Staff Prayer Ritual in the week of Pentecost: OUTLINE of Ritual

We Gather:
- Welcome
- Ritual Greeting
- Sign of the Cross
- Lighting of the Candle
- Opening Prayer

We Listen:
- Scripture Reading
- Reflection

We Respond:
- Sequence of Pentecost
- Closing Prayer/Song

We Go Forth:
- Blessing
- Dismissal
- Sign of Peace

The Environment
Ideally, set out chairs in a circle – creating a space that will permit people to hear and share as they reflect on the Scripture. The large candle is placed near (or on) a small table in the centre of the circle. It is on this small table that the bible rests open.

You will need:

- a Leader of prayer; a Reader (who will read from the Bible); someone to organise/lead the music; someone to light the candle at the appropriate time in the ritual
- a Bible (open at the Reading: Acts 2:1-4) on a small table with a red cloth
- a large white candle and matches
- Handouts for each staff member - and a CD + player (if needed)
- full text of the ritual for the Leader
- The Leader to tell the group (before beginning) which side will be the “Right Side” and which side will be the “Left Side” (for praying the Sequence)
Staff Prayer Ritual in the week of Pentecost: Detail

We Gather
Welcome (in Leader’s own words)

Ritual Greeting
Leader: Blessed be Spirit of God, who breathes new life into the Church and is the source of all gifts and service, Bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Sign of the Cross
Leader: Let us now mark ourselves with the sign of God’s love, poured into our hearts through our baptism:

All: In the name of the Father .... (etc)

Lighting of the Candle
Leader: We light the Fire of this great Love and pray that our own hearts will catch its flame ...

One of the group lights the large candle in the centre of the prayer space. All watch silently as the flame begins to burn.

Opening Prayer
Leader: God deep within us, For fifty days we have basked in the mystery of your revealed love.

See us gathered here in prayer, open to receive the Spirit’s flame. May it come to rest in our hearts and disperse all divisions of word and tongue.

All: We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

We Listen
Leader: Let us open our ears and our hearts to the inspiration of the Spirit in the words of the Scripture:

Scripture Reading

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.

... PAUSE for a moment before the following reflection ...

Reflection on the Scripture
Leader: I invite you to look at the different languages represented in your handout. Each line is the first sentence of the Scripture Reading we just heard.
1. Den Hellige Ånd utgydes på pinsedagen

2. A, no ka taka mai te ra o te Petekoha, e noho tahi ana ratou katoa i te wahi kotahi.


4. 오순절날 이이미 이르다면 저 가다 같이한 곳에 모였던니

5. Siku ya Pentekoste ilipofika, waumini wote walikuwa wamekusanyika pamoja.

6. Et comme le jour de la Pentecôte s'accomplissait, ils étaient tous ensemble dans un même lieu.

Can you recognise any of these languages (Acts 2:1)?
Can you distinguish any particular words?

1 (Norwegian); 2 (Maori); 3 (Croatian); 4 (Korean); 5 (Swahili); 6 (French)

Now, think about the particular language of football, or cricket?
How does one learn this language?

What about the language of Church that we speak ...
✓ who speaks that language?
✓ who understands that language?

What do we need to do to make possible a single language
✓ of love
✓ of hope
✓ of truth and integrity
✓ of compassion
✓ of respect
that we can use in our classrooms and in our everyday communication?

We Respond
Leader: Let us pray in the old and poetic language of our Church’s early tradition:

The Sequence of Pentecost

Right Side: Holy Spirit, Lord of Light,
From the clear celestial height
Thy pure beaming radiance give.

Left Side: Come, thou Father of the poor,
Come with treasures which endure;
Come, thou Light of all that live!

R/S: Thou, of all consolers best,
Thou, the soul’s delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow;

L/S: Thou in toil art comfort sweet;
Pleasant coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.

R/S: Light immortal, light divine,
Visit thous these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill:

L/S: If thou take thy grace away,
Nothing pure in us will stay;
All our good is turned to ill.
R/S: Heal our wounds, our strength renew;  
   On our dryness pour thy dew;  
   Wash the stains of guilt away:

L/S: Bend the stubborn heart and will;  
   Melt the frozen, warm the chill;  
   Guide the steps that go astray.

R/S: Thou, on us who evermore  
   Thee confess and thee adore,  
   With thy sevenfold gifts descend:

L/S: Give us comfort when we die;  
   Give us life with thee on high;  
   Give us joys that never end.

Closing Prayer/Song: Send Down the Fire  
Marty Haugen

Send down the fire of your justice, Send down the rains of your love.  
Come send down the Spirit, breathe life in your people,  
and make us the people of God.

Call us to be your compassion. Teach us the song of your love.  
Give us hearts that sing, give us peace that rings,  
Make us ring with the song of your love.

Call us to learn of your mercy. Teach us the way of your peace.  
Give us hearts that feel, give us hands that heal,  
Make us strong in the way of your peace.

Call us to witness your kingdom. Give us the presence of Christ.  
May your holy light keep us shining bright,  
Even shine with the presence of Christ.

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We Go Forth  
Blessing  
Leader: The God of Fire and Enthusiasm  
   has enlightened our minds with wisdom and love in the Holy Spirit.  
   May God bless us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit forever.  
All: AMEN!

Leader: May that same fire which hovered over the disciples as tongues of flame  
   burn away any darkness from our hearts and make us shine in God’s pure light.  
All: AMEN!

Leader: The Spirit inspired speech in different tongues to proclaim one faith.  
   May our tongues find inspiration to speak always the language of love.  
All: AMEN!

Leader: May God bless us in the name of the Father,  
   + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
All: AMEN!

Dismissal  
Leader: Go forth in the Spirit of Christ ...  
All: Thanks be to God!

Sign of Peace  
Leader: Today we have caught fire in the Spirit of God’s Love.
Let us light up one another with a Sign of Peace ...