



## Pentecost – Sunday 31 May

### Preparation

I greet you all in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

**All    Amen.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**All    He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

### Welcome – Come Holy Spirit videos

### Hymn ~ 1004 O God of burning, cleansing flame

O God of burning, cleansing flame,  
send the fire!

Your blood-bought gift today we  
claim: send the fire today!

Look down and see this waiting host,  
and send the promised Holy Ghost;  
we need another Pentecost!

Send the fire today,  
send the fire today!

God of Elijah, hear our cry: send the  
fire!

And make us fit to live or die: send  
the fire today!

To burn up every trace of sin,  
to bring the light and glory in,  
the revolution now begin!

Send the fire today,  
send the fire today!

It's fire we want, for fire we plead:  
send the fire!

The fire will meet our every need:  
send the fire today!

For strength to always do what's  
right,  
for grace to conquer in the fight,  
for power to walk the world in white:  
send the fire today,  
send the fire today!

To make our weak heart strong and  
brave, send the fire!

To live, a dying world to save: send  
the fire today!

O see us on Your altar lay,  
we give our lives to You today,  
so crown the offering now, we pray:  
send the fire today,  
send the fire today,  
send the fire today!

Words by William Booth, adapted by Lex Loizides  
Music by Lex Loizides

### Opening activity ~ Waiting

## Confession

*We invite you to light a candle as a sign of your need for God's Holy Spirit in your life.*

We confess to you our selfishness and lack of love:

fill us with your Spirit.

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

We confess to you our fear and failure in sharing our faith:

fill us with your Spirit.

Christ, have mercy.

**All Christ, have mercy.**

We confess to you our stubbornness and lack of trust:

fill us with your Spirit.

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

## Absolution:

May the Father forgive you by the death of his Son  
and strengthen you to live in the power of the Spirit  
all your days. Amen

## Collect

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.

This Time @Home ~ Mark and Moira Lemprière from St Mark's

## Hymn ~ 843 **He is the Lord and He reigns on high**

*(led by Brenda Cox, Helen Maguire and Matthew Rickard)*

He is the Lord and He reigns on high;

He is the Lord,

spoke into the darkness, created the  
light; He is the Lord.

Who is like unto Him, never ending in  
days? He is the Lord,

and He comes in power when we call  
on His name; He is the Lord.

*Show Your power, O Lord our God,*

*show Your power, O Lord our God,*

*our God.*

Your gospel, O Lord, is the hope for  
our nation; You are the Lord.

It's the power of God for our salvation;  
You are the Lord.

We ask not for riches but look to the  
cross; You are the Lord,

and for our inheritance give us the  
lost; You are the Lord.

*Send Your power, O Lord our God,*

*send Your power, O Lord our God.*

*our God.*

Words and music by Kevin Prosch

## Bibles Readings

### Acts 2.1-13

- <sup>1</sup>When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.
- <sup>2</sup>Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.
- <sup>3</sup>They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.
- <sup>4</sup>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
- <sup>5</sup>Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.
- <sup>6</sup>When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.
- <sup>7</sup>Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? <sup>8</sup>Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? <sup>9</sup>Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup>Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome <sup>11</sup>(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"
- <sup>12</sup>Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"
- <sup>13</sup>Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine. "

### John 7.37-39 ~ Guy & Angela Quitmann from All Souls'

- <sup>37</sup>On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.
- <sup>38</sup>Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."
- <sup>39</sup>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.

## Sermon

Let's begin with a prayer. "Loving God, on this Pentecost Sunday we invite your Holy Spirit to come and speak to our hearts now, to teach us, to challenge us and to encourage us afresh through exploring your Word. Amen"

In autumn 1904, in the valleys of South Wales, a preacher, Evan Roberts, began a series of nightly prayer meetings at Moriah chapel in Loughor. He made urgent appeals to the people to rise and confess Christ publicly. Each night the presence of the Holy Spirit became more powerful and more people confessed Jesus Christ as their Saviour. One night he urged everyone to pray "O send the Holy Spirit now for Jesus Christ's sake", whereupon the Spirit descended with great fire upon the people present and they prayed until late.

