

Continuing the Pentecost Vision
Cross-Cultural/Intercultural Church Sunday

(Trinity Sunday)

May 22, 2016

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The Merry Month of May! We welcome the end of winter (at least for most of us) and we celebrate God's great re-creation. During the month of May, the Church celebrates the coming of the New Spirit on Pentecost and the Birthday of the Church on Sunday on May 15--do you feel the Breath of God as you enjoy the beauty in the great outdoors!



CELEBRATING PENTECOST

Cross-Cultural/Intercultural Sunday, May 22, follows Pentecost Sunday with a great invitation to the Welcome Table of God's Great Feast. We have received God's Spirit in our time of fear just as the Disciples of the Living Christ did in their time. The beloved Teacher, Jesus, has ascended. They are hiding in the upper room wondering what to do next and fearful of arrest by the same Roman authorities that arrested and killed their leader. What will be their fate?



During this next 50 days after the Passover, the **Jewish Festival of Shavuot**, Festival of Weeks is celebrated. This festival is the day to bring the first fruits of the harvest to Jerusalem (Leviticus 23:15-21). Grapes, barley, pomegranates and figs were gathered and tied with a ribbon around the branch as a sign of God's rich blessings of a good harvest. The crowds gather holding these branches up and parade into Jerusalem with music, songs and dancing. Great prayers of thanks are lifted up the God, who has watched over the family and crops during the past year.



During Shavuot, the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses is also acknowledged with the blowing of the Shofar, the ram's horn. The sound of the Shofar represents the **transformation** from a slave people into the nation named Israel. Booths of the harvest were raised and decorated like an arbor with fruits, greenery and flowers. Families camped out in Jerusalem for the week.



Read again at The Books of **Acts 1 and 2** to remind yourself what miracles also took place for the Disciples during this celebration. God's Spirit came upon everyone gathered and this Spirit created a new church from the old covenant with Israel.

Our celebration of Cross-cultural and Intercultural Sunday continues this Great Day of the Birth Day of the new church---the one we now all belong to. This new church --or the New Way as it was called--begins a new chapter in spreading the Good News that God invites all peoples into the festival of the Welcome Table. We are invited to bring our best and first gifts to share with our church and the world. As the prophet Joel reminds us in Acts 2: the Spirit of God will be poured out on all: sons and daughters, old men and women, those in bondage and every one will be saved!



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CONTINUING THE CELEBRATION

Where to begin in continuing the celebration of Pentecost with this Cross-cultural/Intercultural Sunday on May 22?

Start with the person sitting next to you as you worship. What is this person's heritage? Where do their people come from? Are there particular celebrations or traditions they still have at home? Has this person traveled to a different country? What did they see and learn? Did they bring back any special gifts—dress, ornaments, etc? Every church has different folks whose families may have traveled from another country. We all have a heritage we are proud of. If not, why not?

Begin where you live

Have an Intercultural celebration in church:

- ✦ Ask folks to **wear and/or bring memories from their travels**: clothes (wear them), ornaments, pictures to share.
- ✦ If your church or community has folks from another heritage or an **Immigrant Fellowship** worships in your building, ask them to join with you for the day.



- ✦ There are many stories from our **First Nation people** (Native Americans) that inform our language---“The First Strawberries: A Cherokee Story” retold by Joseph Bruchac and pictures by Anna Vojtech. The story can be told with strawberries as a treat at the end—find this story and retell it in your own words! How do the characters learn the importance of being respectful to others?
- ✦ Host a ‘**Lemonade on the Lawn**’ party after worship today! Let folks in town see you enjoying yourselves with beautiful clothes and lively activities.

Join in others’ celebrations:

- ✦ Instead of asking that **Immigrant Fellowship** that worships in your building to join you, ask if you can **join them**, or find an Immigrant Fellowship that is established elsewhere in your Presbytery or community and ask if you could worship with them.
- ✦ Take notes of **spring festivals** in your community—get a group together from your church to attend.

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Ideas for the Educational Time for Children and Adults

Today is also Trinity Sunday.

