

**Sheffield United Reformed Churches**  
**Team Ministry worship for individuals or families**  
**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 at 10:30 am.**

**Pentecost Sunday**

**Introduction**

Gathered all together, at the first Pentecost we see God's Spirit poured out on his followers, bringing power and life and transformation.

Although we are separated we are together as the body of Christ.

On this day we see barriers broken down, lives transformed and the Gospel spread through the world.

So today we come to receive our free gift of the Holy Spirit, and then give to others with love.

**Call to worship**

God of Pentecost, teach us to understand, to follow you, the way, the truth and the life

We are your people, learning to look again at all you taught us, and seeing with new eyes.

Send your Holy Spirit at this Pentecost, like the first, a new beginning, overflowing with possibility and passion and all that brings life and healing and you, afresh in our midst.

Come Holy Spirit, we welcome you...

**Hymn**

Holy Spirit, truth divine, dawn upon this soul of mine.

Voice of God and inward light, wake my spirit, clear my sight.

Holy Spirit, love divine, glow within this heart of mine.

Kindle every high desire, purify me with your fire.

Holy Spirit, peace divine, still this restless heart of mine.

Speak to calm this tossing sea, grant me your tranquility.

Holy Spirit, joy divine, gladden now this heart of mine.

In the desert ways I sing – spring, O Living Water, spring!

**Prayers of Approach, Confession and Thanksgiving**

Heavenly God, our Creator, we praise and worship you for your love and goodness.

We thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, to live and die and rise again for us.

We thank you, Jesus, for sending your Holy Spirit to live in us, making us more like you.

Holy Spirit, as we learn more about you today, please help us to know your presence with us.

Lord God, we are waiting. Send your Holy Spirit on us today.

Open our ears to listen, our mouths to speak, and our hearts to be filled with love for you. Make us blaze with your power. Change us.

Transform us and fill us with your love and joy to pass on to the world

Loving God forgive us when we hide ourselves away, content with our own lives, oblivious to the lives of others.

Breathe in us and breathe your life through us, catch us up in your whirlwind that in community where your love is shared throughout the land.

In repentance and in faith, receive the promise of grace and the assurance of pardon. Our prayers we lift together in the prayer, which Jesus taught his disciples...

**Our Father ....**



### Readings for the week:

**Psalm 104, 24-35** - Praise for all God has made

**John 20, 19-23** – Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit to his followers

**Acts 2, 1-21** – The Holy Spirit comes to the early church

**1 Corinthians 12, 1-14** – The Spirit gives gifts to the Church

### Reflection

On the evening of the resurrection, John describes the disciples cowering behind locked doors, fearing the Jewish leaders who had arranged the execution of their friend and leader. It's as if everything they had ever strived for, all the hopes that they had invested in their journey with Jesus, had come to nothing.

We all have moments in our lives when we feel we have not achieved much - as if it has been fruitless and pointless. Perhaps, during this time of lockdown, when, like those disciples we are shut in and fearful, even of death, we may feel that we are useless, unable to do anything. We are waiting for something to turn up...

And then the risen Lord is standing among them, coming behind the locked doors to be present. The barriers cannot stop him. He is there. We are reminded that there is no barrier, physical, emotional or spiritual, that can resist the grace of God in Jesus. No matter what the failures of the past or the fears of the present, the risen Lord is with us now - to do something new...

The incident John records is a little foretaste of what is to come on the day of Pentecost when the disciples waited, also behind closed doors, for the gift of the Holy Spirit to send them out. So on that resurrection evening Jesus imparts to his followers the very world-transforming life that is in him. Paul prayed for the early church with these words: *“May the eyes of your heart be enlightened so that you may know the hope to which God has called you and his incomparably great power for us who believe (which is) the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead”* (Ephesians 1, vv18-20). The resurrection life that was in Jesus is now in us! And, as Jesus comes into the locked room, so this life begins to work from the inside outwards, as Jesus imparts three things to the disciples:

**Peace (vv19-21)** - That they may not be afraid. Because Jesus has conquered death, his sacrifice for the human race upon the cross is vindicated by God himself. We can know that our sins are forgiven and nothing in all creation, not even death itself, can separate us from the love of God.

**Proof (v20)** - Jesus shows the disciples his precious wounds so that they may know they are not hallucinating, imagining or seeing a ghost. Jesus is back! The resurrection is real, and our faith is not based on a fairy-tale but on solid historical proof. So, with the disciples our joy is complete because faith engages both our heart and our reason. It will not blow away in the contrary storms of life. It is anchored in reality.

**Purpose (vv21-3)** - The disciples have a new guideline for their lives: to go into the world in the same manner as Jesus came (*“As the Father sent me, so I send you...”*), bearing a message of grace (*“If you forgive anyone’s sins they are forgiven...”*). These words are not a permission from God for us to wield power selfishly over others but, rather, they are an encouragement for, and promise to us that when we dispense grace generously, others will be set free from guilt and fear.

Let us go and live in the **peace**, assured of the **proof**, enabling others to live in the **purpose** of God. So may the world find peace, life and grace from God, through Christ and the Holy Spirit.

### Prayers of Intercession

Heavenly Father, at this moment we come to you. We thank you that Jesus saved us and we are your children.

We pray that the Holy Spirit might come upon us. Lord Jesus, fill us now with the Holy Spirit.

God of creation we pray for our world, we remember especially the people of Afghanistan, Iran and Syria.

We pray for places where war still continues and lives are torn apart by conflict. Lord God, we entrust to you, the people affected by Coronavirus, the families, and communities.

We pray especially for the health care workers, that you guide and protect them.

We pray that your Spirit inspire those researching and seeking solutions for medicines and health care systems that respond to those affected.

We remember communities divided by poverty, oppression, especially.... where the gaps between privilege and powerlessness seem to grow ever wider; the level of violence seems to increase and the injustices continue to outweigh the push for justice.

We pray for healing and that your wisdom will rule in the hearts of all the people who lead.

We remember those who have died, those who mourn, we remember those who are ill, those in hospital, those who are isolated, and those who are seeking to know more about you.

Bless all those who bring healing and hope to those who are ill or anxious about what the future may bring.

Yours is the love that will never die. In our weakness, you are our strength; in our shadows, light; in our sorrows, comfort and peace; from everlasting to everlasting, you are our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God, for ever. Amen

### Song

Spirit Of The Living God, Fall Afresh On Me.

Spirit Of The Living God, Fall Afresh On Me

Melt me, Mold me, Fill me, Use me

Spirit Of Living God - Fall Afresh On Me.

### Blessings

May the Lord bless you not with easy roads, but with strong steps.

May the Spirit bless you, not with certainties and proofs, but with the leap of faith.

May the eternal God bless you, not with happiness for an hour, but with peace and joy for ever.

## Come Holy Spirit!



Wise Counsellor



Cleansing Fire



Gentle Dove



Refreshing Water



New wine



Life-giving  
Midwife



Healing Oil