

## The Bride Valley Service for Pentecost Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2020

*Pentecost is a significant day in the life of the Christian Church, a day when we celebrate the beginning of the Church, the sending down of the Holy Spirit to equip those first disciples. May 31<sup>st</sup> is a special anniversary for me personally, when as a 15 year old this was the day I gave my life to the Lord Jesus, a transforming moment which I'm happy to talk about with anyone. Reverend Jane*

### Welcome to our Service

*You will need a bible for the readings, you might also light a candle to help you reflect*

Suggested hymn: O God of cleansing burning flame (Send the fire)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7et6rFUJ68>

God says: I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

**All The Spirit has come, Alleluia!**

Christ says: I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever.

**All The Spirit has come, Alleluia!**

Come, Holy Spirit, gentle as a dove, burning as fire, powerful as the wind.

**All Come, Holy Spirit, come.**

### **We say sorry**

Forgive us Lord, for all the harmful words we have said to other people and for the careless words we say about other people.

Lord have mercy

**All Lord have mercy**

Lord, forgive us for all the times we have kept silent, forgotten to speak out against injustice and forgotten to tell others of your love.

Lord have mercy

**All Lord have mercy**

Lord, forgive us for all the times we forget to talk to you and forget to praise your name.

Lord have mercy

**All Lord have mercy**

### **We say thank you**

*In silence we remember all the gifts that God has given us and the things he has done for us, and say "thank you".*

**All Loving God, we thank you for sending your Holy Spirit to the Church, to give us the gifts we need to do your work. You have given each of us special gifts to express in the world your love – which is the greatest gift of all. Thank you for loving us so much that you want to make us part of your mission.**

### **The Collect for Pentecost**

O Lord, from whom all good things come: grant to us your humble servants, that by your holy inspiration we may think those things that are good, and by your merciful guiding may perform the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever, Amen.

**First reading: Acts 2 verses 1 - 21**

## ***Gospel reading: John 20 verses 19 -23***

### ***A Reflection by the Reverend Jane Williams***

Picking up on Sue's theme of waiting from last week: 'What are you waiting for?'  
A very good question. What would my answer be?

It's Pentecost Sunday so surely I am hoping for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit to empower people to preach and proclaim the Gospel as happened on the first day of Pentecost. But, what is the point of waiting for something that has already happened? The Holy Spirit has already been poured out and you have received power now that the Holy Spirit has come upon you to be God's witnesses.

Now don't get me wrong, waiting for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit is not like waiting for a train, and if it has already come and gone there is no point in waiting for it. Of course, we are encouraged to wait on God again and again and to spend time in his presence seeking him before we go in His name to do whatever. But there comes a point for us just like the disciples where we have waited for long enough I know that I have said this before, but I won't ever stop saying it – Jesus said GO! (into the world and preach...) but before he said 'Go' he said 'Come'. Come to me all you who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Come to me you who are thirsty, and I will give you rivers of living water, come to me you who are lonely and be welcomed into my family, come and receive life in all its fullness. And it is so important that we come to Jesus before we go in his name, because otherwise we won't be being transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit within us and we won't have anything to authentically witness to.

In this time of lockdown we have an amazing opportunity to spend time waiting in God's presence without the usual distractions. I know that there are new distractions, and new challenges, but what if we really used the remainder of this period however long it might last, to set aside time to just waiting in God's presence however you find that best to do. To ask him if he has any questions to ask us as individuals. To present to him any brokenness and pain that we carry, to feed and build ourselves up in his Word by reading the Bible, and to spend time in worship – which for some of you will be listening to hymns, for some to new and nearly new songs of worship, and to some it will be medieval chants, and for some all of those things! Whatever it is that makes your spirit soar in worship to God, just do it.

When this time of lockdown or waiting is over, we will need to be ready to Go. To make such a racket like the disciples and to be so noticeable because of our joy and love that others will be changed as a result. We will be different. Society will be different. The way we 'do' church will be different. But the need of humankind is just the same as it was that first Pentecost, to hear the Good news of freedom and restoration, to be the people that God made them to be.

We will be people in love in two senses; firstly that we are in Christ, who is love (2 Cor 5:17; 1 John 4:16) , and secondly that we are people who have the freedom of knowing that we are loved for who we are, and that we love God, so we behave like people who are in love. Yes, sometimes that does mean floating on air – or being so happy that you are accused of being drunk. Anyone who has been in love for a long time will tell you that there are moments of euphoria, especially at the beginning, and then there are times when love is a choice, and you stick at it, because you just know that it's the truth. Love brings us to life, and the glory of God is a human being fully alive (Irenaeus). And people will notice, and want to know why.

‘Love is as strong as death, it burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters can’t quench love, rivers cannot wash it away’ as the writer of Song of Songs put it. We usually only use the word ‘incandescent’ in the context of rage, because the word means emitting light as a result of being heated, or full of strong emotion; imagine if we were all incandescent with love. People couldn’t help but notice.

What are you waiting for?

Pray with me: Lord send revival and start with me, fill me afresh with your Holy Spirit of Love, draw me into your presence, so that I can know your transformation and hope. Amen

### ***We declare our faith***

**All We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family in heaven and 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 from on high.  
We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

### ***We pray for others and for ourselves.***

God of Spirit and power, you fell upon the disciples at that first Pentecost, warm as a smile and quick as a lightning strike. Teach us that what happened out there and back then can happen here and right now. We too can know your power in our lives. Open us, we pray, to that same power of love which alone changes lives.

Come, Holy Spirit **and renew us in your service.**

God of Spirit and truth, give us such confidence in the truth of the gospel that we’re happy to share our faith as naturally as the sun rises and a child plays. May your Spirit break open our reticence as it did the fear of those disciples on that first day of Pentecost. And may our lives tell the same story as our lips.

Come, Holy Spirit **and renew us in your service.**

God of Spirit and creativity, bless the creative pursuits of your people – the artists and musicians, the poets and writers, the dramatists, sculptors and graphic designers, the potters and film-makers and all the creative industries. Bless us too as we create albeit on a lesser scale, tend our gardens, take our photographs, cook our signature dishes. May the Spirit find us willing co-workers in the creation of all things authentic and beautiful.

Come, Holy Spirit **and renew us in your service.**

God of Spirit and community, this is the day the church was born. We know the church is still in draft form; you want much more for us. May your Spirit mould us into the likeness of Jesus so that we live the way he lived and love the way he loved. And all in the fellowship of his body, the Church.

Come, Holy Spirit **and renew us in your service.**

God of Spirit and joy, melt the frost around our hearts and fill us with the warmth of Pentecost. Search us with your Spirit until faith is burned into our lives and we dare to live differently. Save us from conventional faith and send us out to live and work, led by the Spirit, to your praise and glory. **Amen.**

*We say the prayer that Jesus taught us:*

**All** 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.

**All** Spirit of God,  
Refining like fire, free as the wind, gentle as a dove, come among us.  
Cleanse our hearts, liberate our souls, bring peace to our minds, and send us out with power to  
proclaim the kingdom of God, in the name of the living Christ. Amen

*We say the Grace together; to one another and for one another.*

**All** 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

Liturgy adapted from a Pentecost Service held at St Mary's Church, Puncknowle recently.  
Prayers adapted from Intercessions by John Pritchard, former Bishop of Oxford.