



**St Peter's Wolvercote & All Saints Wytham
Pentecost - 31 May 2020**

Dear Friends

A really warm welcome to our Pentecost Sunday service for St Peter's Wolvercote and All Saints' Wytham on this last day of May 2020 during the ongoing coronavirus lockdown. Through the familiar biblical text of Acts Chapter 2 we consider again the birth of the Christian church and marvel at the transformation of Jesus's first followers. Today we are delighted to welcome Kathy Day-Dawson one of our wardens from All Saints', who reads from 1 Corinthians 12. Well done to Kathy for navigating the necessary technology and thanks too to David Langdon for reading the Acts account. It is lovely to 'see' familiar faces! Mary Campbell has prepared intercessions for this Sunday, enabling us to keep connected with one another through our praying as we consider our own needs and the needs of those we care for.

Love and prayers

Sarah

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

What God has prepared for those who love him, he has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything.

Therefore, let us in penitence open our hearts to the Lord, who has prepared good things for those who love him.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

**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.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The 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. **Amen**

First Reading: Acts 2.1-18

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs – in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' ¹³But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.' ¹⁴But 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. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷"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. ¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. ²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. ²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

For the gift of the word **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12.3b-13

The Sermon – preached by Revd Sarah Flashman

A Visual Image

You may recall a couple of weeks ago on Rogation Sunday, my All-Age talk involved the visual demonstration of pouring water (signifying the abundant Spirit-filled life) down through a series of glass bowls that enlarged in size. I

³No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit. ⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. ¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body Jews or Greeks, slaves or free and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

For the gift of the word **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (20.19-23)

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹It was evening on the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

began by pouring murky brown water into the top smallest bowl, following it with clean, pure, clear water that displaced the murky brown water as the water cascaded down through bigger and bigger bowls. It may be helpful to hold that visual image in mind as we consider together the familiar account in Acts 2.

Such familiar biblical accounts as we encounter these special festivals in the church calendar require us to come afresh and seek the Holy Spirit's inspiration. I am struck by three words near the beginning of the account.

Noticing Key Words

'When'. It is the opening word and suggests 'an inevitability'. Of course the Spirit's coming was inevitable; Jesus promised it. We read it in the gospel account...Jesus breathes on the disciples and says *'receive the Holy Spirit'*. God is always true to his promises. *'When'* therefore is crucial, not 'if' but 'when'. The disciples who sat in lockdown and uncertainty didn't know the timing, the how and the details but *'when'* reminds us it was inevitable.

'All'. Everyone was involved. All were gathered and all were filled, and all of the house was filled too! There were no spectators here, everyone was filled, everyone involved, everyone received.

'Suddenly'. There was no imagining or mistaking God's entry into the place they were gathered. No uncertainty. The noise and the vision were unmistakable. The sound of a violent wind and the visual presence of tongues of fire left no doubt! God made himself known!

Bank Holiday Monday!

All this happened in the heart of Jerusalem, at the heart of the Festival of Pentecost. Not only were all Jesus followers gathered but all the nations were represented by Jews and proselytes who had come to take part in the Pentecost Festival. It was noisy, busy and packed, much like a bank holiday on a hot day by the seaside! Everyone was there; God chose his moment!

The Disciples experience three things; they were.....

Perplexed! We know the disciples were all filled. However, they were far from empty. Rather they were full of bewilderment, questions and uncertainty. They were still trying to figure out what had happened through Jesus life, death, resurrection and ascension. What did it all mean? They were still trying to make sense of it all. Such perplexity makes us weary and tired. The inner turmoil is exhausting.

Filled! When the Spirit came he displaced all their questions, uncertainty and sense making. He displaced their tiredness with a new energy, understanding and clarity.

