

Worship At Home

17th May 2024

Pentecost

[From Spill the Beans, 17th May 2024]

*Silence,
fire,
wind,
noise.*

*Anger,
peace,
conspiracy,
subterfuge.*

*Song on the streets,
voice of the oppressed,
comfort for the least,
rage in the machine.*

How might we name the spirit?

*The energy of heaven
and midwife of creation.*

How might we name the spirit?

*As poetry and story,
abstract and street art.*

How might we name the spirit?

*In harmony and discords,
in protest and whispers.*

*This is the day when the spirit came,
Pentecost, our renewing.*

We come together as part of your community of Lord.



Let us pray,

God of fire and flame, God of light and life, God of hope and peace. The light of your love is here. The fire of your Spirit is here. The hope of a better world is here, in me, today. Come, Lord Jesus, and make yourself known during this time of worship, In this Pentecost season, I pray that you will make yourself known to me, **Amen**

Listen or sing or read the words of this hymn - CH4 619 Spirit of the living God

<https://youtu.be/2DtJgaGRav4?si=cftaoBfiuRb4MfU->

Reading: Acts 2: 1-21, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3A1-21&version=NIV>

Holy God, God of fire and Spirit,

God of light and life, God of justice and joy, we pray for your Church today,
Especially for the witness of your people in this, my community,

Breathe new life into us, as those first disciples rediscovered their passion and energy for you and for inclusion.

God of Pentecost and Easter, God of Christmas and Lent, God of Sunday morning and Tuesday afternoon, I come to you in prayer for those in need today.

I hold a moment of stillness to pray for those known to me who need prayer this day.

God of here and there, God of coming and going, God of now and forever,

Grant to those in authority the gifts needed to speak clearly across divides, to bring healing and calm, where there are wounds and discord.

Amen.

Reflection for Pentecost

Imagine that the disciples made their getaway from Jerusalem as quickly as possible after Jesus' crucifixion and went back to what they had been doing before he had entered their lives. Then, just when the fishing business was picking up again, Bartholomew had come over the hill and shouted to Peter: Hey! He's risen! Peter gasps out loud "Oh no!" saying to himself "Oh no, if he's risen, that means he was right all along. It wasn't just a dream. And that means, back on the road, back into the midst of trouble. Why couldn't he have stayed dead? Just when I'm beginning to get my life together again, this has to happen!"

It probably didn't take place that way, but then again, it might have. And the conversation may have continued something like this "If he has beaten death, then everything changes. If he calls us to spread the word around - in Jerusalem, or right here by the lakeside, or off in Thessalonika, or even in Rome wherever - at least we won't have to do it alone, because if he has somehow beaten death, wasn't that his promise that nothing can really separate us from him. Maybe it is worth giving another try!"

Maybe that was when they remembered what Jesus had said to them about the Advocate - the Spirit of truth - the indwelling helper, coming to be their guide just as Jesus himself had when he walked the road with them. Perhaps they now understood that - now, with Jesus' life in them, things which had seemed impossible by their reckoning, would now be possible through this gift of the Holy Spirit.



Today we are here because they were empowered by the Holy Spirit - to "give it another try" - in other words - to embrace an unknown future - but in the knowledge that they were not just proclaiming the good news about their risen Lord, they were doing it with his life within them. Today is Pentecost - the day when we are reminded that through God's gift to us of the Holy Spirit, Jesus becomes alive within our very beings, and we are filled with the powerful energy of his love and his compassion - his life. So - don't expect life to be the same after being filled with the gift of the Spirit. Today is Pentecost - expect the unexpected!



When Jesus was baptised in the river Jordan and felt himself empowered by the Holy Spirit, he was tempted to use that power for himself. In the wilderness, he was tempted to use his power to change the stones into bread - tempted to satisfy his own needs - and what one of us would not have been tempted likewise? But he didn't. He only ever used his power to fulfill the needs of others. He empowered others to search out and fulfill the needs of others - as we too are empowered - and challenged to use our gifts to empower others.

But we might be too afraid to answer God's challenges on our lives if we believe that we have to respond out of our own power. If we believe that, our response is always going to be - "Oh no, not me - I have nothing - no gifts to offer" Or, as Peter may have said " Oh no, it wasn't just a dream - and that means, back on the road, back into the midst of trouble."

We are where we are today, because that band of Jesus' followers were empowered by the Holy Spirit to embrace an unknown future. Empowered by Jesus' life - a life that was a constant reminder of God's infinite love for every individual, especially the weak and the oppressed. A life gifted to each of us also so that we too may be constant reminders of God's love for all people.

Today, Pentecost - with the wild power of the Holy Spirit within us inviting us to take holy risks, let us believe in a power and possibility beyond our wildest dreams waiting to multiply and transform whatever gifts we have to offer.

The question is - are we ready?

This Pentecost, may you be challenged and inspired. May the Spirit not only remind us of a miracle long past but also stir within you a fresh wind, prompting new understanding, deepening unity, and inspiring transformation that resonates through your life and the lives of those around you.



This week's prayer list – based upon information from Christian Aid. The links go to the Christian Aid Website if you want more information.

1. Give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit.
2. Pray with thanksgiving for the times we have been shown love and compassion.
3. Pray for families hit by the food crisis in Malawi.
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/where-we-work/support-families-hit-food-crisis-malawi>
4. Pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire us to transform our world for the better.
5. Pray for the work of Christian Aid <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/research>
6. Pray for schools which are fighting racism in classrooms.
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/schools/global-neighbours/global-neighbours-anti-racism>
7. Pray for Christian Aid's work in Afghanistan and our partnership with the Scottish government to deliver aid.
8. Pray for justice and peace <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/pray/prayer-peace-and-justice>
9. Pray for all volunteers working for Christian Aid this week: fundraising, doing door to door visits, cooking breakfast ...

9. Virgil of Pray for the Middle East.

<https://youtu.be/dHN2bR8vXfA>

Pray for peace in the Middle East.

<https://youtu.be/dHN2bR8vXfA?si=CJBwM4v5N7jNsn-e>

Light your own candle and pray for peace in our world.



10. Virgil of Pray for the Ukraine. <https://youtu.be/y4CS56S9Ikk>



Listen or sing or read the words of this hymn - CH4 524 Make me a channel of your peace.

<https://youtu.be/FnY7+1N1s2U?si=jFaeClvrRgkWaaCj>

God we are thankful for your love: love that changes us,
turns our priorities upside down, and
yet somehow makes us more fully ourselves.

We offer our gratitude for those who have shown us tenderness,
care and compassion;

Those who have seen us through troubled times and brought us hope.

We pray for those we love

And for those we have failed to love.

Remembering Aline's experience, we hold in mind people around the world who
know what it is to be treated as less than human.

May we work together to uphold the dignity of every human being, so that no
one feels forgotten.

God whose love endures forever, Hear our prayer. Amen

May we persevere in faith, May we go out in hope, May we act and speak with love, By the
grace of God, our creator, redeemer, and comforter, May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all evermore. Amen.

*Thank you to those who have taken the time to contact me. Take care out there this week.
May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you this day and each day.*

Rev. Susan Thorburn, sthorburn@churchofscotland.org.uk

If you choose to email me, please can you tell me who you are and where you live. Thank you.