

## Module 14 - The Liturgical year and Repertoire III: Ascension/Pentecost/Ordinary Time

This module is the third that looks ahead at a part of the Christian Year with a view to preparation as musicians. Choosing music for these periods needs to be done well in advance if material is to be ready for rehearsal.

### The Liturgical Background

We are looking at the period from [Ascension Day](#) which occurs after the sixth Sunday of Easter, through Pentecost, Trinity Sunday and into the wilderness of Ordinary Time or Sundays after Trinity. There are twenty-two Sundays after Trinity taking us up to the Sunday in October called 'The Fourth Sunday before Advent'.

2008		
Ascension Day	May 1	(40 days after the resurrection)
Easter 7	May 4	
Pentecost	May 11	(50 days after the resurrection)
Trinity Sunday	May 18	

We have a flurry of activity at the beginning of May and then four months of Ordinary Time. This is when the structure of the week becomes important as a self-contained pattern that moves each week towards the Sunday Eucharist.

Why do these dates move every year?

CLICK [HERE](#) TO FIND OUT!

Click [HERE](#) to find out the dates for this year.

### Ascension

*You will guide me by your counsel, and afterwards receive me with glory.* – Psalm 73.24.

'It is generally agreed that the feast of the Ascension was not established as a distinctive feast until late in the third century, but clearly what was marked by that feast, that the Risen Christ was drawn into the very heart of God, was part of the Christian consciousness from earliest times, and the language of glory and exultation was used to express this central conviction.'

Celebrating the Easter Mystery, Irvine, p. 110.

During this period and into Pentecost, the church holds together the acts of resurrection, ascension and the commissioning of the apostles by the risen Christ. All work together to bring salvation to the whole of creation. The language of glory, used in the psalm text above which is associated with the feast of Ascension, is very much a part of this time and underpins our liturgical celebrations.

## Resources

[The Light of Life](#) (RSCM 2002), contains some very good examples of texts and music for the feast of the Ascension.

Father in heaven	Elena G. Maquiso, arr. Geoff Weaver. A metrical setting of words by D.T. Niles bring together the Father, Christ and Spirit. The music is 'Halad' and is an example of 'world music'
Forsaking Chariots of Fire	Grayston Ives with words by John Bell and Graham Maule. A difficult and extensive setting for SATB choir and organ which uses brilliant words and would repay the hard work required in preparation.
Mayenziwe	Traditional South African music to a sentence from the Lord's Prayer, 'Your will be done on earth, O Lord'. Can be sung in English. For SATB a cappella singers.
Christ Triumphant	The popular hymn by John Barnard with words by Michael Saward. 'Yours the glory and the crown, the high renown, th'eternal name!'. With optional descant. A must for Ascension!

## Pentecost

*Jesus said, 'stay together until you are clothed with power from on high'. Luke 24:49.*

On the day of Pentecost, God reveals the mystery of the Trinity by pouring upon the Apostles the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They are appointed as heralds of the faith, making them confessors and teachers of true divine knowledge. The unity of the Trinity is given to the Church and preached through the Apostles, now endowed and animated with the gift of wisdom.

There is much to unpack at this time. We are still drawing on the events of Easter and completing the act of redemption in the sending out of the Apostles to bring the world from darkness to light. In the Byzantine tradition, Pentecost is also called Trinity Sunday as it was at Pentecost that the nature of God as a Trinity was revealed.

It is customary in some churches, not to kneel during the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost. At Vespers on 'Monday of the Holy Spirit', 'Kneeling Prayers' are used and chanted aloud. These prayers ask for forgiveness and for the gifts of the Spirit in order to do good and live well.

*'We have seen the true light; we have received the heavenly Spirit; we have found the true faith, in worshipping the indivisible Trinity: for He hath saved us'.*

(From the *Pentecostarion*, a hymn sung after Communion at all Eastern liturgies except during Easter).

## DISCUSSION TOPIC

Discuss with others on the website, what music has been planned for use at Pentecost. Has anything special been used? How has this choice unified the events of Easter, Ascension and Pentecost? Has there been a common thread, say during the Gospel Acclamation? What music might help to bind these events together in the minds of worshippers?

## Resources

In [Celebrating the Easter Mystery](#), edited by Christopher Irvine, forms are provided for: A Pentecostal Vigil and an Introductory Rite for the Feast of Pentecost, (ch.13).

[Resurrexit](#) from Decani Music has a small section at the end for Pentecost which includes:

Responsorial Psalm 104	Bill Tamblyn – ‘Send forth your Spirit O Lord, and renew the face of the earth’. Unison and SATB verses and easy refrain.
Gospel Acclamation	Bill Tamblyn – a simple and effective setting for unison voices.
Pentecost Canon	Stephen Dean, a prayer in three parts using the text ‘The Spirit of the Lord has filled the whole world, Alleluia! Holding all things together, knowing every word, we speak!
Tongues of Fire	Stephen Dean’s ostinato refrain. With seven texts to be built up, all sounding together, the effect of many languages and tongues spoken together is produced.