Freed! They were now free, as the penny dropped, to speak of God's purposes, to preach the gospel message, to call people to declare Christ as Lord! We see the clear example of this as Peter, who takes hold of Joel's prophecy and, together with the background noise of the Jewish Festival of Pentecost as a helpful backdrop, draws together the big picture of God's relationship with his people. He makes sense of it all emboldened with clarity, he understands now and he weaves in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. He makes sense of it all! We recall Jesus prayer in his final discourse in John (ch 16 v 13); that the Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth. All the murkiness and perplexity has been displaced by a wonderful clarity as he explains how Israel's story and Christ's life work together; complete! The Festival of Pentecost was a twofold commemoration; historical (recalling the giving of the Law to Moses on Mt Sinai) and agricultural (the offering of two barley loaves given in thankfulness for the harvest). So we see the flourishing (a different kind of harvest!) as Peter speaks and brings the life and work of Jesus Christ into life and settles it clearly within the sweep of the overarching story of God from Moses to eternal life!

Connections!

There is an obvious connection with our current experience of coronavirus lockdown. We too are full of perplexity, questions, uncertainty, grief and tiredness. We too need the fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit, to energise us and help us trust that God is still true to his promises. The writer to the Hebrews reminds us that *'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever'* (Hebrews 13:8) and that *'he who promised is faithful'*. (Hebrews 10:23) May this knowledge free us to find our voice in these days, not seeking answers to everything and desiring the neatening of all loose ends, but that ability to speak life, clarity and truth where it's needed.

Finally, we see that Pentecost hastened in the Spirit as the *'dominant reality'* (Barclay) which flows throughout the book of Acts. We see the **mark of the Spirit** as the source of **clear guidance** time and again in leadership situations. There are numerous examples including moments of identifying and commissioning new leaders. Additionally, we see

the other mark of the Holy Spirit as giving **courage and power** to Jesus followers. In these days of uncertainty, especially as we face the interregnum, let us seek again to be renewed and refreshed with the infilling of Holy Spirit. God is true to his promises, he is unchanging and by his Spirit, he will provide guidance, courage and effectiveness as we look to the future.

Come Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*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.*

The Intercessions

*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*

Weekday commemorations: Today we would have marked the Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth ('The Visitation'). As today is Pentecost the feast is moved to Monday. St Luke tells us (1.39-56) that when Elizabeth saw Mary, the baby she was carrying (John the Baptist) leapt in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, said '*Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb*'. Mary said '*My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour..*' We know this outburst of praise as The Magnificat.

Other commemoration: Boniface (Wynfrith) of Crediton, *Bishop, Apostle of Germany, Martyr (754)*

In the Deanery we pray for: the Parishes of St Giles, St Philip and St James with St Margaret, St Mary Magdalen, St Thomas the Martyr.

Mary Campbell prepared the following intercessions

There is no place where God is not. Wherever we go, there God is. Now and always he upholds us with his love and keeps us safe in his power.

*Lord in your mercy ... **Hear our prayer.***

We pray for St Peter's and All Saints' at this changing time and for our clergy doing so much for the parishioners to keep us all in touch.

We pray for those living in Apsley Road, Apsley Court, Upland Park Road, Banbury Road, and Summertown House.

We especially remember the children doing schoolwork at home, not always in easy circumstances, and we are thankful for all the help that has been offered and given during this lock-up time.

We pray for our Queen and country and for our government that they may be guided to the right decisions at all times.

*Lord in your mercy ...**Hear our prayer.***

We ask you to be with those who are sick among us: Margaret Williams, Jenny Gerrard, Trixie Collier, Ray Voss, Marion Boulton, Vicki Shepstone, John Waugh, Margaret Ewert, Jean Tuffley, Charmaine Anderson, Lyn Dean, Gordon Killie, his wife Jane, and children Charlie and Isabella.

We remember with thanksgiving those who have died recently, including Kelvin and those who have died as a result of COVID-19, and for all their families and friends.

Among those who died about this time in earlier years we remember Vanessa Adams, Stanley Tombs, and Kerstin Schofield.

Give strength and hope to all medical staff at this terrible taxing time, and to all those carers and to all people keeping on doing jobs that make our lives run as smoothly as possible. We are thankful to them.

Lord in your mercy ...Hear our prayer

Amidst all the sadness and worry of this present time, we are thankful for the sunshine, for the beauty of the earth around us, and for all God's creatures that give us some peace in our hearts.

And we pray for all people, according to their needs.