- ✦ What is that? Traditionally, the church acknowledges the **mystery of the Triune God**: Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit. With the coming of the Holy Spirit, we are anointed as the new church. We have been launched into the world bearing witness to God’s Good News that we experience in the living Christ. Christ challenges us to live as the Children of God (Matthew 28:16-19). Look up the liturgical symbols for the Trinity--see if you recognize any of them (for example, the Shamrock 🍀).



- ✦ Studying the **sacrament of Baptism** is also a part of Trinity Sunday and an important way to remember we are God’s beloved. Baptism is one of the two sacraments of the Reformed church that visibly show that we are all Children of the Living God.



Class time with Children and Adults:

- ✦ Children and adults can have a delightful time together **cooking** simple foods from other cultures: teachers and other who like to cook can have recipes ready in the weeks before to hand out for families to bring specific items to make them at church. Bring pictures and/or information from the cultural which you are making a tasty dish. If you have restaurants around your area, go get some take-outs to taste and share.



- ✦ Art in class -- **fun** with kids and adults! Make fans using the symbols of the Holy Spirit or the Trinity. Or use the colors of Pentecost—Fire colors: red, orange, yellow, & gold to make flags (i.e. Tibetan Prayer Flags), windsocks, and paper flowers. Any of these can be used on windowsills of the



sanctuary and around the chancel area for decorations. Windsocks can adorn trees or poles (church signs) outside. Have the symbols of the Trinity ready for kids and adults to trace and color on cloth ‘flags’ or strips of paper, crape paper or cloth for streamers to wave. Also these same streamers can be used for the windsocks or decorations for windows in the sanctuary and/or the educational building windows. Sharpies are a great alternative to paint!

- ✦ The Sunday classes can be a part of a **parade** that gathers outside the sanctuary doors with their “cultural colors” and parade in the sanctuary during the opening Hymn.

Adults

- ✦ Adults may be interested in the **theology** of the Trinity. There are many helps with this through the PCUSA bookstore on line or the PCUSA worship and theology area (both of these are on the PCUSA web site); remember the book “Christian Doctrine” by Dr. Shirley Guthrie.



- ✦ Look up the list of [Calendar of Observances for 2016](#) on the Anti-Deformation League’s web site. The month of May has many **observances** and celebrations of other religions. Perhaps this is a good month to study the principals and values within the Jewish, Baha’i, Buddhist, and Christian religion: What is same and different? If you have representatives from these faith traditions in your city or town, invite them to be a part of the leadership in sharing their faith with your adult and youth group.



- ✦ There are a good many **books** that an adult study class can use to study the value of cross-cultural/intercultural living:

- *The Word at the Crossings: Living the Good News in a Multicontextual Community*, by Eric Law
- *Multicultural Manners: New rules of Etiquette for a Changing Society*, by Norine Dresser

- ✦ The Society of Friends Meeting (Quakers) have some good resources on their [AFSC](#) peace and justice site. Their [FGC](#) (Friends General Conference) site has a “Tool Box” that includes inclusion and racism resources.

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Worship – Enjoy!

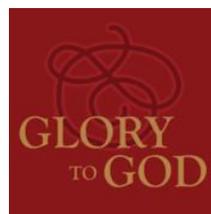
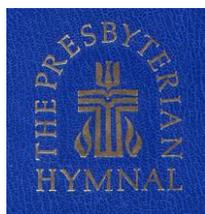
Words and liturgy

- ✦ If you are having folks with skills in **other languages** participate in worship leadership, make sure they rehearse their parts beforehand—helps everyone feel more comfortable in their leadership role. Looking up translations of scriptures in other languages is as close as your computer!! Look online for all the ways you could say “Come Holy Spirit” in many languages. If there are folks in your church or community that can help you with translation and/or pronunciation, this is a great way to make friends.
- ✦ There are many **worship helps** that have litanies for special Sundays including the PCUSA Worship Book and PUCSA.org/worship.