The revival meetings were extraordinary with people crying for joy or crying for sorrow over their sin. Some people would be praying out loud, others singing and the chapels were filled to capacity with crowds outside. They lasted until 2 or 3 in the morning so that men coming off the night shift in the colliery met the people coming out of the meetings. The Revival spread like wildfire from place to place all over the country where people had been praying that such a thing would happen.



Thousands of people were saved. Pubs became almost empty, money wasted on alcohol was now being saving it and used to buy clothes and food for their families. Stealing and other offences became less and less. Often a magistrate came to court and found that there were no cases for him to try.

Men who blasphemed learned to talk purely. The miners' pit ponies were so used to being sworn at that they became disobedient! People who had quarrelled forgave each other and were reconciled. Society was changed and Wales became a God-fearing nation.

I love this story because revivals excite me. In an era when much of church in UK has been in decline, at least regarding attendance, it is good to be reminded that it has not always been this way, and that God's Spirit can, and does, come on churches, regions and nations impacting lives of many.

There have been many other revivals of the church in UK throughout history such as:

- Protestant reformation of 16<sup>th</sup> Century when church had become all about power and influence
- Wesley and Whitfield and the birth of methodism in UK in 18<sup>th</sup> C, when churchgoing and the moral standard was lower even than now (had though that may be to be believe)
- Revival on the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides in mid 20<sup>th</sup> C, when church was dry and legalistic

And there are still plenty of revivals and moves of the Holy Spirit throughout the world in the present era, where there is amazing church growth in countries like China, Brazil, Iran and Nigeria.

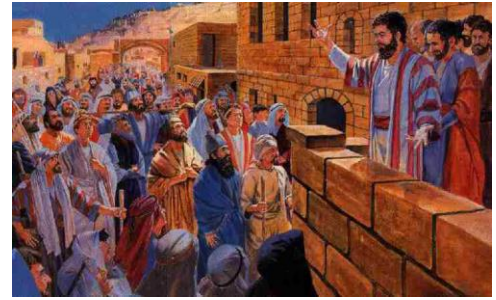
When revival comes it affects large numbers with these characteristics:

- Repentance and right living – an acknowledgement of personal sin and self-centred living, asking Jesus to forgive them and living holy and Christ-centred lives. Whole communities are changed as people live righteously
- Exalting Jesus – there is great focus on Jesus, on exalting his name, on praising him, on living for him. It is not about us, but about him.
- Prayer – there is always a renewed emphasis on prayer as people have a passion to get to know Jesus better and intercede on behalf of others.
- Mission – excited by the work of the Holy Spirit in their own lives Christians are fired up to tell others about Jesus, to serve the poor, to heal the sick



- Revival is always a work of the Holy Spirit, rather than something that Christians can bring about of their own accord.

We see these characteristics in the first great move of the Holy Spirit recorded on the day of Pentecost that we read in Acts 2. A day that was part of God's great plan. A day that the events that we have been looking at over the last few weeks when Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem were leading to. Jesus had fulfilled his purpose on earth. He had taught people about the kingdom



of God, reframing their view of who God is and how they should live, especially their attitudes to the marginalised in society. He had showed people the power of God and love he has in healing the sick and performing miracles. He had died on the cross for the sins of the world. He had risen from the dead to show the power of God and defeat the evil one. And he had prepared the disciples for his ascension and return to heaven, sending them out to proclaim the good news and heal the sick, instating Peter as their leader and telling them to wait for the Holy Spirit.

Because the earthly person of Jesus could do no more. He was one physical being limited in geography and time, but God's plans were so much bigger than just the people of Israel. They always had been, but the Jewish people had become very insular and on the whole had not been the light to the gentiles they were called to be. Jesus' ministry had prepared the powder keg and the HS was the spark for the explosion that began on Pentecost when the church was born and the gospel began to spread to many nations.

God's timing is always immaculate. Jesus' crucifixion at Passover, that greatest of Jewish feasts, symbolically indicated how he was the sacrificial lamb whose blood would save people from death. And now he chooses the Jewish feast of Pentecost, when Jews from all over the Middle East had travelled to Jerusalem to celebrate, to launch the Holy Spirit in power, knowing that many would return to their homelands changed people who would spread the good news of Jesus.