Lord in your mercy ...Hear our prayer

Lord, you know the fears and anxieties that fill our hearts at what the coming weeks might bring. Free us from panic and worry, and at this Whitsuntide fill our hearts and minds with your great power and love.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers. for the sake of your Son. our Saviour Jesus Christ. 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
and also with you.

As the grain once scattered in the fields
and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside
are now reunited on this table in bread and wine,
so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered
together
from the corners of the earth
into your kingdom. **Amen.**

The Lord is here

His spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and everlasting God,
through Jesus Christ, your only Son our Lord.
This day we give you thanks
because in fulfilment of your promise
you pour out your Spirit upon us,
filling us with your gifts, leading us into all truth,
and uniting peoples of many tongues in the confession
of one faith.

Your Spirit gives us grace to call you Father,
to proclaim your gospel to all nations
and to serve you as a royal priesthood.
Therefore we join our voices with angels and

archangels,
and with all those in whom the Spirit dwells,
to proclaim the glory of your name,
for ever praising you and saying:

**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.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness
of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.
Therefore, heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious

ascension;
we look for the coming of your kingdom,
and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

All

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As our Saviour has commanded and taught us, we are
bold to say.

**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 priest breaks the consecrated bread.

All

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

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

Alleluia. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

We invite you to join in at home with this prayer:

**Lord Jesus Christ, since I cannot at this time receive
communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite
myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,
my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from
you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I
come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.
Amen.**

Post Communion 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.**

Almighty God,

we thank you for feeding us

with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

**Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.**

Send us out

in the power of your Spirit

to live and work

to your praise and glory. Amen.

The Blessing

The Spirit of truth lead you into all truth, give you grace
to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and strengthen you
to proclaim the word and works of God; and the
blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the
Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

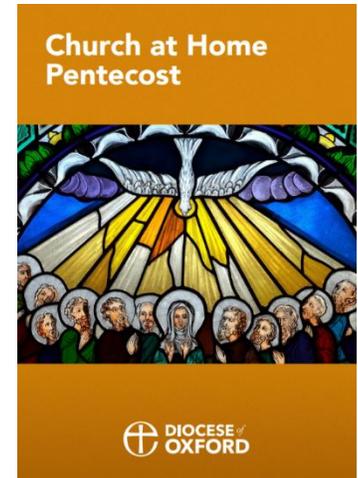
Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Church at Home: watch online or dial in

Church at Home 10am service from the Diocese of Oxford for Pentecost takes place online here <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19/livestream/> on Sunday. Download the order of service from <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/DOX-051-Pentecost-OoS.pdf>. The Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, presides and the address comes from the Revd Kate Seagrave, Mission Priest at St Frideswide Mission Community.

The service has been prepared by the Revd Christopher Woods, Vicar of St Barnabas and St Paul with St Thomas the Martyr, Oxford and members of his congregations. It features contributions from around the Diocese. Those unable to watch online may call 01865 920930 to participate by telephone. Standard call rates apply.



I will come into your house

The starting point for Bishop Steven's fifth reflection for a church in lockdown is Samuel Wesley's beautiful setting of Psalm 5.8.

He writes, "Wesley crafts a peaceful song of trust out of the middle of a Psalm which refuses to hide from life's difficulties. The music at the start of this episode is taken from a recording of *Lead me Lord* by Samuel Wesley and sung by Somerville College Choir (Psalm 5.8 and 4.8)."



"I'm using several commentaries on the Psalms to prepare these podcast episodes, but particularly Professor Sue Gillingham's commentary: *Psalms through the Centuries: A reception history commentary on Psalms 1-72* (Wiley Blackwell, 2018) and *John Goldingay, Psalms in the Baker Commentary Series* (Baker Academic 2006)."

Listen here: <https://blogs.oxford.anglican.org/podcast/i-will-come-into-your-house/>

Contributions PLEASE

Thank you for your photographs, music suggestions, poems and anecdotes received over the last weeks. These help us keep in touch with one another and what's going on around us and are always hugely appreciated. Although restrictions are starting to ease for some, many of our friends will have to continue shielding for quite a few more weeks, most likely months. The next e-newsletter will be distributed this Wednesday 3 June. **Please send contributions to:** info@stpeterswolvercote.org or call 07770 766546. Thank you!