

Camel-Allen Churches

Sunday Worship at Home

23rd May 2021



PENTECOST

WELCOME on this Pentecost Sunday, as we celebrate the coming of Jesus' promised Gift of the Holy Spirit

WE PREPARE

Call to Worship

Come as God's Spirit calls us.

Lord we come.

Come as God's Spirit calls us in gentleness.

Lord we come.

Come as God's Spirit calls us to worship.

Lord we come.

Come as God's Spirit calls us to action.

Lord we come.

A gathering prayer

Lord, help us to look out and listen for your Holy Spirit.

May we welcome you with open hearts and minds.

Call us, inspire us, surprise us and challenge us.

Give us confidence and calm assurance.

Lead us to your power and love. Amen

HYMN

Come down, O Love divine

seek Thou this soul of mine
and visit it with Thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, Thy holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn,
till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes, in its heat consuming;
and let Thy glorious light
shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

Let holy charity
mine outward vesture be,
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;
true lowliness of heart,
which takes the humbler part,
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

And so the yearning strong,
with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the power of human telling;
for none can guess its grace,
till he become the place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes His dwelling.

We say, 'Sorry' and receive God's loving forgiveness...

Forgive us, Creator God,

when we have not heard your voice in the song of the birds
and the rustle of leaves:

Open the ears of our hearts.

When we have not seen you in the grandeur of the mountains
and the rhythm of the waves:

Open the eyes of our hearts.

When we have not rejoiced at the vibrance of spring or the
colours of autumn:

Unlock the joy in our hearts.

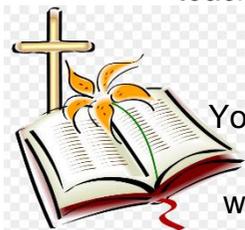
When we have stifled your Spirit and confined your love:
Deepen the love in our hearts.

Forgive us, and release in us the true Spirit of Pentecost,
Today and always. Amen

May the Father forgive us
by the death of his Son
and strengthen us
to live in the power of the Spirit
all our days. Amen

HYMN

Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as is the dove;
teach us the truth and help us believe,
show us the Saviour's love.



You spoke to men long, long ago,
gave us the written Word;
we read it still, needing its truth,
through it, God's voice is heard.
Spirit of God ...

Without Your help we fail our Lord,
we cannot live His way;
we need Your power, we need Your strength,
following Christ each day.

Spirit of God ...



GOD'S WORD

Readings:

Acts 2: 1-21

2 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested^{1a} on each one of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. **6** And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. **7** And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? **9** Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya



belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” ¹² And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³ But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.”

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.[Ⓜ] ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;

²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

Romans 8: 22-27

²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because[Ⓜ] the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Gospel John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

[Jesus continued...]

²⁶ “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ concerning sin, because they do

not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹² "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore, I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

Reflection

Today we celebrate Pentecost and, fittingly, today's Gospel reading is an extract from the long farewell discourse of Jesus to his disciples on Maundy Thursday in which Jesus reassures the disciples that, although he is now to return to the Father, he will send the Holy Spirit who will guide them into all the truth. That promise was fulfilled at Pentecost when, as we were told in the reading from Acts, the Spirit descended upon the apostles with a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and tongues of fire rested on each of them as they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Whether we are to understand that description literally or not, the Spirit undoubtedly turned what had been a frightened, fearful and dispirited group of leaderless men, hiding away in locked rooms in the wake of the crucifixion, into outspoken and courageous missionaries proclaiming the Gospel message for all to hear, regardless of any personal risk to themselves.

This was the work of the Holy Spirit: but the job of the Holy Spirit was not completed at Pentecost.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul explains the role which the Holy Spirit fulfils in our lives now. Chapter 8 of the letter needs to be read as a whole. Paul tells us that those who live according to the flesh set their minds on things of the flesh which leads only to death, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit, which brings both life and peace.

Christians, Paul says, live in the Spirit because the Spirit of God dwells in us. All who are led by the Spirit are children of God and, if children, then heirs, joint heirs with Christ.

What does it mean to be joint heirs with Christ as the children of God? In addressing this question Paul grapples with the problem which troubles so many as to why there is suffering in the world. We suffer with Christ, Paul says, so that we may also be glorified with him. The sufferings of the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed to us.

Paul urges upon us the long view of God's plan for the universe. He deploys the powerful image of the whole of creation groaning in labour pains until now. The pains of labour are, no doubt, excruciating: but I have not met a mother yet who did not think that the suffering was worth enduring for the prize of the final result.

Paul's vision, then, is that the whole of creation is suffering the equivalent of labour pains as it struggles to give birth to the new creation of God where decay and death will be no more when, as we pray each week, the Kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven.

For Paul, then, we are in a kind of in between times. The creation is still struggling in its labour pains to bring forth the new creation but, despite the suffering, we Christians already have the first fruits of the Spirit. We need to look to another of Paul's letters, to the Galatians, for what the fruits of the Spirit are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

We are on the way; the whole of creation is on the way: but we are not there yet; and the Spirit helps us in our present "between times" predicament. The Spirit helps us to pray and intercedes for us with the Father 'with sighs too deep for words'. What Paul means here is that we do not have the language to address God in prayer as we really ought to do, but it does not matter because the Spirit, which dwells in us, speaks directly to the Father for us, in ways that are beyond any language. There is an important lesson to take away here about prayer: it doesn't always have to be filled with words. Sometimes we can, and should, just sit quietly and let the Spirit within talk to the Father for us.

HYMN

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,

the Holy One, is here;
come bow before Him now
with reverence and fear:
in Him no sin is found –
we stand on holy ground.

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire,
with splendour He is crowned:

how awesome is the sight –
our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place:
He comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister His grace –
no work too hard for Him.
In faith receive from Him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

We say together, in faith...

We believe in God the Father
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power on high.

We believe in one god;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen

WE PRAY TOGETHER

Intercessions

We pray for God to fill us with his Spirit
Generous God
we thank you for the power of your Holy Spirit.
We ask that we may be strengthened to serve you better.
Lord come to bless us
and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the peace of your Holy Spirit.
We ask you to keep us confident of your love
wherever you call us.
Lord come to bless us
and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the gifts of your Holy Spirit
We ask you to equip us for the work
which you have given us.
Lord come to bless us
and fill us with your Spirit.

We thank you for the breath of your Holy Spirit,
given us by the risen Lord.
We ask you to keep the whole Church
in the joy of eternal life.
Lord, hear our prayer
**and make us one in heart and mind
to serve with joy for ever. Amen.**

A collect for today...

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

Being made one by the power of the Holy Spirit,
we pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.....

...Our Father

OUR SERVICE DRAWS TO A CLOSE

HYMN

Spirit of the living God,
fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God,
fall afresh on me.
Melt me mould me,
fill me use me.
Spirit of the living God,
fall afresh on me.



**May the Spirit
who set the Church on fire
upon the day of Pentecost,
bring the world alive
with the love of the risen Christ. Amen**

**And... May the Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ
the Love of God
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all, evermore. Amen.**

*Material for this service is drawn from: Rootsontheweb.com;
Common Worship - Times and Seasons
Hymns taken from missionpraise.com; CCLI# 999402
Service compiled by Sue
Reflection by Jeffrey*