

Traditional Home service Sunday 28th May

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

Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

*Almighty God, long-suffering and of great goodness: I confess to you, I confess with my whole heart my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments, my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts I have done to others, and the good I have left undone. O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you; and raise me to newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
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 (*Holy, holy, holy!*)

READINGS - Acts 2.1-21
John 20.19-23

TALK

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 (*Come, Holy Ghost*)

CONCLUSION

The Lord bless you and watch over you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Hymns to use

1 Holy, holy, holy!
Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning
Our song shall rise to Thee
Holy, holy, holy!
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity!

2 Holy, holy, holy!
Though the darkness hide Thee
Though the eye of sinful man
Thy glory may not see
Only Thou art holy
There is none beside Thee
Perfect in power, in love and purity

3 Holy, holy, holy!
Lord God Almighty
All Thy works shall praise Thy name
In earth and sky and sea
Holy, holy, holy!
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity

1 Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire
and lighten with celestial fire;
thou the anointing Spirit art,
who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

2 Thy blessed unction from above
is comfort, life, and fire of love;
enable with perpetual light
the dullness of our mortal sight.

3 Teach us to know the Father, Son,
and thee, of both, to be but one;
that through the ages all along
this may be our endless song:

4 Praise to thine eternal merit,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Sermon - Holly Horspole
ACTS 2:1-21 – SPIRIT-FILLED FOR A
PURPOSE

As we heard in our reading for this morning, today we're thinking about that amazing story from Acts about the day of Pentecost when God gave the gift of his Holy Spirit to his followers. In Acts we hear about how the gift of the Holy Spirit equips and empowers the church to begin to fulfil Jesus's instruction to 'go and make disciples of all nations'. At Pentecost, through his Holy Spirit, God breathes new life into his church. God gives the church a gift to help them become who they were really made to be. Pentecost marks a new phase in the journey of the life of the early church. And as we think a bit about that this morning, how fitting it is to be celebrating Jack's baptism this morning on Pentecost, as he starts a new phase in his journey with God – what a great Sunday for a baptism! And, of course, the gift of the Holy Spirit is not just something God gave to his church thousands of years ago, but it's a gift God continues to offer us today. The story of Pentecost gives us an example of what it looks like when the church is filled with the Holy Spirit – God equips his people for mission and thousands of people become Christians as a result. And the Holy Spirit is a means by which God continues to equip us for his purposes today.

The story of Pentecost shows us what can happen when the church is filled with the Spirit. I think it's impossible for the church to truly be the church without the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, it can be quite easy for the church to do lots of nice things in its own strength – we can have lots of good ideas and put on nice events and be known as helpful people, but if we're not listening to the Holy Spirit's leading or allowing God to equip us by his Spirit, we're really missing the point. To be who we are really called to be, the church needs to be Spirit-filled.

I'm going to use a balloon to show you what I mean...

For a balloon to really be a proper balloon, it needs to be full of air. When it's full of air it fulfils its purpose of being something you can celebrate with, play with, rub on your head and make your hair go funny... When it's full of air, a balloon is everything it's meant to be.

But a balloon without air in it...you can't really do much with it, it just looks a bit limp and pathetic!

As a church, we are a bit like a balloon – like a balloon needs to be filled with air, the church needs to be full of God's Holy Spirit. We need God to breathe life into us for the church to be all that we are meant to be.

We can't see the air that goes into filling the balloon, but we can see the affect the air has on the balloon, we can see the difference the air makes. And it's the same with the Holy Spirit – we might not be able to physically see the Holy Spirit, but we can see the difference the Spirit makes in our lives and in the church. When we are full of the Holy Spirit, a sign of that might be that the church is filled with more joy or peace or excitement or courage – when we are filled with the Spirit, we can see the difference. As God's church, don't we want to be more like the full balloon being all that it's meant to be, rather than the sad-looking empty one? For the church to truly be the church, it needs to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

So, let's think a bit more about what happened at Pentecost...

Firstly, we see that the Holy Spirit is a gift God wants to give all who believe in him. We're told in Acts 2 that on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were gathered together in one place – and then suddenly the Holy Spirit shows up through a violent wind and what seemed to be tongues of fire that came and rested on each of them. We're told that ALL of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues. The Holy Spirit didn't just come and fill some of Jesus's followers, ALL the disciples were filled with the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not just a gift God has for some of us. The Holy Spirit is available to everyone. God wants to equip all of us with his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a gift for the whole church.

Of course, we all receive the Holy Spirit at the moment we become Christians, but the Holy Spirit is a gift God wants to continue to give us more and more of so that the church can really be who we're called to be. We're reminded of this again towards the end of our reading in Acts 2:16-21 when Peter addresses

the crowd and quotes the prophet Joel who envisioned a day when God would pour out his Spirit on all people – whether male or female, young or old, no matter our status or job or position in life – the Holy Spirit is a gift available to all of us.

Secondly, here at Pentecost, we see that the church is Spirit-filled for a purpose. God doesn't just send his Holy Spirit to give his followers a good experience, or to improve their lives. God equips his people with his Spirit for a purpose. Gathered together in Jerusalem were thousands of people of all different nationalities and backgrounds. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God enables the disciples to speak in all different kinds of languages, meaning that everybody gathered in Jerusalem, regardless of where they were from, could hear the wonders of God declared in their own language. How amazing that must have been!

At Pentecost, God equips his people with the Holy Spirit for the purpose of his mission – so that other people can hear the Gospel message and the truth about who God is. Later on in Acts 2, we're told that about three thousand people accepted the Gospel and were baptised at Pentecost. How incredible and exciting that must have been...It is only through the power and the equipping of the Holy Spirit that this could happen. Thousands of people came to know God, not because of how interesting, articulate, or talented the disciples were, but through the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the church. If the disciples had tried to spread the gospel in their own strength, I don't think they would have had the same results!

So, the event of Pentecost shows us that the Holy Spirit is a gift God wants to continue to give to those who believe in him, and that God sends the gift of the Holy Spirit for a purpose – so that we are equipped and empowered to tell others about Him.

Before Jesus left the disciples and ascended into heaven, he instructs them to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them and teaching them to obey his commands. Here at Pentecost, we see the Holy Spirit equipping and empowering the disciples as they begin to fulfil Jesus's instruction. And that instruction to go and make disciples wasn't just for Jesus's

followers back then but continues to be what we as God's church are called to do today. We are all called to share the gospel and tell others about the difference knowing Jesus makes to our lives.

Telling others about Jesus is the responsibility of the whole church – it's not just for vicars or people who have done a licenced lay ministry course – we've all got a part to play in God's mission, and God is faithful in equipping us for his purposes by his Holy Spirit, just as his did for his disciples at Pentecost.

And all this stuff about being filled with the Spirit and telling others about Jesus is not just about what goes in when we're in this building – it's also about what goes on in the places we (the church) spend our time when we go out from here. It's about how we act and live in our homes, with our neighbours, in our workplaces, our schools, the shops, on the bus, etc.

So, as we finish, I invite you to think about the places and people you spend your time with in the week. We all have people we are connected to in some way that don't know God, and it could be that we're the only Christian they know, the only one who could possibly tell them something about what it means to know Jesus. We don't want people to miss out on the good news! Who might God be prompting you to tell about him? Is there someone in your life the Holy Spirit might be leading you to bless or encourage or help? What is your role in our church's call to make more disciples and tell others about God? I'll leave those as questions for us to continue to reflect on...but as we finish, let's pray...