



The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
Sunday 23 May 2021
Pentecost Sunday

Preparation

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

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 through the breaking of bread. 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 promised Holy Spirit, his gift to his people, through whom we make Christ known to the world.

Responsory

As we wait in silence,
fill us with your Spirit
As we listen to your word,
fill us with your Spirit
As we worship you in majesty,
fill us with your Spirit
As we long for your refreshing,
fill us with your Spirit
As we long for your renewing,
fill us with your Spirit
As we long for your equipping,
fill us with your Spirit
As we long for your empowering,
fill us with your Spirit



Acts 2:1-13

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

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

The Lord is here

His Spirit is with us

Be with us, Spirit of God:

nothing can separate us from your love.

Breathe on us, breath of God:

Fill us with your saving power.

Speak in us, wisdom of God:

Bring strength, healing and peace.

The Collect

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.

John 15:26-27, 16:4-15

‘When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify 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. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, “Where are you going?” But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgement: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgement, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

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

Thanks be to God for the gift of His Holy Word

Reflection by Helen Keighley

Who likes a quiz?

I used to, but lockdown has somehow changed my enjoyment of quizzing!

I used to enjoy being among friends in a lively environment and rising to the challenge of remembering little known facts. Quizzes on zoom have been plentiful over the last year. I can't say it's enjoyable for me. Sitting at home on my own isn't the same as being able to work in a team. There have been quizzes galore on TV but it's not great watching on your own. Questions can be helpful and sometimes annoying.

How many questions do you suppose you ask in a day? I wonder how that compares to how many questions children ask in a day. They always seem to be asking..... WHY? When I was teaching I had to introduce the children to report writing as part of their literacy lessons. We always began by thinking about the words.... WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY AND HOW. These are the words that set up the questions we need to ask. And that's true for Pentecost.

Jesus told His disciples that he was about to leave them. How would they have been feeling? It must have been hard, scary even, knowing you were about to lose your friend and leader, the one you had given everything up to follow. They must have had many questions but time was short and often the disciples didn't fully grasp the things that Jesus was telling them. Jesus tells us they were so filled with grief that they didn't ask where he was going. As Jesus was about to return to His Father, He explained that He would not leave them alone. He would send the Holy Spirit to be with them. They would have someone on their team to guide them. All they had to do was listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit. Still, they wondered what they would do without Him.

The Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks. There was a sudden violent wind. How would that feel? Then tongues of fire came to rest on each one of them. Surely, they were scared. They must have thought... What's happening? It is interesting that those receiving the Spirit then began to speak in different languages. It occurs to me that this is significant. People who heard them could understand them, despite coming from many different regions. Each heard in their own tongue. It speaks to me of the need for effective communication.

We, as modern-day disciples of Christ, are called to spread the Gospel and grow God's Kingdom on earth. To do that we have to reach out to others from different cultures and backgrounds and communicate His word in a form they can understand. It transforms the relationships between humans, as the fire of the Spirit transforms our inner life and the wind of the Spirit blows through the community bringing us together. Pentecost was the beginning of the Christian church and we are called to continue the work.

Jesus did not travel alone. He took his followers with Him. And when He sent the disciples out he sent them in pairs, never alone. We then, also need each

other and we need the Holy Spirit. It's like the difference between doing the quiz on your own or being able to confer.

We cannot go it alone. Jesus gave us the greatest gift that any Christian could imagine; the Holy Spirit, the counsellor, the Spirit of God himself; the spirit of truth who came to guide the disciples and all Christians. The Advocate promised by Christ enters the believing community to guide and protect it until the second coming. The day of Pentecost is a celebration of God's hand guiding the Christian community through the trials and decisions that are presented to it.

And be comforted because when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, he will silence every fear and answer every question and dispel every fear of impossibility. We need only have faith.

So ask yourself... Is the Holy Spirit in you? Are you transformed? Are you growing in the fruits of the Spirit: In love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? Do you feel the rush of the wind and the warmth of the fire? Do you hear the quiet voice? Do you listen for it in prayer? And are you led by the Holy Spirit?

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

(Romans 8:14)

Affirmation of Faith

**We believe and trust in God the Father,
The source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?
We believe and trust in God the Son,
Who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?
We believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
Who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?
This is the faith of the Church. This is our faith:
We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

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.

Merciful Father,

Hear our prayer and make us one in heart and mind

To serve you with joy for ever. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

CONCLUSION

Closing Prayer

Faithful God, who fulfilled the promises of Easter

By sending us your Holy Spirit and opening to every race and nation

The way of life eternal: Open our lips by your Spirit,

That every tongue may tell of your glory;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessed are you sovereign God, overflowing in love.
With Pentecost dawns the age of the Spirit.
Now the flame of heaven rests on every believer.
Strong and weak, women and men tell out your word;
The young receive visions, the old receive dreams.
With the new wine of the Spirit they proclaim your reign of love.
Amid the birth pangs of the new creation
The way of light is made known.
Source of freedom, giver of life,
Blessed are you Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever!

Commission

For fifty days we have celebrated the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ over the powers of sin and death. We have proclaimed God's mighty acts and we have prayed that the power that was at work when God raised Jesus from the dead might be at work in us.

As part of God's Church here in Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme, I call upon you to live out what you proclaim

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, will you dare to walk into God's future,
Trusting him to be your guide?

By the Spirit's power, we will

Will you dare to embrace each other and grow together in love?

We will.

Will you dare to share your riches in common
and minister to each other in need?

We will.

Will you dare to pray for each other
until your hearts beat with the longings of God?

We will.

Will you dare to carry the light of Christ into the world's dark places?

We will.

The Lord is here
His Spirit is with us

Today we have remembered the coming of God's power on the disciples and we invite that same Spirit to drive us out into the wild places of the world.

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

Amen.

May the Spirit,
who overshadowed Mary when the eternal Son came among us,
Make you 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 you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Filled with the Spirit's power
Go in the light and peace of Christ. Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sending Out

