

Pentecost at Home



With Prescott Parish Church

Dear all,

Greetings from Prescot Parish Church. We hope that you and your loved ones are keeping safe and well during these strange and uncertain times. We look forward to the day when we gather again in person yet, although dispersed for now, we are still connected – as the body of Christ.

In your packs you will find a dove attached to a piece of string. On this dove, we would love it if you would write a prayer – for anything or anyone that is on your heart at this time. Then, one day, when we are reunited once more, we will ask that you bring your dove with you as we attach them to the cross – a lasting reminder that nothing can ever separate us from His love, or the love of one another.

We also remain connected through virtual means, be that the services on the website or Facebook; by audio CD or over the phone; and by praying Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline in our individual homes – knowing that our brothers and sisters in Christ are doing the same.

In the second enclosed booklet you will find a lectionary which runs from Pentecost until the end of summer. We encourage you to use this, along with either your prayer booklets (sent in March) or the Church of England Daily Prayer app on your mobile phones, in order to set aside some time each day for prayer and reflection.

Each year – between Ascension and Pentecost – the Church of England calls upon Christians to renew their commitment to prayer. Although many of us feel isolated, may this be a time where our lives of prayer are enriched and refreshed, for we know that prayer changes us, changes others, and changes the world.

May you receive the power of the Spirit – fierce as the wind yet gentle as a breath. May the fire of the Spirit purify you; burning away the dross of life. And may the peace of the Spirit, which passes all understanding, be yours – this Pentecost and always.

Love,

The Team at Prescot Parish Church

Introduction

Jesus Christ, whom we worship, is our crucified, risen and ascended Lord and we have walked with him through his journey of love. We have faced the agony of his suffering and death on a cross. We have rejoiced at his bursting free from the bonds of death. We have enjoyed his risen presence with us and his revelation of himself. We have seen his return to the throne before which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that this Jesus is Lord. And now, with the followers of his own time, we await the coming of the promised Holy Spirit, his gift to his people, through whom we make Christ known to the world.

Opening Responses

God speaks to us

In the riches of creation

God speaks to us

In the stories of Jesus

God speaks to us

In the lives of other people

God speaks to us

In words and ways that we can understand

God of fire and beauty

Warm us

God of peace and justice

Disturb us

God of wind and wonder

Amaze us

God of Pentecost

Kindle your love in our lives

Confession

The Spirit of the Lord fills the world
and knows our every word and deed.
Let us then open ourselves to the Lord
and confess our sins in penitence and faith.

A moment of silence

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.



You bring pardon and peace to the broken in heart:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

You make one by your Spirit the torn and divided:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy

May the God of love
bring *us* back to himself,
forgive *us our* sins,
and assure *us* of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Collect

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.

Pause for Thought

When was the last time
that we heard the wind of your Spirit
roar through this place?
When was the last time
your fire lit up this room?
When was the last time
we took you at your word
and met together in expectation
of your Spirit filling this place,
and these lives with your Glory and Power?
Lord, you challenge us with Pentecost.
Do we believe that this
was a once in eternity experience,
never to be repeated?

That the Holy Spirit was poured out
on your followers for a single purpose,
and ended His work at that instant?
Lord, as we meet together,
and celebrate once again
the memory of that first Pentecost,
may it be for us as it was then
a moment of empowerment,
an awareness of your Glory in this dark world,
a life changing experience.

Bible Readings

Acts 2:1-21 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² 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. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, 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, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." ¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

Peter Addresses the Crowd

¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the

morning. ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ '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.

¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.

²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

John 7:37-39 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

³⁷ On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, ³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Sermon by the Rev'd John A. Taylor

On the feast of Pentecost, the first followers of Jesus tumbled out into the streets of Jerusalem alive with the power of God's Spirit; and the bystanders were bemused. 'What does this mean?' was the reaction of some; whilst the less charitable onlookers dismissed the noisy group of uneducated Galileans as being drunk; thinking that their ecstatic speech was the result of too much wine, too early in the morning. But at least some people were amazed and interested enough to ask what it all meant.

‘What does it mean?’ they asked; and that is still a relevant question. Peter gives his explanation of what was happening. He says that it is the outpouring of God’s Spirit on all people, as foretold by the prophet Joel.

Having said this there is something which Peter doesn’t deal with directly and that is the miracle of understanding which is taking place. We are told that there are Parthians, Medes, Elamites and the rest; and all these people hear of the mighty acts of God in their own language. They don’t hear in Greek, or Aramaic or any of the commonly spoken languages of the time, which most people knew; but each hear in their own language.

I think a miracle of understanding is something we are going to need, as we emerge from this Covid19 global pandemic. The new normal will be different from what had gone before. We will need to learn and understand better what is important in life.

I have been moved by the way in which we have all applauded our National Health Service workers each Thursday. Men and women who have put their own wellbeing at risk in order to care for others. Government ministers rightly join in this applause, yet governments have been responsible for underfunding the NHS for years, and many of the vital workers on whom we depend are on low pay - both in the health service and care homes.