Other suggestions are to be found in the [Laudate Hymnal](#) (Decani Music): Pentecost Psalm by Walker, 299. Pentecost Sequence – Veni Sancte Spiritus (chant), 300; Veni Sancte Spiritus (Walker), 307; Holy Spirit Lord of Life, 301.

## [The Light of Life](#) – RSCM

Christ has no body now but yours	A strong evocative setting by David Ogden of words by Teresa of Avila. For unison voices, keyboard and optional solo instrument.
The Spirit’s Gift	Ian McKinley’s setting of words from a 4 <sup>th</sup> century office hymn. For organ and SATB choir, the piece uses contemporary techniques to great effect. Ten languages are employed at one point and the text ‘mocked as being drunk’ uses vocal glissandi (sliding) octaves.
Give us a new heart	Bernadette Farrell’s prayerful chant to words from Ezekiel. Use as a response to prayer/intercessions.
Affirm anew the threefold name	A hymn with words by Timothy Dudley-Smith to the tune Kingsfold.

## [Enemy of Apathy](#)

The Iona volume with a section for Pentecost entitled ‘The Holy Spirit, coming to stay’.

## [Fountain of Life](#)

*Send forth your Spirit* by Margaret Rizza is a setting of Psalm 104.

New English Hymnal 141

A strong setting by Herbert Howells of words by Timothy Rees. Not too well known, possibly because it has five flats in the key signature!

There are numerous Taize chants for the feast of Pentecost. The new publication '[Worship Feast](#)' contains an order of service (Holy Fire), with suggestions for six chants.

Sing Praises (Laudate omnes gentes)  
Our darkness (La tenebre)  
Wait for the Lord

Come and fill  
In the Lord  
Let your servant now go in peace.

## Trinity Sunday

*'...faith in the Trinity is not a matter of puzzling out a mathematical conundrum, but of living it out in the worship of the Church and in our daily lives.'*

Celebrating the Easter Mystery, Irvine, p.31.

Is the mystery of the Trinity seen as the culmination of the Passion, Resurrection, Ascension and giving of the Spirit at Pentecost in your church?

### DISCUSS

You might discuss your own experiences of worship on this Sunday and make suggestions how churches might retain a feeling of celebration as the Church reaches this climactic point in the year.

### Resources

Mothering God

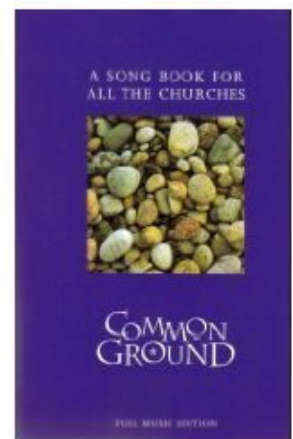
Number 88 in [Common Ground](#). Different slant on Trinitarian theme, Mothering God, Mothering Christ, Mothering Spirit. Origin of words from Julian of Norwich.

Today I awake

Number 133 in Common Ground. Words and music by John Bell. In the tradition of Celtic prayers for protection which envision God encircling his people with his presence.

God the Father

41 in Common Ground. A useful Trinitarian hymn.



## Ordinary Time

Before events begin again at Advent, there are many weeks to use the shape of our eucharistic worship and our daily prayer to revisit through readings and prayer the events we have been celebrating.

The name Ordinary comes from the word 'ordinal' and means 'counted time'. After the peaks of Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost, we need some time to consider, to think and to act. Late Spring and Summer months hold special times for us as community and family. Dealing with living the Word and trying to make sense of it within these communities and families occupies our minds during worship at this time.

## Resources

### [Psalm Songs for Ordinary Time](#)

Edited by David Ogden and Alan Smith, this collection of varied settings uses the Psalms allotted for this period in the Roman Lectionary. This is Volume 3 and here you will find contemporary styles of all kinds, mainly responsorial in form.

Your words are spirit and life

Setting of Psalm 19 in [Christ be Our Light](#) by Bernadette Farrell for use during Ordinary Time.

[Common Worship: Times and Seasons](#) was published in May 2006.

This new book of seasonal material for *Common Worship* is intended to augment three volumes that currently enjoy 'commended' status in the Church of England, *Lent, Holy Week and Easter, The Promise of His Glory* and *Enriching the Christian Year*.

The material intends to provide a rich resource of seasonal material to span the entire Christian year. Major festivals like Christmas and Easter are covered as well as hitherto neglected points of the year like Remembrance Sunday.

Material for Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity Sunday may also be found in: [Enriching the Christian Year](#), compiled by Michael Perham, SPCK 1993. The book includes selected seasonal Canticles.

Hopefully you have found new material in this module that you have not come across before. It would be useful if you have any material not mentioned here and that you have found helpful, to share it on the bulletin board.

Written work for this module can take the form of a service plan for any of the specific days or seasons covered here.

RCF February 2005  
Revised November 2007  
Revised July 2010