

Pentecost Eve 2017

Compiled by Lilian Schmid, Convenor of Transforming Sydney, Coordinator of Prayer Strategy for the Spheres of Influence

The Feast of Pentecost

According to the Christian Bible, it was on the day of Pentecost when the disciples prayed together and the Holy Spirit descended on them (Acts 2:1-4). They immediately began to preach with boldness about Jesus Christ to Jewish people from all over the world who had come to Jerusalem (Acts 2:5-12) for the Feast of Shavuot.

For Christians Pentecost not only commemorates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit but also marks the birth of the Christian Church. Although it is not certain when Christians started observing Pentecost as a regular celebration, it may have been early as the first century CE.

Pentecost is also called White Sunday, Whitsuntide, or Whitsun by Anglican and Celtic communities in modern times, and is the period beginning with the Saturday before Whitsunday and ending the following Saturday. The Jewish feast of the first-fruits or *Shavuot* is 50 days after the feast of *Passover*, which flows directly into church tradition: Pentecost is seven weeks (50th day) from Easter Sunday. In some Orthodox churches, Easter is observed after the date set by the western churches and therefore Pentecost is also celebrated later.

The Easter date depends on the ecclesiastical approximation of the vernal (March) equinox. However because much of the Orthodox church still observe holidays according to the Julian calendar rather than the Gregorian calendar adopted by the western churches, the date for Easter varies between the two congregations. The calculation of days for Easter and Pentecost is not inconsistent, but the base calendar for determination of dates is different. Pentecost in 2017 was special; the calendars coincided and the Eastern Orthodox and Western Churches celebrated Pentecost together.¹

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Pentecost this year also marked the golden anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic renewal that started during the "Duquesne Weekend" on February 17-19 1967.²

When we started Transforming Sydney in 2009 we knew God bestowed upon us a mission to connect, pray, move and honour the body of Christ together. The body is a unit, as Paul says in 1 Cor 11-13:

"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, who apportions them to each one as He determines.



The body is a unit, though it is comprised of many parts. And although its parts are many, they all form one body. So it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given one Spirit to drink...."

We believe that the **Proclaiming Pentecost** is God's awakening in Sydney and the whole world.

Since we started the Proclaiming Pentecost movement in 2015 in Sydney, Australia we have seen tremendous breakthrough; It is a true awakening to revive the celebration of Pentecost in unity.

Pentecost is a perfect time for Christians of all denominations to focus on the role of the Holy Spirit in their individual lives and in their worshipping communities, while commemorating the beginning of the Church some 2000 years ago.

Sydney leaders from all denominations started celebrating Pentecost Eve together in one accord since 2015, it is a very significant event in Sydney

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¹ Refer to: <https://www.thoughtco.com/how-date-of-easter-is-calculated-542413>
<https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/why-dont-catholics-and-orthodox-celebrate-easter-on-same-date/>
http://www.newportthisweek.com/news/2017-04-13/Faith_Community/When_Easter_Merges_for_Both_Christians_and_Orthodo.html

² See <https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2017/02/18/charismatic-renewal-marks-50th-anniversary-founding/>

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now, this mustard seed now has grown to reach other states across Australia, in Queensland and Victoria, celebrating in one accord. See below a list of states and cities celebrating Proclaiming Pentecost in Australia. Proclaiming Pentecost is a grass roots movement to celebrate Pentecost Eve in unity.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." [Acts 1:8]

We are all praying for revival and transformation for our cities. God brought Sydney together at Pentecost Eve 2015 and 2016 - read full reports here <http://www.transformingsydney.org/TSEventsPentecost2015.html> and <http://www.transformingsydney.org/TSEventsPentecost2016.html> respectively.

Proclaiming Pentecost's celebration in unity is taking place also in other states across Australia - feedback from these events are included at the end of this report.

Pentecost Eve 2017 in Sydney

This year Proclaiming Pentecost was celebrated on Pentecost Eve 2017 in the South of Sydney in partnership of Transforming Sydney (TS) and the South East Sydney Pastors (SESPN).

Rev Bart VandenHengel the minister of St John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Penshurst hosted the event with his congregation which has a significant number of Chinese worshippers.



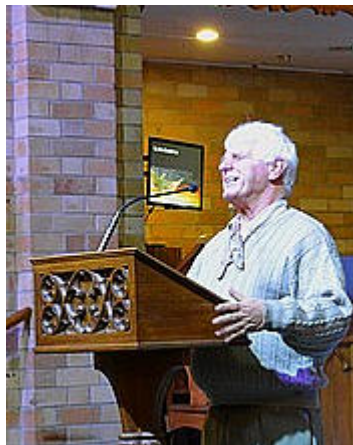
Rev. Bart VandenHengel

welcomed the pastors who represented

Parramatta City (where we celebrated Proclaiming Pentecost 2016) to hand down the baton to the South Sydney Pastors, it is a tradition that the Lord put in our heart since the beginning of Proclaiming Pentecost to pass on the blessing from region to region and welcome the pastors from each region to pray and bless each other.

