

Morning Worship for Pentecost

Preparation

As we wait in silence,
fill us with your Spirit.
As we listen to your word,
fill us with your Spirit.
As we worship you in majesty,
fill us with your Spirit.
As we long for your refreshing,
fill us with your Spirit.
As we long for your renewing,
fill us with your Spirit.
As we long for your equipping,
fill us with your Spirit.
As we long for your empowering,
fill us with your Spirit.

Opening Prayer

**We praise you and we bless you,
our risen Lord Jesus, King of glory,
for you promised that your disciples
would be baptized with the Holy Spirit
and now we see the fulfilment of your promise.
Fill us afresh with your Spirit today,
revive your Church,
and renew the face of the earth.
To you, Lord Jesus,
giving to your people the greatest gift of all,
be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

Cast your burden upon the Lord:
And he will sustain you.
Create in us clean hearts O God:
And renew a right spirit within us.
Cast us not away from your presence:
And take not your Holy Spirit from us.
Give us the joy of your saving help:
And sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.
Blessed be the Lord day by day:
The God of our salvation who bears our burdens.

We confess our sins.

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. *(1 Corinthians 2.9,10)*
Come, let us return to the Lord and say:

**Lord our God,
in our sin we have avoided your call.
Our love for you is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.
Have mercy on us;
deliver us from judgement;
bind up our wounds and revive us;
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May almighty God, who sent his Son into the world to save sinners, bring you his pardon and peace, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Praise

O Lord, open our lips:
And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Let us worship the Lord:
All praise to his name.

Gloria in Excelsis

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The word of God

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

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

A reading from the gospel of John

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. It 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.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples

rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.' (John 20:19–23)

A reflection by Rt Revd Richard Atkinson, Bishop of Bedford

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages (Acts 2)

Luke, as we know, describes that first Pentecost with images of a violent wind and tongues of fire. It is a dramatic moment, not just because of the fulfilment of the promise of Jesus in the coming of the Spirit – *See I am sending upon you what my Father promised*; but because it marks a dramatic new phase in the transformation of the Kingdom in the world. It is marked by the profoundest of spiritual experiences; and by the remarkable sign of the disciples speaking in other languages.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages

But for a moment a brief diversion. Many years ago as part of my Queen's Scout Award, with a couple of friends, I used to go once a week after school to Hammersmith Fire Station. Tutored by one of the Fire Officers we were introduced to the work of the fire service which included, I seem to recall, everything from the equipment that was carried on the Appliances through to rescue and fire safety. For some reason I have never forgotten that we were also told that the 'pips' on the epaulettes of senior officers were Impellas from the inside of pumps. Associated with this we also learnt about the difference between Centrifugal pumps and Centripetal pumps; the latter of which I think at that stage were used in their appliances. Centrifugal and Centripetal pumps – in case the difference eludes you, one uses a Centrifugal force that pushes the water away to the edge within the pump, whilst the other uses Centripetal force and draws it towards the centre.

Now before you think you have clicked on the wrong internet page – don't worry this isn't a mechanical engineering class.

Rather, those two images of being pushed to the centre (Centripetal) and pushed away from the centre (centrifugal) sum up so well the dynamic of Pentecost – for Pentecost both draws us in and pushes us out. Centripetal and Centrifugal.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages

Pentecost draws us in by powerfully witnessing to the essential unity of humanity. It is the divine corrective to the tower of Babel which scattered the peoples and divided them - speaking many different languages and thus unable to co-operate easily. At Pentecost, in contrast, each person heard *God's deeds of power* spoken in their own tongue.

The message is clear – all are welcome; welcome into the love of God; welcome into the Kingdom. The invitation of Christ is for all nations – it is never the precious possession of the few.

There is a centripetal force to Pentecost – drawing each and every one in; indicating an essential unity that always challenges whatever and whoever would seek to divide.

Pentecost also always reminds us that we are empowered to be sent out. Jesus, in our Gospel from John, says *As the father sent me, so I send you* and then immediately anoints them with the Holy Spirit.

In Acts the gift of tongues is not just an expression divine unity, but to remind each and every disciple that they are commissioned to go out and make disciples of all nations. To speak the language of others is to open up communication, to be able to make the glory of God known.

There is a centrifugal force to Pentecost – the Holy Spirit always pushing us outwards; more than that equipping us to be witnesses to Christ.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages

So two questions for us this week:

1. Where do I need to let the Holy Spirit broaden my appreciation and love for the diversity of God's people?
2. How can the Spirit better equip me to speak of 'God's deeds of power'?

The Holy Spirit drawing us in – into that wonderful unity that is God's desire for his people. The Holy Spirit sending us out – his witnesses in the world.

Centripetal and Centrifugal – I don't think I, or those Fire Officers who prepared us for our Queen's Scout Award, realised that they were providing a powerful image of Pentecost.

Our faith

**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- Catherine Wendeler

Through Christ, who ever lives to make intercession for us, let us pray to the Lord. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

We pray for the unity of the church in witness and proclamation of the Gospel. For the week of Thy Kingdom Come, the wave of global prayers and for our clergy: Joy, Stephen, Gordon. Lift up our hearts to the heavenly places and inspire us to serve you as a Royal Priesthood. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Bless the leaders of our nations. Give them and their advisors knowledge and foresight to act with wisdom and sincerity for the wellbeing of all whom they serve. For the peace and stability of all peoples and for the leaders of the nations that they may find renewal, we pray to the Lord. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

For the homeless: God of compassion, your love for humanity was revealed in Jesus, whose earthly life began in the poverty of a stable and ended in the pain and isolation of the cross: we hold before you those who are homeless during this pandemic. Draw near and comfort them in spirit and bless those who work to provide them with shelter, food and friendship. Let us pray to the Lord:

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

For our local community, for a blessing on our homes; for our relations and friends and all whom we love that they may acknowledge the kingdom of the ascended Christ we pray to the Lord.

Almighty God of healing and hope, at this time of heightened global awareness of our mutual interdependence, enable all of humankind to appreciate the strength that comes from being united in concern and love, rather than divided with hate and prejudice. As we look to the

future, may you endow all people with the capacity to build and sustain societies of unity, tolerance, harmony and peace. Let us pray to the Lord. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

For the sick and suffering and all who minister to their needs, bless all the medical staff and key workers who tirelessly seek to heal and help the sick. For all those who suffer with broken relationships may they find strength in your compassion. For those who suffer mental illness may they seek your Word, let us pray to the Lord:

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

Let us commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray, to the mercy and protection of God. Let us pray to the Lord Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We remember those who are close to death and the recently bereaved at this time of social distancing, grant them courage and consolation. Bring them the hope of your salvation. We light a candle to symbolise the light of Christ which eternally shines and brings hope. Holy Spirit come.

Lord of the past, the present and the future, breathe on us breath of God fill us with new life. We pray that mirrored here, our lives will tell your story. Shine in our darkness, we pray to the Lord.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

A prayer for the coronavirus pandemic

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

We join together with Christians throughout the world in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**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.**

Conclusion

The Collect for the day

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.

Be with us, Spirit of God;

All nothing can separate us from your love.

Breathe on us, breath of God;

All fill us with your saving power.

Speak in us, wisdom of God;

All bring strength, healing, and peace.

We end with the words of the Grace, an ancient Christian prayer of fellowship, remembering that although we are not together in person, nothing can separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all evermore. Amen.**

If you would like us to pray for you during this time of stress and anxiety, please leave a prayer request on the website email address or contact Joy (vicar@stmaryseatonbray.org.uk)

Reverend Joy Cousans
Reverend Stephen Burge

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