

*Christ Church, New
Southgate & Friern Barnet*

*Pentecost Sunday
23 May 2021*

Please join with us at 11am on Sunday in person, online or on paper

Welcome to Christ Church

Song - 'Holy Spirit inspire again' by Jo Dore

Opening prayer

Lord we thank you for this Pentecost Sunday and birthday of the Church. We thank you for the power and presence of the Holy Spirit with us at all times. We adore and glorify your name.

May the flame of the Spirit touch our souls, the light of Christ's truth fill our minds, and the love of the Creator fill our hearts as we worship together this day. **Amen.**

Call to worship

Psalm 104 vs. 24 -35 and 35b.

LORD, you have made so many things!
How wisely you made them all!
The earth is filled with your creatures.
**There is the ocean, large and wide,
where countless creatures live, large and
small alike.**

The ships sail on it, and in it plays Leviathan,
that sea monster which you made.

**All of them depend on you to give them
food when they need it.**

You give it to them, and they eat it; you
provide food, and they are satisfied.

**When you turn away,
they are afraid;
when you take away your breath,
they die and go back
to the dust from which they came.**

But when you give them breath, they are
created; you give new life to the earth.

**May the glory of the LORD last forever!
May the LORD be happy with what he
has made!**

He looks at the earth, and it trembles;
he touches the mountains, and they pour out
smoke.

**I will sing to the LORD all my life;
as long as I live
I will sing praises to my God.**

May he be pleased with my song, for my
gladness comes from him.

**Praise the LORD, my soul! Praise
the LORD!**

All-Age Talk

I have three Ps to explain Pentecost, the
coming of the Holy Spirit to the first disciple
of Jesus. Can anyone guess what each of the
Ps stand for?

1st P – Promise: The gift of the Holy Spirit,
Jesus promised His disciples arrived ten days
after He went up to heaven. The disciples
received the Holy Spirit in a miraculous way
through **Wind** (Swoosh) and **Fire** (Sizzling)
2nd P -Power: The gift of the Holy Spirit
gave the disciples the ability to follow Jesus.

He gave them the boldness to carry on the work of Jesus. The work of telling everyone God loves them. That He wants everyone to become part of His big family and forever Kingdom. That everyone, yellow, white, black or brown who decides to follow Jesus is welcome by God.

3rd P - Presence: Jesus told His disciples before he left that, he will be with them at all times and forever. The Holy Spirit came to remind them Jesus is with them at all times. That he will rejoice with them when happy. Comfort them when sad; Guide and care for them.

Jesus is willing and very much want everyone to receive this same gift of the Holy Spirit. He wants everyone to have the power of God to do His work and to know the presence of God at all times. To enjoy this gift ask Jesus to forgive you for living your own way. Believe Jesus died and rose again so that we might be forgiven and ask Him to be the ruler of your life. **Amen**

Let us pray

Lord Jesus thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Help us to turn from living our own way to living your way. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit, so we can enjoy your power and presence at all times. **Amen.**

Bible reading: Acts 2:1-21.

Prayer of confession

**God of all mercy,
we have wandered from your way.
We have sinned in thought,
word, and deed,
and have failed to do what is right.**

**Have mercy on us,
wipe out our sins and teach us
to forgive others.
Bring forth the fruit
of your Holy Spirit
that we may live the new life
to your glory.**

Assurance of pardon

May the God of mercy who forgives all your sins through Jesus Christ strengthen you in all goodness by the power of the Holy Spirit and keep you in eternal life. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Sermon – by Mrs Ola Lawal

Let us pray:

Guide us, O God, by your Word, and Holy Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover peace; through Christ our Lord, **Amen.**

Why celebrate Pentecost'?

I had an interesting conversation a few weeks ago with someone who was wary the lockdown will soon come to an end. He felt safer indoors. He was glad not to have entertained or interacted with anyone for so many months. I guess he is not alone. It is natural to be wary and scared after the devastation we had all witnessed in the last fourteen months. He could do with some help to overcome his fear and to move forward.

The first disciples of Jesus too were wary and frightened after Jesus ascended to heaven. If the authorities could do such horrible things

to their leader, what chance had they not to suffer from persecution too?

The disciples definitely needed help to move forward. Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift He will send to them after he had ascended to heaven. This promised gift, the Holy Spirit, also known as the Advocate or Helper arrived ten days after the ascension of Jesus. It arrived on the same day as the feast of Weeks, which is celebrated fifty days after the Passover. Many of the Jews living inside and outside Israel as far as Greece and Rome, were in Jerusalem for the celebration. The feast of weeks is to thank God for the Spring Harvest and to pray for a bounteous autumn harvest. It is also seen by some as a time of covenant renewal and new birth. A time of moving forward and of taking up new opportunities.

Today we celebrate the feast of Pentecost, in remembrance of the day The Holy Spirit first came. Pentecost Sunday is also known as the Birthday of the Church. On this day, we remember how the miraculous, much needed gift gave the first twelve disciples the courage to move forward and propelled the onset of Christianity. Acts 2 vs 2v - 4 and 9 say, 'suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Everyone heard the disciples speaking in their different languages. It was not a mystical event like the Transfiguration which was witnessed by just three disciples. The arrival of the Holy Spirit was an outpouring of God's energy, seen and

heard by everyone present. Everyone in Jerusalem heard the disciples in their various languages. A communication miracle much needed in today's world to break down barriers, prevent war, injustice, violence and abuse. The unleashed God's Spirit was nothing to do with being drunk as pointed out by Peter to the critics. The Holy Spirit is the fulfilment of part of Joel's prophecy which Peter quoted in verses Acts 2 vs. 17-21.