We see in Acts 2 various groups of people how they were before, during and after the dynamic coming of the Holy Spirit. As we look at them, I wonder which of them and at what stage of this process you most identify with now. Firstly, we have the disciples. They were together in a house in Jerusalem, waiting, as Jesus had commanded them 10 days earlier. They were unsure of what the future would hold exactly, but remained together and obedient. And then when the Holy Spirit dramatically came upon them all with a violent wind filling the room and tongues of fire resting on their heads they began to speak in foreign languages that they didn't know. Their patience and obedience was followed up with a willingness to allow the Holy Spirit to completely fill them and enable them to declare the wonders of God in these other tongues.

But they clearly weren't speaking quietly or tucked away in the corner of this house because, worried what others might think of them as they spoke what to them would have sounded like gobbledygook. Whether they went outside the house or stood by the windows there was no fear, only boldness, as a crowd

started forming as they heard their own native languages being spoken by these uneducated Gailileans with a funny accent. This boldness was especially shown by Peter when he stood up to address the Jewish crowd, explained that Jesus was their Messiah and that they needed to repent.

And then we have the various members of the crowd, who react differently as events unfold. Many, when they hear the disciples speaking in their language, and clearly many others, are naturally puzzled, bewildered as to why and how this is happening. They are amazed, curious, open hearted and want to know more about the God that is being praised.

But then there are the cynics who made fun of them by saying they had had too much wine, people with closed hearts, who either like to have a laugh to impress their friends, or use humour to deflect from the fear of having to change.

Some of those who then listened to Peter's testimony would decided not to believe whether out of fear, or cynicism, or needing more time to reflect on his words. But others were cut to the heart, as v37 says, and knew they needed to respond with repentance and acceptance of Jesus. I imagine they would have told their friends of their miraculous encounter with the living God because 3000 people became believers that day, almost certainly not all were gathered around that house initially.

There are many today who feel that God is doing something new today during this worldwide pandemic, whether you want to call it revival or not, that the Holy Spirit is at work afresh. The New Statesman magazine last month contained an article which picked up on this, so it is not going unnoticed in the secular world. Dr Rowan Williams, the former archbishop of Canterbury, was reported in this article as saying this pandemic has triggered a "historic spiritual moment". You have probably read about the results of surveys that show that nearly 25% of people in the UK have watched an online service or listened to one on the radio in the last 2 months, far more than would usually go to church in that period, and we have good numbers watching this service. Surveys that indicate that 5% of British people have started praying, seeking God, during this pandemic, people who have never done so before. Online sales of physical bibles have skyrocketed, as have downloads of bible apps, searches for prayer, resources for prayer etc. Many churches who are running online Alpha or similar explorer courses have reported greater numbers participating than ever. Christians are praying more and seeking God more. Churches are responding in sacrificial service to their communities running foodbanks, meal delivery schemes, shop and drop services all over the country.

Something is stirring and many Christian leaders believe it is a move of the Holy Spirit. So my question for us today is who are we most like in the story of Pentecost when it comes to the coming of the Holy Spirit.

- Are we like the disciples, prayerfully and obediently waiting for this moment and when the Holy Spirit comes joining in with his work, allowing him to take control of our lives, being bold in sharing our faith and serving God in new ways? I heard a lovely phrase this week from Pastor Agu Irukwu, a senior pastor of a Nigerian church in London, about "setting our sails to be guided by the wind of the

spirit” which captures this attitude beautifully. If so then keep praying, seeking God and how about being bold and inviting friends or family members on our new Life Explored or Alpha courses, details of which are in Notes and News.

- Or maybe we are like those in the crowd who are hearing about the work of the Holy Spirit, puzzled, amazed and want to know more. In which case I would urge you to pray ‘Come Holy Spirit’, inviting him to fill you afresh or for the first time.
- Or maybe your first reaction to the work of the Holy Spirit is a cynical one – “there’s a logical explanation”, “I’ve not experienced it so it can’t be real”, “I have bad experiences of people who talk about the Holy Spirit”. In which case I would urge you to check yourself, reflect on why you think this way, pray for a softening of your heart. You may well need to talk to someone, so please find a good friend or a member of the ministry team, we would love to help you.

