursery is available if needed and an usher can take you there and turn on the speakers so you can hear the service.

UNITED STATES OF KINDNESS is a movement to complete 250 acts of kindness in celebration of the 250th birthday of the United States. We encourage everyone to perform one act of kindness per day for the rest of the year.

MAY FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT is May 31st featuring **Babe** at 5:00 p.m. A light supper will be served. *Babe is a little pig who doesn't quite know his place in the world. With a bunch of odd friends, like Ferdinand the duck who thinks he is a rooster and Fly, the sheep dog he calls Mom, he realizes that he has the makings to become the greatest sheep pig of all time, and Farmer Hoggett knows it. With Fly's help he learns that a pig can be anything that he wants to be.*

CALLING ALL CONFIRMANDS: If you have a young person entering 7th or 8th grade (or above) who is ready for Confirmation, please contact Pastor Debbie Jo ASAP. We would like to get the class organized and some of the requirements completed over the summer. Regular classes will begin in the fall with Confirmation taking place on May 2, 2027.

Thank You!! A “BIG” thank you for the wonderful celebration on Sunday, May 17th. A special thank you for all the words of appreciation and the gifts we received, and of course the delicious meal. I look forward to seeing you in church, only from the pew side. Becky.

GALAXY: Launching Kids on a Mission of God’s Love VBS will take place on June 29-July 2 from 5:30-7:30 each night. A light supper will be served and Pastor will lead a Bible Study for adults during the event. Watch for more announcements and details.

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT UPDATE: To date, we have doubled our enrollment for next year and currently have 17 students registered. We continue to add more students and hope to have another 9-10 before the new school year begins in August. Share a flyer with someone you know who has a 3 or 4 year old.

NEW MEMBERS will be welcomed into full church membership in late June or early July. If you would like to formally unite with the congregation, please see Pastor Debbie Jo.

Vacation Bible School will be June 29—July 2, from 5:30—7:00pm

NOTICE IS GIVEN OF A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING following worship on June 14th for two items of business: 1. To decide which Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to covenant with now that the Wabash Valley Association has been dissolved and 2. Hear an update on Preschool Enrollment and possible shortfall for the 2026-27 academic year. More details will be sent to each member in the coming week as part of our two-week notification of a called meeting.

CHURCH PARADE FLOAT: Will and the youth will be developing a float for the July 4th city parade promoting our various missions to the community. It will be built on July 2nd & 3rd if you would like to help. Please see Will for details.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ. We will collect the offering on June 7th.

DINNER & CONVERSATION: This week’s dinner will be at 6:00 pm on Dogwood Thursday night. Please sign the list in the back of the sanctuary so we can reserve a large enough table.

CHURCH OFFICE will be closed on May 25th for Memorial Day.

Prayers Posts

We ask for continuing prayer requests for: Tom Nowaskie, Marilyn Houchins, Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece), John Mineo, Cindi Gilmore, Kim Godare’s daughter Mallory, Jeremy Carpenter, Dale Linneweber, and Chris Sanders.

Shut-in Addresses:

Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Leona Conway - Aperia Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Marge Beamon - The Villages at Oak Ridge, Room 303, 1694 Troy Road, Washington, IN 47501

At Home:

Gary Meyer
Mike Lankford

This Week in the Life of St. John's

Sunday, May 24

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship 10:30am
Pentecost Sunday

Monday, May 25

BABE Store 12-5:30pm

Office Closed

Tuesday, May 26

Wednesday, May 27

Laundry Love 6-8pm

Thursday, May 28

Dinner & Conversation
Dogwood—6pm

Friday, May 29

Pastors Day Off



Staff and Volunteers

Pastor:	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Secretary	Kim Butler
Church Board President:	Saundra Lange
Organist:	DeEtta Welte
Pianist:	
Children & Family Ministry Coordinator:	Will Meyer
Head Usher:	Kristi Mattingly
Projection:	Saundra Lange
Sound:	Brian Fillingim
Liturgist:	Larry Marchino

Looking Ahead In May 2026

Sunday, May 31

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship 10:30am

Monday, June 01

BABE Store 12-5:30pm
Evang/Membership @ 6:30pm

Tuesday, June 02

Girl Scouts 2 4:30-6:30pm

Wednesday, June 03

Thursday, June 04

Dinner & Conversation
CoCo's—6pm

Friday, June 05

Pastors Day Off
Phoebe's Mission 4:30-6pm



Did You Know?

St. John's Sunday Morning Worship Services are streamed **LIVE** on our church's Facebook page, "**St. John's United Church of Christ Vincennes.**"

Or, you can watch the Worship Service at your convenience by going on the church website, "**myucc.org**" and clicking on "Worship Service" for a particular date.

You can also download a copy of each monthly **church newsletter** from our church website to keep up with all the activities.