The Holy Spirit, the Power of God, gave the disciples a sudden, much needed new life. He gave them the boldness to speak the truth about Jesus. To tell those present, that through His death on the cross and resurrection on the third day, our sins are forgiven by God. That accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour is the only way to eternal redemption. He gave them the power continue telling everyone this Good News all over Judea, Samaria and much farther as Jesus commanded before He ascended to heaven.

We celebrate Pentecost, the Power of God, because it propelled not just the onset of Christianity but also its continuation over two thousand years afterwards. The Holy Spirit, is who helps us turn away from darkness to the light of Jesus on hearing of God's grace and love. Binding us together as the body of Christ, the Church, despite our diversity and differences. Empowering the church to continually share the Good News of Jesus, pray, and encourage others as we stride towards God's ultimate plan. The plan for all people to turn away from doing things their way. To accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour. To propel the second coming of Jesus and for everyone to be part of God's eternal Kingdom.

Another reason we celebrate Pentecost is He enables our faith, testimony and acceptance of the truth about God. What truth you might ask? The truth that the birth, death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ are for us! That we are God's beloved children. Spirit-filled from the day we get baptised and adopted into God's family. That all the promises of God in the Bible are unfailing truths. That God is no longer distant from us but intimately connected to our life. That He is with us all through the ups and downs of our life-journey. Comforting us when we are sad, lifting us up when we are down and reminding us that our eternity with Jesus in heaven is assured.

The global pandemic had shaken some people's faith in Jesus. Some of us have become a bit indifferent or lukewarm about the Good News of Jesus. Some also struggle to believe He loves them. Brothers and Sisters, are you indifferent or struggling to believe in the power and presence of God after all you have been through? On this Pentecost Sunday, ask Jesus afresh for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to empower and strongly reassure you of His love, truth and presence. If lukewarm, ask Jesus to stir your hearts and rekindle your zeal for Him.

We should all also ask Jesus to embolden us with His Power and Presence. To pray along with so many this week 'Thy Kingdom come'. To continually share the Good news of Jesus and His love with everyone. To keep doing our bit for the goodness of our society and communities. To be at the forefront of social justice. To boldly move forward. To embrace new opportunities as a church and as individuals. **Amen.**

Let us pray using the collect for today.

O God, who on this day 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 judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Prayer of thanksgiving and intercession

The response when I say: **Lord Your Spirit is with us is --Hear our prayer.**

Lord, Your Spirit is with us----Hear our prayer

Loving God we ask for the gift of your Holy Spirit to help us pray as we ought. Come Holy Spirit, fill your universal church. Set our hearts on fire with the warmth of your love. Thy Kingdom come Lord. Help us to boldly reach out to others with the Good News of Christ and to bring hope to those in distress.

We pray for our minister, Revd. Ruth Moriarty, and the deacons here at Christ Church nsfb to fill them with your Spirit, wisdom and the discernment to move the church forward in your power as we fully reopen. Guide us in our relationships with each other, as a church and as a community. Draw us together in your fellowship of love,

joy and holiness.

Lord, Your Spirit is with us----Hear our prayer

Come Holy Spirit, direct the world rulers. Fill them with your discernment and the urgency to seek the common good. Show them how to promote peace, equity and unity. This we ask especially for countries where many are suffering because of war, conflict or oppression. We remember Yemen, Palestine, Israel, Myanmar, Northern Nigeria and Northern Ireland.

We ask for your energy and vision for the peacemakers and the relief workers in places of strife, war, oppression and violence. Lord, renew our world and especially the United Kingdom with your Spirit. Stem the abuse, violence and alienation that is ruining people's lives. Comfort those who have suffered from these things. Breathe your Spirit into perpetrators of harmful behaviours and turn them away from their evil deeds.

Lord, Your Spirit is with us----Hear our prayer

Holy Spirit, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, spirit, especially those known to us being cared for at home, care-home or in the hospital. We remember, Jean, Kevin and Lynda. Grant them all courage, hope and the joy of your salvation. Renew the lives of all those who have suffered or still suffering from the effects of the Covid - 19 pandemic, grant them the courage to start afresh. Help those who have since lost their job to find new opportunities.

Lord, Your Spirit is with us----Hear our prayer

Holy Spirit we commend to your everlasting love and light all those who have passed into your glory especially in this last fourteen months. Comfort all who mourn for them especially those amongst us. Grant them all renewed hope and the reassurance of your love.

Lord, Your Spirit is with us----Hear our prayer

Holy Spirit, let us see your light and know your presence in our daily lives whatever our situation may be today. Sanctify us. Create new life in us. Fill us with your peace, comfort and joy. Guide, guard and provide for us. Help us to keep on obeying your commandments to love God with all our heart, body and soul, and to love our neighbours as ourselves. All these we ask in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Blessing

God of power,
may the boldness of your Spirit
transform us,
may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,
may the gifts of your Spirit
be our goal and our strength,
now and always. **Amen.**

Song: 'Send us out' by Matt Osgood