

Sunday 23rd May - Pentecost

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Loving God, on this day of Pentecost, may we connect with others through this act of worship. May your Spirit move among us.

Hymn: StF 385: Holy Spirit, we welcome you

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5rHa_epc7w

Holy Spirit, we welcome You. (x2)
Move among us with holy fire,
As we lay aside all earthly desires,
Hands reach out and our hearts aspire.
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,
Holy Spirit, we welcome You.

Holy Spirit, we welcome You. (x2)
Let the breeze of Your presence blow,
That Your children here might truly know
How to move in the Spirit's flow.
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,
Holy Spirit, we welcome You.

Holy Spirit, we welcome You. (x2)
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 © 1986 Sovereign Lifestyle Music.

Let us pray together

Gracious God, we give thanks today for every work of loving grace we have seen in our lives this week.

We bring them to mind in thanksgiving.

Loving God, we give thanks today for every glimpse of your Spirit at work in the world around us.

We bring them to mind in adoration.

Merciful God, we acknowledge there have been times in our lives this week where we have not allowed you to work in our lives without reservation.

We bring them to mind in humility.

Jesus, who promised the Spirit, promised too that we could be people who forgive one another and receive forgiveness from God.

We give thanks for that forgiveness now to our gracious, loving and merciful God. Amen.

Today's Gospel Reading and Epistle:

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

Acts 2:1-21

Time to Reflect

I don't know about you, but I often find the anticipation of something is very different to what actually happens. That difficult conversation you build up in your mind and worry about that goes really well. The quick and easy piece of work that takes quite a few hours. The panic at finding a new place when, in the end, the journey is straight forward.

In our Gospel reading today, Jesus tries to give a sense of what it will mean for the Spirit of Truth to come to the disciples. I wonder if, when it came to Pentecost, what actually happened was very different from what they anticipated? After all, Jesus didn't exactly say that there would be tongues of fire and miracles of communication involved!

We've definitely needed some miracles of communication over the past year. Different ways have worked for different people and, if we are honest, we haven't always been able to anticipate what will work best straight away or get it right all the time. Yet, one of the things that strikes me about the story of Pentecost, is the way in which the Spirit breaks down barriers of communication. When that happens, people experience God in ways that are meaningful to them.

I wonder what barriers of communication we have seen broken down in ways that need to continue? What are the barriers that we still need to work on breaking down? How will we respond when what happens is different to what we anticipated? What will we learn from our experiences both over the past year and into the future?

This Pentecost, my prayer for everyone is that you may experience the Spirit of God at work in your life today. Oh, and don't be surprised if it happens in ways you didn't anticipate!

Take a time to sit quietly.

A time of prayer

Prayers for others

I am sure there are many people and places on your mind right now. To give you a focus for thinking about them you might like to light a candle or battery tea light.

As you bring each person and situation to mind, you may find it helpful to use the words of the hymn below to help you reflect.

*Come, Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus,
Pour out Your Spirit we pray.
Come, Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus,
Pour out Your Spirit on us today.*

*Noel Richards & Gerald Coates © 1992 Kingsway's
Thankyou Music. (Singing the Faith 405)*

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: StF 397: The Spirit live to set us free
Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDcbYk-9C-Y
or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

The Spirit lives to set us free,
walk, walk in the light.
He binds us all in unity,
walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
Walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*

Jesus promised life to all,
walk, walk in the light.
The dead were wakened by his call,
walk, walk in the light.

He died in pain on Calvary,
walk, walk in the light.
To save the lost like you and me,
walk, walk in the light.

We know his death was not the end,
walk, walk in the light.
He gave his Spirit to be our friend,
walk, walk in the light.

The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light.
His light will shine for all to see,
walk, walk in the light.

Damian Lundy © 1978 Kevin Mayhew Ltd

A prayer of blessing

This Pentecost Sunday may we go from this space to walk in the light, be guided by the Spirit, and proclaim Christ Jesus. Amen.

We think of all who shared this Pentecost service today. We bring to mind the faces of those we have gathered in worship with over the years and pray that the blessing of God, Spirit, Son and Father remain with them and with us, now and forever. Amen.

Original Materials by The Rev'd Lorna Valentine
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We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the Connexion who have contributed to Worship at Home. This resource is administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional Team. We aim to continue to provide these resources until the end of August 2021.

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

The Work of the Spirit

'I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, "Where are you going?" But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgement: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgement, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Acts 2:1-21**The Coming of the Holy Spirit**

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.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

Peter Addresses the Crowd

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

"In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood,

before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."