Song

- ✦ The ‘Gift of the Holy Spirit’ section in the new *Glory to God* hymnbook begins with hymn # 278 and goes through #294 (check p. 966 in the back of this hymnbook under Triune God for additional hymns) or in the blue *Presbyterian Hymnbook* #125 -140 (includes Trinity Sunday). Many of these **hymns** are familiar already. Challenge your congregation or choir to try a new hymn---there are many new simple hymns that can be sung with the choir as they become the worship leaders.
- ✦ Two hymns are “Spirit of the Living God’ (#320, blue *Hymnbook*, #288 in *Glory to God*) and Halle, Halle (#591 in *Glory to God*). Both of these hymns are delightfully done with **American Sign Language** hand signs---keep it simple. If you blessed to have a signer in your congregation ask that person to teach the signs and lead during the singing. Again, you can find [signs for words](#) on the internet. These hymns can be easily learned in the children’s classes or children’s choir with the hand signs. Then, the children can be worship leaders for these hymns in morning worship!
- ✦ If you have not looked through either the Blue PUCSA Hymnbook or the new *Glory to God*, please take time to find the many **hymns** available to us with **both English and another language** that represent the membership of the PCUSA!



Scripture: The [Lectionary Readings for May 22, 2016](#) include:

Proverbs 8:1-4,22-31

Psalms 8

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15



- ✦ There are many **uplifting verses** in these readings that can be used in Call to Worship; Litanies for unity and mutual respect; texts for Preaching; and reaffirmation of God's call for us to become children of the living God.
- ✦ **Additional Hymns** from the Glory to God Hymnbook: look in the back of hymnbooks to find the list of hymns that can be sung with specific scriptures. For example: #625 – “How Great Thou Art” is listed for Psalm 8:3. There are also many short hymns that can be used as coral responses, coral introits, or choral response before the benediction. For example, #595- “Holy, Holy, Holy---Santo, Santo, Santo” can be sung in both English and Spanish. [return to top](#)

MORE OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE MONTH OF MAY

World Day for Cultural Diversity For Dialogue and Development.

- ✦ Our PCUSA recognition of a Cross- Cultural/Intercultural day this Sunday is only one part of a weekend that includes the U.N.'s **World Day for [Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development](#)**.  This weekend is set aside to recognize cultural diversity as a source of innovation, exchange and creativity. The emphasis is to create ways of peace and mutual respect among all peoples and nations. Check out the UN and the [Anti-Defamation League](#) for additional ideas for your congregation and community.

May brings us many opportunities to study and learn more about our neighbors:

- ✦ May is [Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#). For information look on the internet under this title and information will be available. If you have folks of **Asian or Pacific Islander heritage**, ask them to help you plan for celebrations in your church, including leading worship and other activities. If you do not---look around your community to see what and who will be available to assist you in planning to highlight the many ways these neighbors have been a part of our nation's history.



✦ You may live near one of the **internment sites** where [Japanese families were interned during WWII](#). If so schedule a visit and tour with members of your congregation. You will find a map under the [National Park Service website](#).



✦ Another art idea is **Origami**, an art of paper folding usually associated with Japanese culture. Someone may know how to make origami art or you can find instruction in craft or school supply stores. There are simple origami doves to fold and hang in the sanctuary or around your building inside and out!



Additional Sunday celebrations in May:

- **May 1-7:** Older Adults Week
- **May 8:** Mother's Day
- **May 5:** Ascension of the Lord and National Day of Prayer and Holocaust Remembrance Day as well as Cinco De Mayo (held in Mexico to celebrate the defeat the French occupation forces in Mexico)
- **May 15:** Pentecost Sunday
- **May 30:** Memorial Day
- Oh, yes, graduations galore! The Merry Month of May!!

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WE ARE THE RAINBOW OF GOD'S GREAT AND GOOD CREATION!

Enjoy and find the challenge that Jesus gave us to 'go into all the world'. The world lives in our community, our church has sent many missionaries overseas, our circles grow wider, and so we continue in the [Great Ends of the Church](#) to be neighbors one and all!!



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