

Service for Week May 13th -19th
Pentecost Sunday by Chaplain Andy

Our Opening Prayer.

Living God, we remember how you transformed the lives of the Apostles: how, through the breath of your Spirit, you turned their fear into confidence, their weakness into strength, their doubt into faith, their sorrow into joy. Come to us now, through that same spirit.

Help us to remember today not simply all you did once, but to rejoice in all you are doing now in our lives through your Holy Spirit.

Amen

Prayer inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,

.....Amen

Bible Reading Ac 2:1-17

The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost
When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.
Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because

each one heard them speaking in his own language.

Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

"In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams."
Holy words, Holy wisdom ,

Thanks be to God



Reflection

When Jesus ascended and returned to God, he promised that God's Spirit would be sent and our bible reading describes how that happened - 'a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came and filled the whole house. And they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.'

We call it Pentecost which means '50' because it occurred 50 days after Easter. Pentecost Sunday also used to be called Whit Sunday but less so these days. Also, on Friday next week we remember in the Methodist church Aldersgate Day. This is when John Wesley the founder of the Methodist Movement (it wasn't separate from the Church of England at the time) had a spiritual experience while attending a service in Aldersgate Street, London on the 24th May 1738.

He described, how when listening to a reading of Martin Luther's preface to the New Testament book of Romans, his heart 'felt strangely warmed'. He felt at that moment that he did trust in Jesus Christ, and knew that Christ had taken away his sins, and saved him from the law of sin and death. Although doubts came to him later on, after that moment in Aldersgate he knew that God's Holy Spirit was with him and would always defeat his doubts and keep him strong.

Now you may be surprised to learn that John Wesley when he went to that service was an ordained Church of England priest and had been one for 10 years. But despite that fact something happened to him at that service -he described it as his heart being strangely warm – or having a good reassuring feeling within him. It was the realization that God loved him, that God forgave him, and most importantly God's Holy Spirit was with him to give him strength and encouragement for the rest of his life.

And this happened after 10 years of being a priest and preaching about Jesus and taking services himself over all that time. To me that demonstrates how it is easy to get into the habit of having faith. We can say- yes, we believe in God, yes, we attend services, and yes, we may read or hear religious teachings. But do we sit down and really accept the change that God can bring about in our hearts- through faith. Because that is what faith is -it is accepting and welcoming God into our lives as those disciples and followers of Jesus did in that upper room when God's Holy Spirit came upon them. It is never too late to do that.

Amen

Closing prayer

Come now Lord and breathe through your Holy Spirit a renewed faith into my life and new life into my soul, by your gracious power.

Amen

