

Sunday 31st May 2020 Pentecost

Jesus Christ, whom we worship, is our crucified, risen and ascended Lord and we have walked with him through his journey of love.

- We have faced the agony of his suffering and death on a cross.
- We have rejoiced at his bursting free from the bonds of death.
- We have enjoyed his risen presence with us and his revelation of himself through the breaking of bread.
- We have seen his return to the throne before which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that this Jesus is Lord.

And now, with the followers of his own time, we await the coming of the promised Holy Spirit, his gift to his people, through whom we make Christ known to the world.

Opening Antiphon:

**Come down, O Love divine,
seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.**

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Canticle

refrain: The Spirit of God fills the whole world. Alleluia.

The Lord promises:

- 1 I will take you from the nations,
and gather you from all the countries.
- 2 I will sprinkle clean water upon you,
and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses.
- 3 A new heart I will give you,
and put a new spirit within you,
- 4 And I will remove from your body the heart of stone
and give you a heart of flesh.
- 5 You shall be my people,
and I will be your God. *Ezekiel 36.24-26,28b*

refrain: The Spirit of God fills the whole world. Alleluia.

Luke 11:13. Jesus said

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

And so we dare to ask:

As we wait...

fill us with your Spirit.

As we listen to your word,

fill us with your Spirit.

As we worship you in majesty,

fill us with your Spirit.

As we long for your refreshing,
fill us with your Spirit.

As we long for your renewing,
fill us with your Spirit.

As we long for your equipping,
fill us with your Spirit.

As we long for your empowering,
fill us with your Spirit.

Silence is kept.

God has made us his chosen people...

And has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts. Alleluia.

cf 2 Corinthians 1.22

Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Let us praise and bless God for ever.

Gloria in Excelsis

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world:

have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father:

receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,

**you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect

Let us pray that the Spirit will work through our lives
to bring Christ to the world.

Silence is kept.

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father,
ignite in us your holy fire;
strengthen your children with the gift of faith,
revive your Church with the breath of love,
and renew the face of the earth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Pentecost Reading. Acts of the Apostles (2.1-13) NIV

2 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6** When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. **7** Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?”

8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? **9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, [b]
10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" **12** Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" **13** Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

To greet the Gospel:

Holy Spirit, living breath of God,
Breathe new life into my willing soul.
Let the presence of the risen Lord,
Come renew my heart and make me whole.
Cause Your Word to come alive in me;
Give me faith for what I cannot see,
Give me passion for Your purity;
Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me. *Stuart Townend*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

John 7:37-39 NIV

37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. **38** Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." **39** By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him

were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

OK, so maybe we don't walk around with our heads on fire (as one child described Pentecost to me!) but we can - and we should pray for the Spirit to come on us too - pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

What words should we use - well it doesn't really matter because the Lord reads and understands the prayers already written on our hearts before we ever form them into words - but maybe something like:

Heavenly Father, I choose your Son Jesus Christ to be my Lord and Saviour. I choose to follow him. And as I repent of my sins and empty myself of all that is not of you, I ask you to fill me with your Holy Spirit so that I truly and completely belong to you...

And God does answer our prayers and will send his Holy Spirit upon us.

Shall we see tongues of fire? Well maybe and maybe not. But the Spirit is not necessarily any less visibly tangibly, perceptibly present...

The Spirit comes in many ways - with many purposes - many gifts - and many jobs to do - but always in blessing...

I have seen and felt the Holy Spirit come on people - individuals and groups ... and I believe that many of you have too.

I have seen people “rest” or kind of faint in the Spirit. Or just become so still - so very still - that they do not move a muscle - as the peace of God rests upon them. The Spirit of Peace comes sometimes bringing just peace, and sometimes working a bit like an anaesthetic to allow God to work deeply bringing healing to bodies, minds, or memories.

I have known people find “an unusual” strength or courage in impossible situations as the Spirit came literally as their helper and comforter.

I have seen people receive a gift of tears as the Comforter came to release and wash away pent up grief and pain that they had been unable to find a way to express.

I have seen people receive a gift of joy and laughter - building faith and bringing hope in difficult times and filling a room with praise and thanksgiving in good times. I have seen people’s eyes and faces light up not only with their own smiles, their own joy and pleasure but also with a “heavenly light and joy” as they testify to what God has done for them.

I have seen the Spirit overshadow people in prayer - wrapping them in a great prayer blanket - as they pray and he prays with them and in them.

I have heard the Spirit give people just the right words in a really sensitive moment, words to bring healing and peace, words to bring justice but not offence, words for individuals

or words for groups. And I have seen people's surprise (and relief) as they realise they have been inspired with words they are certain they could never have thought of for themselves!

And often as the congregation bows its heads in prayer I have felt "a wave of the Spirit" sweep in so that we all seem to enter a still moment in time and space - so peaceful, so beautiful - that we almost dare not disturb it!

