

Traditional Home service Sunday 31st May Pentecost

OPENING PRAYER

God, who as at this time taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:
Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.
Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

HYMN 1 (*see page 2*)

READINGS - Acts 2:1-21
- John 20:19-23

TALK (*see page 3*)

CREED

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

Spend some time praying for our nation, our community and our families.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

HYMN 2 (*see page 2*)

CONCLUSION

May the Father from whom every family in earth and heaven receives its name strengthen you with his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; and the blessing of God Almighty, Father Son and Holy Spirit be among us and remain with us always. Amen.

HYMNS TO USE

AT THE NAME OF JESUS

Every knee shall bow,
Every tongue confess Him
King of glory now;
'Tis the Father's pleasure
We should call Him Lord,
Who from the beginning
Was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season,
To receive a name
From the lips of sinners
Unto whom He came;
Faithfully He bore it
Spotless to the last,
Brought it back victorious,
When from death He passed.

Bore it up triumphant
With its human light,
Through all ranks of creatures
To the central height,
To the throne of Godhead,
To the Father's breast,
Filled it with the glory
Of that perfect rest.

In your hearts enthrone Him;
There let Him subdue
All that is not holy,
All that is not true;
Crown Him as your Captain
In temptation's hour,
Let His will enfold you
In its light and power.

Brothers, this Lord Jesus
Shall return again,
With His Father's glory,
With His angel-train;
For all wreaths of empire
Meet upon His brow,
And our hearts confess Him
King of glory now.

Martin Rinkart.

405 Tr. Catherine Winkworth.

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD,
With hearts and hands and voices;
Who wondrous things has done,
In whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms
Has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns
With them in highest heaven,
The one eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adore;
For thus it was, is now,
And shall be ever more.

Revd Dawn Airey's talk - 31st May

(Acts 2:1-21)

Good morning.

-A Tearfund survey indicates 3 million new people have turned to prayer since lockdown

-the UK Blessing song has had more than 2.7 million views with many moved to tears unexpectedly

-Eden bookstore reported a 55% increase in sales of bibles in April

-Almost 1 in 4 people in the UK are currently attending on line church services and this is particularly so among 18-34 year olds.

-churches are reporting more people than ever are signed up to do the on line Alpha course

Who would have thought cancelling church services & closing church buildings, could, reverse decades of decline, increase prayer and extend the reach of Alpha!!

I want to suggest that all of this is in part down to a fresh releasing of the Holy Spirit for our times.

If like us you listen to the daily Government update, there is much to grieve over and I suspect there is much about the times we are in that will continue to be very difficult for some time, but, I'd like to encourage us this morning to look through a different lens.

Today is pentecost Sunday, the birth-day of the church; 10 days after Jesus went to heaven, the disciples, his brothers, his Mum and other unnamed women were together and the promised Holy Spirit turns up. It caused such an explosion of life, and power, that thousands came to know Jesus in one day. People were speaking in languages that hadn't been learnt but given supernaturally, there was the promise of visions, dreams, prophesy, power to speak with confidence and boldness about what Jesus has done and the transforming impact that has in our lives. All of this from pentecost suddenly became available not just to one or two special people but to everyone who wants to follow Jesus.

I first became consciously aware of the Holy Spirit a few months after becoming a Christian. I was 20 years old and during my prayer times God was actually speaking to

me, and when I was reading the bible it was as if particular passages had been written just for me, they seemed to literally jump off the page and into my heart, I felt alive in a completely different way - and I couldn't help but tell everyone about it.

I'd been to church when I was younger, and always had some notion of God as I grew up, but this, this was on a whole other level, and Jesus became so real to me. This was the moment that Christianity changed from being a religion to being about a relationship. Not only had I come alive in a different way, I began to learn I was deeply loved, precious, of value, that my life had been created intentionally. He then started to deal with some deeper issues, particularly around cyclical depression and I was, over time, changed from the inside out. It was a radical overhaul, and it changed everything for me.

There are a number of reasons why the Holy Spirit is given to us but on the day of pentecost I think these guys were being equipped for two things:

i) To know our heavenly Father more intimately than ever dreamed of before and,

ii) Secondly, to speak of, to live and to take the good news of Jesus to the nations. What was on their way was a terrible persecution and they were going to be scattered to other nations, they were going to have to leave everything that was familiar and comfortable. In order to keep going they needed a depth of relationship with the Father that nourished them and, the very life of God within them to demonstrate the reality of God's power and Lordship despite circumstances, others coming to know Him as a result.

Right now we can't gather together as church community as we have known it. In a sense, we have been scattered, not because of persecution but because of a virus - scattered, not physically because we're confined to our own homes & a particular place of work, but none the less, scattered to this nation and beyond as we learn to live our lives in a virtual space on the internet.

In a strange sort of way it excites me - history shows us that every time the forces of evil try to silence the church, THE church becomes more alive.

I wonder if God is releasing a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit to the church, for this time, so that we will be similarly equipped - to know the Father more intimately, and secondly, be powerfully equipped to live from the perspective of heaven - bringing the transforming news of Jesus to our community and our nation in a completely new way. We have reason to be expectant, excited about what God is doing, and we need to guard against shrinking what we believe about God down to what we can only see in front of us. God is still God and He says, Church here is more of me for this time. And so it shouldn't surprise us that there appears to be a fresh awakening to Jesus - a fresh explosion of the life of the Holy Spirit being poured out for all to see. Of course, whenever there is a great move of God there are differing reactions. On the day of pentecost people were either bewildered, amazed, astonished, perplexed, indifferent or suspicious. But there were also at least 3 thousand that day who said - wow, I want that...and I suspect we're seeing some in our nation say the same.

What can the church do right now (& I'll end with this)? Three things:

-firstly, seek the Holy Spirit, asking Him to make the Father's presence very real to us - this may be familiar to you or maybe you've never had that kind of pentecost experience, ask Him. Ask him for dreams, visions, tongues, prophesy.

-secondly, speak faith into our families, into our homes, into our situation, into our nation, lets not diminish God to the size of our circumstances.

-thirdly - get ready! Allow God to equip you for this and the next season, pray and draw close to God, read your bible, study and listen to what others say about it, we need to be ready to welcome those, encourage those, help nurture those who see what God is doing and say, wow, I want that.. Be bold, invite your friends to see what God is doing & invite them to join online services.