As we watch the NHS workers on our TV screens, the mixture of ethnicities is obvious. Many will have been born in this country; some will be immigrants. All of them are working to save lives, and we rightly express our gratitude to them. It is ironic that only a few months ago during the toxic Brexit campaign, immigrants were, in some quarters, being spoken of with contempt.

One of the points of the Pentecost story is that the Holy Spirit can break down the barriers we put up, to shut out those who we consider different than ourselves. The Spirit breaks down barriers and lets us see the real people behind the artificial divides and labels we put on others. The Spirit helps us to see others for who that are, none other than our brothers and sisters who, like us, are made in the image of the living God.

So, there is a question for each of us today. The same question asked by the people of Jerusalem when they heard the disciples speaking, 'What does this mean?' What does this mean for us? What barriers have we put up against other people, what prejudices do we have that need to be broken down by the Holy Spirit? Broken down so that we can see the people behind those barriers are created by God, loved by God and redeemed by Him.

In learning to accept others, we have to learn that very difficult lesson of accepting ourselves, and then that even more difficult task of accepting that we are accepted by God.

Amen.

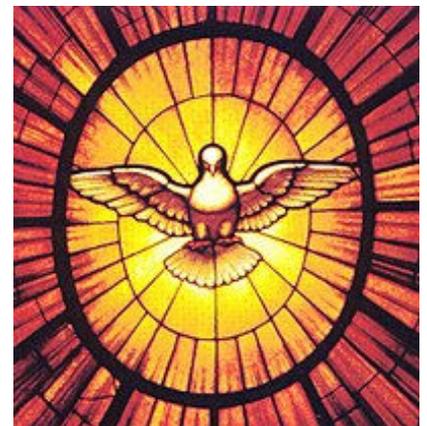
The Apostles' Creed

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

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 *wisdom* of your Holy Spirit.

We ask you to make us wise to understand your will.

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 *healing* of your Holy Spirit.

We ask you to bring reconciliation and wholeness where there is division, sickness and sorrow.

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 *fruit* of your Holy Spirit.

We ask you to reveal in our lives the love of Jesus.

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, living and departed, in the joy of eternal life.

Lord, come to bless us

and fill us with your Spirit.

Generous God,

you sent your Holy Spirit upon your Messiah at the river Jordan, and upon the disciples in the upper room:

in your mercy fill us with your Spirit,

**hear our prayer,
and make us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Blessing

May the Spirit,
who hovered over the waters when the world was created,
breathe into us the life he gives.

Amen.

May the Spirit,
who overshadowed the Virgin when the eternal Son came among
us,
make us joyful in the service of the Lord.

Amen.

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 the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.

Amen.

Closing Responses

Spirit of truth

Fill our emptiness with your fullness

Spirit of power

Stir our hearts afresh

Spirit of love

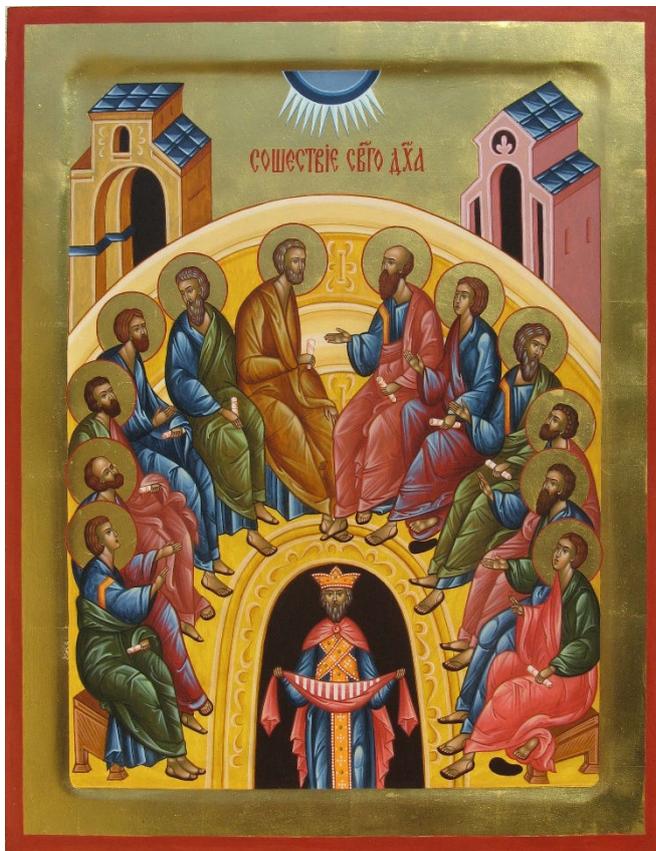
Touch us, and through us, our neighbour

Spirit of Creativity

Enable and empower the gifts you have given

Spirit of Eternity

Draw us ever deeper into your Kingdom



The liturgy in this booklet is taken from:

*Common Worship Times and Seasons –
Church House Publishing*

Wild Goose Resources – Iona Community

Pentecost is Now – Joy Mead

**All Bible references are taken from the
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

Orthodox Icon of Pentecost

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