An Act of Repentance also took place on behalf of the South of Sydney asking God to forgive the sins of his people in the south and ask Him to bless the South and open the door for revival and transformation

Lilian Schmid gave a brief message on Proclaiming Pentecost gatherings across Australia which were taking



Ps. Ron Brookman

Bjorn Schmid, Ron Edwards and Ps. Ron Brookman together with Rev. Bart



Bjorn Schmid (TS)



Ron Edwards



Parramatta Pastors Rev. Simon Black and Ps. Gerald James (front) blessing and handing the baton to the South East Sydney Prayer Network leaders Ps. Ron Brookman, Ron Edwards and Rev. Bart (back)



Lilian Schmid (Convenor of TS)

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place at the same time in the states of Queensland, NSW and Victoria (see report below).



Carol Price from the Eastern suburbs of Sydney



Dr Phil Greer from Liverpool Pastors Network



Rev. Peter Robinson (Board Member of TS)

Leaders from across Sydney came to pray for the South of Sydney, for Greater Sydney and our beloved nation Australia, prayed for other nations, prayed and for the persecuted churches in Egypt and other part of the world as well. We prayed for our Church leaders across the denominations and leaders in authority so that they receive wisdom to rule our nations.

Particular focus' of prayer were for families, young adults, for marriages, for reconciliation, revival, peace in other parts of the world.



Ron Edwards (Member of ICCC, SESPN and TS) introducing Des Higgs

These prayers were supported by small group prayer. After each group of leaders



Australian elder Des Higgs (Member of TS) preaching on the 'Meaning of Pentecost'.

prayed, the small groups then prayed into the topics raised and whatever God put in their hearts.

Leaders from St John the Evangelist Church read John 14:15-20 in English and Chinese. Worship songs were played beautifully on the night by a Chinese couple from St John's; their voices lifted up the spirit of every person attending the evening - it was heaven on earth.



Attendees split into groups to pray throughout the night



St. John Musicians: Joy Watkinson (Keys), Rev. Bart (guitar) and Aisen Ju (drums - not pictured). Singers: George and Jennifer Chan

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Rachel Dunwell, Alpha NSW



Anthony Assaf from the Maronite Church



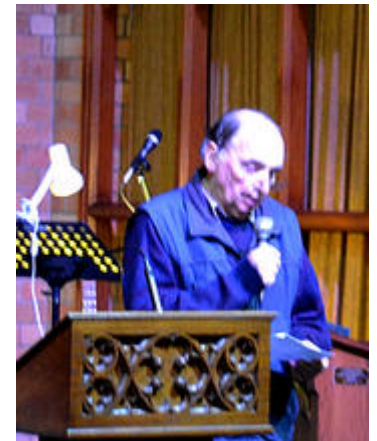
Mary Zhang from the Chinese Community in Sydney



Ps. Gideon Sunindito from the Indonesian Churches



Kathy and Dr. Stephen Van Heerden from the South suburbs of Sydney



Gordon Griffith representing the Australian Prayer Network

At the end of the evening, Ps. Ron invited Bishop Samuel Varghese (Uniting Church India) to close with a prayer and bless Sydney and Australia

We praise God for the night

Until next Pentecost 2018 which will be held in Sydney's South-West, we continue to pray for revival and transformation for our cities.

As we are moving from region to region, we witness the power of the Holy Spirit sweeping across our cities, bringing holiness, revival, righteousness, healing, forgiveness through the power of prayer.

Continue to pray for us and for our mission, we honour, we bless you and we hope to see this movement growing to become an international festival that all Christians are praying together. This year is very significant because the Eastern Churches are celebrating Pentecost with the Western Churches.

Your support in prayer is very important to us, we want to witness the fire of the Holy Spirit spread across the Earth. Hallelujah!

A special thanks to Jean-Luc Schmid for the photography.

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Bishop Samuel Varghese blessing everyone

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Pentecost 2017 in Other Places

Nicaragua

We are with you Sydney & 'Australia Fair' and we have shared with sister Lillian that we shall be joining you from Nicaragua in Central America, to celebrate Pentecost and seek to repeat the evangelism and church planting launched on that first week in accordance with The Great Commission of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, all those years [ago]

Have to praise God as you in Australia prayed for us in Nicaragua on the Saturday before Pentecost we saw 62 good decisions for Christ, made in a remote area of Terra Bona. It was a team of 130 young Nicaraguans we took there. Thank you Australia Fair believers we [are with] you!!! We also prayed for you on Pentecost.

