

Celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit

How the Church marks Pentecost

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The Day of Pentecost marks fifty days since Easter Day and brings the Easter season to an end. It is a major feast of the Church's year when Christians recall how God's Holy Spirit was given to the disciples after Jesus's ascension, empowering them to begin the work of making disciples of all nations.

Stained glass window
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Pentecost (which comes from the Greek word for 'fiftieth') has its roots in the Jewish Feast of Weeks.

Jesus had promised his followers that, although they would not see him after his Ascension, they would receive the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire them.

The Acts of the Apostles describes how the crowds gathered in Jerusalem – representing many nationalities and speaking many languages – were able to hear the disciples preaching in their own language.

'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.'

Acts 2, Chapter 2

Red altar cloth with cathedral and cross stitched on it
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The colour most often associated with Pentecost is red, representing the tongues of fire which the Acts of the Apostles describes appearing above the heads of the disciples as a sign that they had received the Holy Spirit.

With its focus on God's Spirit being poured out on believers, Pentecost is one of the most popular days for baptisms and confirmations in the Church's year.



Bishop in cathedral baptises older lady in font

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Adult baptism

[Find out more about getting baptized as an adult or teenager](#)



Confirmations

[Being confirmed is an important part of a lifetime journey of faith](#)

A prayer from the Confirmation Service

Defend, O Lord, these your servants with your heavenly grace,
that they may continue yours for ever,
and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more
until they come to your everlasting kingdom.

Amen.

Pentecost is also referred to as Whit Sunday (or Whitsun), especially in the north west, where traditional parades called Whit Walks take place, often featuring brass bands.



Whit walk manchester diocese

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Photos from Manchester Diocese

Thy Kingdom Come

Many churches set aside the ten days between Ascension and Pentecost as a special time of prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thy Kingdom Come – the global wave of prayer established in 2016 following an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York – has seen millions of Christians across denominations and across the world joining together to pray for more people to come to know Jesus.

In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities
People taking part in service outside cathedral, watching singer on large screen

Archbishop Justin Welby

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Diocese of Guildford

Thy Kingdom Come

Join the global wave of prayer

[Learn more](#)

Ascension

Ascension is a day which marks the ascension of the risen Christ into heaven, forty days after Easter.

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