The Spirit - (we tend to think of him a bit like a tame dove or a homing pigeon - while our Celtic ancestors thought of him more as a wild goose!) - is not tame but he is always gentle and respectful. His purpose always for our good. For our good sometimes he does disturb us, prick our consciences, convict us - but only to draw us closer and deeper into the God we love, who is love.

Often in Church we sing:

Holy Spirit we welcome you
Please accomplish in me - in us - today
Some new work of loving grace we pray
Unreservedly have your way
Holy Spirit we welcome you.

It is a bold and a brave prayer because it is, it will be transformational, life changing, but only ever and always for the better.

Today, let us realise that we are called / chosen to be equipped/gifted and sent and let us allow that to happen. Let us allow ourselves (like the first apostles), to be equipped

and gifted, empowered and emboldened, enthused and energised as witnesses to what we have seen and heard...

Let us welcome and receive again the Holy Spirit...

Sermon response

**Holy Spirit, we welcome you.
Holy Spirit, we welcome you.
Please accomplish in me today
some new work of loving grace, I pray;
unreservedly have Your way
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,
Holy Spirit, we welcome you.**

Chris Bowater

Our Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in God the Father,
God almighty, by whose plan
earth and heaven sprang to being,
all created things began.**

**We believe in Christ the Saviour,
Son of God in human frame,
virgin-born, the child of Mary
upon whom the Spirit came.**

**Christ, who on the cross forsaken,
like a lamb to slaughter led,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
he descended to the dead.**

**We believe in Jesus risen,
heaven's king to rule and reign,
to the Father's side ascended
till as judge he comes again.**

**We believe in God the Spirit;
in one Church, below, above:
saints of God in one communion,
one in holiness and love.
So by faith, our sins forgiven,
Christ our Saviour, Lord and friend,
we shall rise with him in glory
to the life that knows no end. Amen.**

**Prayers of intercession. - Prepared and led by Keith Callard
(St Mary's)**

When I say "**Lord, come to bless us.**"
Please feel free to respond either out loud or in your hearts
with the response "**Fill us with your Spirit**".

Generous God, we thank you for the power of your
Holy Spirit. We ask that we may be strengthened to serve
you better.

Lord, come to bless us.
Fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the wisdom of your Holy Spirit. We ask
you to make us wise to understand your will.

Lord, come to bless us.
Fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the peace of your Holy Spirit. We ask you
to keep us confident of your love, wherever you call us.

Lord, come to bless us.
Fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the healing of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to bring reconciliation and wholeness
where there is division, sickness and sorrow.

Lord, come to bless us.

Fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the gifts of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to equip us for the work which you have given us.
Lord, come to bless us.

Fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the fruit of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to reveal in our lives the love of Jesus.
Lord, come to bless us.

Fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the breath of your Holy Spirit,
given by the risen Lord.

We ask you to keep the whole Church,
living and departed, in the joy of eternal life.

Lord, come to bless us.

Fill us with your Spirit.

Generous God,
you sent your Holy Spirit upon Jesus at the River Jordan,
and upon the disciples in the upper room.
Fill us with your Spirit, we pray.

Heavenly Father
Accept these prayers
For the sake of your Son,
Our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen

Let's pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in Heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Notices and Birthdays

Concluding Prayer

Faithful God,
who fulfilled the promises of Easter
by sending us your Holy Spirit
and opening to every race and nation
the way of life eternal:
open our lips by your Spirit,
that every tongue may tell of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Blessing :

May the Spirit, who hovered over the waters when the world was created,
breathe into you the life he gives.

Amen.

May the Spirit,
who overshadowed the Virgin when the eternal Son came among us, make you joyful in the service of the Lord.

Amen.

May the Spirit,
who set the Church on fire upon the Day of Pentecost,
bring the world alive with the love of the risen Christ.

Amen.

And the blessing ...

The Sending

Filled with the Spirit's power,
go in the light and peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Final acclamation (from Love divine all loves excelling - Charles Wesley)

**Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be:
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee;**

**changed from glory into glory,
'til in heav'n we take our place,
'til we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

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The Day of Pentecost - “They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.” (Acts 2:3)



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The Day of Pentecost

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Acts 2:4 (NIV)

Based on Acts 2:1-21



Y K J T N K H J G A M A Z E D
T Q B F F P E N T E C O S T U
L P I Q H C I D Q I E S T R G
H R J C I W D F B E Q V C O G
H E A R O S T F I L L E D A R
P W S L G T P O C C K R X X S
Y S B P P F H I N U W I P F L
L V C D E N D E R G U I J C W
K A Z Z I A U W R I U L N R Y
I W N M O L K X Q U T E D D U
C F H G H E A V E N C I S A D
J O I O U E Z A E X G H T N O
R E Q R L A D E W E E N U Y Y
C H J P E Y G H I N T O H F H
F A H T I M L E U Y S T R G B

SPEAK	LANGUAGE	PENTECOST	HEAVEN	BLOWING
SOUND	OTHER	HOLY	SPIRIT	HEAR
FILLED	WIND	FIRE	TONGUES	AMAZED