

DSW Circuit Written Service for Pentecost – Sunday 23rd May 2021

“And they all heard in their own language” by Revd John Yarrien

We pray together:

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. **Amen.**

Pentecost is the celebration of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on those First Disciples. But it has its origins as a Jewish Festival – where they offered the first grains of harvest to God, and it was an opportunity for Jews from all over the world to come together. Hence Pentecost in the Christian tradition is a celebration of the forming of the church, and for God’s love to be understood and shared whatever your mother tongue.

Let us continue in prayer:

Generous God, we thank you for the *power* of your Holy Spirit. **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. **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. **Fill us with your Spirit.**

We thank you for the *breath* of your Holy Spirit, given us by the risen Lord. We ask you to keep the whole Church, living and departed, in the joy of eternal life. **Fill us with your Spirit.**

Generous God,
in your mercy fill us with your Spirit, **hear our prayer, and make us one in heart and mind to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.**

And now we take a moment to think of those moments or times where we have done or said things that we are know are wrong, and lifting them to God we seek is forgiveness and we receive his grace, in our prayers of confession:

Like Mary at the empty tomb,
we fail to grasp the wonder of your presence.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Like the disciples behind locked doors,
we are afraid to be seen as your followers.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Like Thomas in the upper room,
we are slow to believe.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

{We pause to bring confessions of heart and of mind to God}

Absolution

May the God of love and power
forgive you and free you from your sins,
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn: STF 404 God's Spirit is in my Heart

1 God's spirit is in my heart;
he has called me and set me apart.
This is what I have to do,
what I have to do:

*He sent me to give the good news to the poor,
tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more,
tell blind people that they can see,
and set the down-trodden free,
and go tell everyone
the news that the kingdom of God has come;
and go tell everyone
the news that God's kingdom has come.*

2 Just as the Father sent me,
so I'm sending you out to be
my witness throughout the world —
the whole of the world:

3 Don't carry a load in your pack;
you don't need two shirts on your back;
God's workers can earn their own keep —
can earn their own keep:

4 Don't worry what you have to say;
don't worry, because on that day
God's spirit will speak in your heart —
will speak in your heart:

v. 1 and refrain Alan T. Dale (1902–1979)

vv. 2–4 Hubert Richards (b. 1921)

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Reading: from Acts 2

2 When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. **2** Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. **4** They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

5 There were Jews living in Jerusalem, religious people who had come from every country in the world. **6** When they heard this noise, a large crowd gathered. They were all excited, because all of them heard the believers talking in their own languages. **7** In amazement and wonder they exclaimed, "These people who are talking like this are Galileans! **8** How is it, then, that all of us hear them speaking in our own native languages?"

14 Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, listen to me and let me tell you what this means. **16** Instead, this is what the prophet Joel spoke about:

17 'This is what I will do in the last days, God says:

I will pour out my Spirit on everyone.

21 And then, whoever calls out to the Lord for help will be saved.

Message for today – “feeling the spirit, sharing the grace”

As bad as it is for my teeth, I love to drink a glass of Cola! When it’s a freshly opened bottle, sparkling and fizzy and when its cold, it is just wonderful. But its not so great, when the bottle has been opened a few days, and its gone a bit flat – those bubbles of CO2 are no longer fizzing around your mouth!

In our reading the disciples are feeling rather Flat. Jesus has died, had risen again, but now he had left them, and gone to heaven to be with God. So they were all alone in the world. Jesus had asked them to go to every nation in the world, to tell them of God’s Love, for each and every Person - for all of you.

The disciples didn’t know how on earth they were going to be able to do that, and certainly not with Jesus gone. Remember, Jesus promised the disciples that he, would not leave them alone. That God would send the **Holy Spirit**. I remember one science lesson many years ago my teacher was trying to explain chemical reactions. They brought a bottle of cola into the classroom, and added 2 mentos mints, and the cola exploded, hitting the ceiling!

That fizzy, bubbly, overflowing - was essentially what happened on the day of Pentecost all those years ago. The Holy Spirit came to give lots of energy, to make us disciples of Jesus – fizz and bubble, to overflow, so that we can share God’s love with all the world. That was amazing then, and seems pretty amazing today as well. Just think about the words of that reading: A wind blew, stronger and stronger. And then the Holy Spirit appeared on each disciple like a Flame, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Just imagine a pretty incredible sight. . .

But then the story says: as the Spirit led them, they were able to speak each others languages. This was a signal that there were all sorts of people gathered together, and in an instant they could all understand what other was saying. Language is important to all of us. Some of us find learning languages really easy and others, struggle with English, let alone foreign languages. Our ability to speak, converse, to ask, to request, to say our piece, to lobby, request, question, all roots from our ability to listen and speak.

So think what it must have been like, on the first Pentecost – not to hear the messages of Jesus’ disciples in greek, in Arabic, but each in their own language. Being able for the first time to hear, and listen and to understand. But more than that – then have the ability to share, with all people listening, hearing and sharing, as God’s gift of the spirit pours out and spreads amongst them ALL. Suddenly this haphazard group of believers, teetering on the edges of unbelief or at least having little confidence in what God's future held for them, experienced something extraordinary. They understood one another. No other force could unite a group this diverse as the Holy Spirit did that day of Pentecost. The same is true today too. Only God's spirit can unite people like us.

Thank God for the Holy Spirit that takes a group of haphazard individuals and: crafts, shapes, forms us into the Body of Christ—the household of faith. What are the amazing but confounding things God is doing in the midst of the life of our church, of our community, this nation, and the world today?

We trust the Holy Spirit to stir us to prophesy when we witness injustices. We trust the Holy Spirit to inspire each and every one of our members to live into and embody their Spirit-given gifts. We trust in and celebrate the many and varied ways the Spirit works in our lives, especially the ways in which she manages to know just what we need individually and communally and when. Today I pray that you might let the Spirit give you a new sense of energy, joy, and fervour, that we can share God's Mission to the world – to share his Love with all we meet in his name. Amen.

Prayers & Lord's Prayer

On all those who are sick, in body, mind and spirit, O Living God. **THY KINGDOM COME.**

On those who are lonely or afraid, those who suffer from anxiety or whose souls are dis comforted, O Living God. **THY KINGDOM COME**

On all those whose lives are dedicated to service; our NHS staff, the hospitality industry, our farmers and many others, O Living God. **THY KINGDOM COME**

On those who are never able to attend their place of worship, who suffer persecution and oppression and live in deprivation, O Living God. **THY KINGDOM COME**

On those who fear they are unworthy and unwelcome in church. Who do not feel included in your Kingdom, O Living God. **THY KINGDOM COME**

On those who do not know your peace, for whatever reason, O Living God. **THY KINGDOM COME**

Time to add our own prayers of the heart, either spoken or unspoken.

Everlasting God, whose very nature is love that has no end, hear our prayers. Help us to never make you in our own image but remain in awe of your mystery, the God who was, who is and who will always be. In the name of Christ, who shows us how to love, amen.

The Lord's Prayer: -

As our Saviour taught his disciples, we pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And Lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, The power and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

Song: Spirit of the living (STF 395)

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Daniel Iverson (1890–1977)

Blessing

Creator, redeemer and sustainer, go with us now. May God's Spirit be on us, on those we love, and on those for who we should pray, this Pentecost day and always. And, may the blessing of God, Spirit, Son and Father, be with you, with those you love, and those you are called to Love, now, in the name of Christ. **Amen.**