Next week we begin a series which continues from Pentecost, called “The ordinary and the extraordinary”, following various characters from the book of Acts, ordinary people like you and me, as they responded to the Holy Spirit’s prompting with all the challenges that entails that will help us respond to the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Whether a spiritual revival that this nation desperately needs is coming soon or not is God’s decision, though it only ever happens through fervent prayer. But we can all respond to the Holy Spirit’s prompting in our lives so I’m going to invite you now to have a time of quiet reflection and prayer. Pray “Come Holy Spirit”, over and over, pray the words of the next hymn “Holy Spirit we welcome you”, don’t rush and let the Holy Spirit do his work.

### Hymn ~ 241 Holy spirit we welcome you

Holy Spirit, we welcome You,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome You!  
Move among us with holy fire  
as we lay aside all earthly desire,  
hands reach out and our hearts aspire.  
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome You!

Holy Spirit, we welcome You,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome You!  
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,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome You!  
Please accomplish in us today  
some new work of loving grace, we  
pray –  
unreservedly – have Your way.  
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,  
Holy Spirit, we welcome You!

Words and music by Chris Bowater

### Creed

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

Prayers of intercession ~ *Brenda Cox from St Peter's*

Heavenly Father, so often we come before you with a list of the things we want and hope for, but we forget that we have so much to thank you for.

Today we thank you for loving us so much, each and every one of us, that you sent your one and only Son to save us.

We thank you for all your good gifts, not that we deserve them, but given to us by your amazing grace, through your, continual love.

Help us to be joyful in your presence, and safe in the knowledge that you are always caring for us and will always love us and be by our sides whatever the situation.

In Jesus Name **Amen**

We pray that this threat of Coronavirus will be defeated throughout the world.

We pray for our country our town and our church.

We pray for wisdom for the authorities, doctors and health service staff

We pray for insight for those researching the disease

We pray for the frightened, the sick and the bereaved.

Help us to trust you Lord and to follow the instructions given to us, speak Lord, we pray, to those who think they are invincible and do not obey, putting themselves and others in danger.

Help us to trust you and not be afraid.

In your name we pray **Amen**

God of all compassion and mercy, we ask for your blessing on all those who are suffering, whether it be as a result of the pandemic or not.

We think of those separated from their loved ones maybe at a critical time in their lives, those who are isolated, those in care homes, those who just need a "loving hug", to say don't worry. Be with all of them as they face their own particular challenges. Give to those caring for them compassion and understanding and to comfort them we pray.

We remember all those who grieve the loss of loved ones. In particular the families and friends of Naomi Etheridge, Joan Deacon, Valerie Maslin, and Keith Russell. Please be with them as they seek to come to terms with their loss.



We bring before you those of our church family in need love and our prayer, Mary and Bob Baker, Eileen and Peter Bliss, John Francis, Daphne Jones, Trevor Lloyd, and Wendy Todd.

Comfort them in each of their struggles.

Graciously hear us good Lord **Amen**

We remember dear Lord, our Mission Partners, and thank you for the benefits of technology when last week I could along with Sam meet together with them to understand the needs at this time for each of them and to be able to bring their prayer requests before you.

For Mike & Safaa who are in Texas and unable to travel to Egypt where their Therapy Centres are but now closed. They ask that we pray for their words of encouragement by telephone to the parents of the children from the centres will keep the minds and limbs of these little ones motivated.

For Malcolm in Uganda, who requests prayer for all the paperwork that he is having to do in order that he gets his work permit. He says that Covid 19 hasn't hit his area hard just yet, but feels it will come. His prayer is that the medical staff will fight on and not flee the situation because they do not have the equipment or PPE.

For Cherith in Liverpool, she asks for the time and ability to complete her four years training. Having two more parts to finish one in July the other in August.

And finally for Steph in Gravesend. She asks that you pray for her to have the time and resilience to keep in touch with all the children and Families from her church as well as the writing of her Sunday School training Manual that will go on line in the near future.

