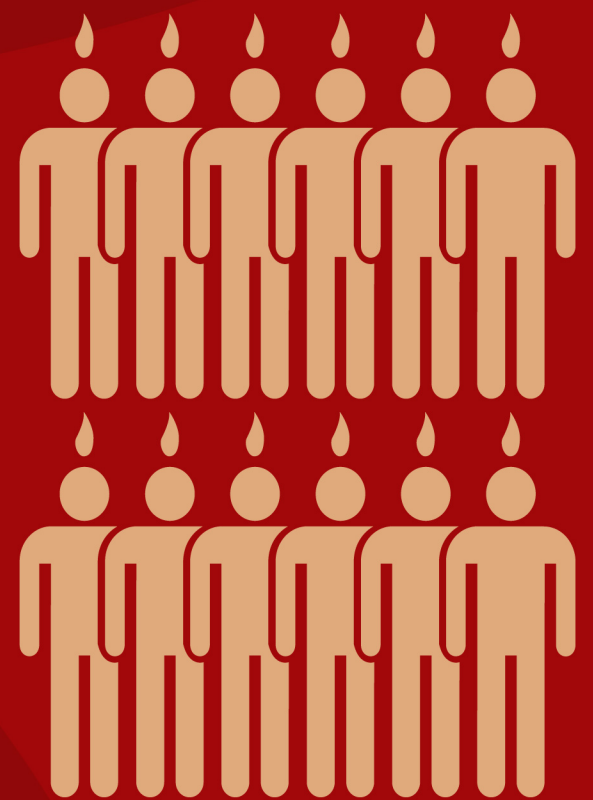


# Pentecost



The Christian celebration of Pentecost began during the Jewish feast of Shavuot. This was one of Judaism's three pilgrimages (hence why so many people were gathered in Jerusalem in the Pentecost account in Acts 2). This festival occurred seven weeks after Passover and celebrated both the ingathering of Israel's wheat harvest and the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Pentecost is the last of the Great 50 Days of Easter and celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (often symbolized by the dove) during the second chapter of Acts. Pentecost comes from the Greek Πεντηκοστή (Pentēkostē), meaning 50, and it falls on the seventh Sunday after Easter. The liturgical color of Pentecost is red, symbolizing joy and the fire of the Holy Spirit (especially the tongues of fire that appeared over the heads of the apostles).



While the traditional color for Pentecost is red, it is popularly known in English as Whitsunday or "White Sunday." This name arose because Pentecost was a major day for baptisms, taking on the character of a kind of "make-up" day for those unable to be baptized on Easter. In fact, in northern climates, Pentecost often became a preferred date for baptism because the weather (and the water!) was warmer. The white refers to the white baptismal robes.

In the Pentecost account in Acts, the apostles speak to "devout Jews from every nation under heaven" in their own languages (the map shows where they would have come from). They would have likely spoken in Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Latin, and possibly also Demotic Egyptian, Median, Persian, Akkadian, Elamite, Phrygian, Arabic, and South Arabian.