Pastors Syd & Liz Doyle (Nations Light Ministries)

Australia

Queensland

Sunshine Coast

Yes we too had a great night. Around 40+ people came, to worship and hear about the feasts. Most people were blessed through the prayer and worship, just being in His Presence which is what we want - more of His Spirit brings more intimacy which brings more Repentance which brings greater intimacy which makes us a Holy and Powerful people, for the Kingdom for our regions!

Many blessings and thanks to our Faithful Father.

Brigitte Reich

Gympie

<http://heartofgod.org.au/>

We had around 70 people join our Proclaiming Pentecost and Revival Prayer Meeting from many different churches and denominations. We are looking forward to continue the Revival Prayer Meetings every month and hope that Pentecost will be proclaimed throughout the Gympie Region in the Power of His Holy Spirit.

Be blessed!

Ps Justin Lippiatt

South Australia

Adelaide

Lilian, we experienced such an anointing of joy at our city wide meeting in Adelaide at Pentecost, and then also at church. The joy of the Lord is our strength.

Jenny Hagger

Victoria

Melbourne

On Sat 3 June prayer intercessors from 5 different denominations came together at Wonga Park Redeemed Church of Christ to pray for unity in the body of Christ and to honour the Holy Spirit.

Our prayer points from Ezek 11, 18-20:

- 1) protect and deliver us from idols*
- 2) unity among / within churches*
- 3) churches filled with Holy Spirit*
- 4) keep our hearts soft*
- 5) living in obedience to God*

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Our prayers continue to see the body of Christ united under Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour in Australia and the whole world. Amen.

Blessings

Christine Hohmann-Andrasch

New South Wales

Katoomba - Blue Mountains

A combined churches celebration of Pentecost at the Katoomba Christian Convention Centre meeting hall on Jun 4 at 3pm - an event of combined praise and prayer, with several short reflections on Scripture, testifying to each other and our community about the unity we have in Christ.

250 people from 14 Upper Mountains churches celebrated Pentecost together last night – Katoomba Convention Centre was pleased to support this event alongside many others

Ps. Andy Collins

Woy Woy - Central Coast

www.societyofsaints.net/blog/let-us-pray-2017

Pentecost Sunday, 4 June 2017 at St John the Baptist Catholic Church, Woy Woy.

Formal prayers 1pm-2pm, Informal prayers 2pm onward.

Catherine Cavanagh

Penshurst - Sydney

Vision and word for Prayer night and Penshurst Anglican Church

The following is the word of encouragement received for Prayer Night and Penshurst Anglican Church last Saturday night at the Pentecost service.

I had been praying around the inside of the church and had not sensed anything unusual there.

Then just before the service started I noticed really bright colours above in the roof cavity filling it with moving items. I realised they were small angels bouncing up there

I haven't seen them like that before but have heard other people describe them.

Then as we were singing I noticed a golden mist flowing from the front of the church back down the aisle. It indicated the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Then the word I had for Minister Bart at the Penshurst Anglican Church was:-

"This church has a strong faith community at present and God honours their faithfulness and is blessing this church. This church has a long history of faithful believers.

There is great joy in their praise and worship which is mainly being generated by their Chinese members in that community."

I spoke with Ron Brookman last night and he said the minister Bart was very encouraged by this word.

Bart had told us that it affirmed impressions he had.

Hope this is helpful.

Jill Thornton,

Aglow Sutherland / Menai Baptist Church

Revivals & Awakenings

Revivals and Awakenings: each is divine in nature and often contrary or external to the programs of men (believers and unbelievers), and they have a profound effect and legacy on the communities that experience them.

7 principles (or characteristics) of revival:

- *Gods' Sovereignty (His timing - Acts 2:1)*
- *Prayer (Acts 1:14; 2:1)*
- *Unity (Acts 2:1)*
- *Obedience to the Spirit (Acts 2:4)*
- *Preaching (Acts 2:14)*
- *Repentance (Acts 2:37-38)*
- *Evangelism (Acts 2:41)*

(From "What Is Revival" in the book "Flashpoints of Revival" by Dr. Geoff Waugh)

The goal of one body, many parts (cf. 1 Cor 12:12) is most readily realised in prayer.

Christians can disagree on many matters, but can also be united to pray for the needs of our community, the prime of which is for all peoples to be restored into relationship with the Father.

Gathering together as one body, one church before our King Christ Jesus, and putting aside our differences of opinion and revelation to publicly recognise and worship the one true Lord and our Bridegroom fulfils Jesus' prayer in John 17, and unlocks transformational blessing over our nations and cities.