Lord please hear these prayers on behalf of our Mission Partners **Amen**

Heavenly Father we ask for your understanding at this time as we look to you for so much and fail to give you praise and glory.

We give you thanks for the many blessing which we have and continue to have, even though our situations have changed because of "Lock Down"

We remember the kindness and support of so many for help with shopping, collecting of medicines, a friendly telephone call and so much more.

We thank you for the amazing help we are getting from technology, which brings us together in prayer, in meetings, worship and fellowship.

We thank you Lord **Amen**

### The Peace

God has made us one in Christ.

He has set His seal upon us and,

as a pledge of what is to come,

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

The peace of the Lord be always with you

**All and also with you**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here

**All His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is always right to give You thanks,

God our Creator, loving and faithful,

holy and strong. You made us and the whole universe,  
and filled Your world with life.

You sent Your Son to live among us, Jesus our Saviour, Mary's child.

He suffered on the cross; He died to save us from our sins;

He rose in glory from the dead. You send Your Spirit

to bring new life to the world, and clothe us with power from on high.

And so, we join the angels to celebrate and sing:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Father, on the night before He died,

Jesus shared a meal with his friends.

He took the bread, and thanked You.

He broke it, and gave it to them, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this to remember me.

After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine.

He thanked You, and gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you.

This is my blood,

the new promise of God's unfailing love.

Do this to remember me.

Jesus Christ has died.

**All Jesus Christ has died.**

Jesus Christ is risen.

**All Jesus Christ is risen.**

Jesus Christ will come again.

**All Jesus Christ will come again.**

Father, as we bring this bread and wine,

and remember His death and resurrection,  
send Your Holy Spirit, that we who share these gifts  
may be fed by Christ's body and His blood.  
Pour Your Spirit on us that we may love one another,  
work for the healing of the earth, and share the good news of Jesus,  
as we wait for His coming in glory. For honour and praise belong to You,  
Father, with Jesus Your Son, and the Holy Spirit:  
one God, for ever and ever.

**All    Amen, Amen, Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

Being made one by the power of the Spirit,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**All    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 for ever. Amen.**

### The Breaking of the Bread

*The presiding minister breaks the consecrated bread.*

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.

**All    Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

**All    Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace**

### Giving of Communion

Draw near with faith.  
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ  
which He gave for you, and His blood which He shed for you.  
Eat and drink in remembrance that He died for you,  
and feed on Him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

*For most of us in this time of pandemic, receiving the Bread and Wine according to the practice of the Church of England is impossible. This prayer of Spiritual Communion taken from Great St Mary's Church Cambridge, is a beautiful way to remember Jesus and abide in Him.*

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my

heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day.

**All Amen.**

### Prayer after Communion

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.

**All Amen.**

**All Come Holy Spirit, to all baptised in Your Name,  
that we may turn to good whatever lies ahead.  
Give us passion, give us fire;  
make us transform the world from what it is,  
to what You have created it to be. Amen.**

### Notices

#### Hymn ~ 1012 These are the days of Elijah

These are the days of Elijah,  
declaring the word of the Lord:  
and these are the days of Your servant  
Moses,  
righteousness being restored.  
And though these are days of great  
trial,  
of famine and darkness and sword,  
still we are a voice in the desert  
crying,  
'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.'

*Behold He comes riding on the  
clouds,  
shining like the sun at the trumpet  
call;*

*lift your voice, it's the year of  
jubilee,  
out of Zion's hill salvation comes.*

These are the days of Ezekiel,  
the dry bones becoming as flesh;  
and these are the days of Your servant  
David,  
rebuilding the temple of praise.  
These are the days of the harvest,  
the fields are as white as the world,  
and we are the labourers in the  
vineyard,  
declaring the word of the Lord.

*Behold He comes . . .*

Words and music by Robin Mark

### Blessing

May God's Holy Spirit be in your life  
May God's Holy Spirit be in our world  
May God's Holy Spirit be love between us  
And the blessing of God etc...

**Amen.**

### The Dismissal

Go in the light and peace of Christ. Alleluia. Alleluia

**All Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia**