

Worship for 5TH JUNE 2022 (complete text. A video version is also online)
Keep safe. Keep caring. Keep praying.

THE PREPARATION

Welcome

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Welcome to you all on this Pentecost Sunday to worship prepared by staff members from the South Warwickshire Methodist Circuit. The readings today will be read by the Rev'd Jemima Strain. The Rev'd Dr Iain Ballard is the preacher. I am the worship leader for this service – and for those of you who haven't met me yet, my name is Rev'd Sally Jones.

Call to worship –

God declares:

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.
Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Let us pray:

**Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful people,
and kindle in us the fire of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Wherever we are, whether we are watching or
reading this service, we rejoice that God's Spirit
is with us, and that we are one in the Spirit.**

**Hymn: StF 20 Be still, for the presence of the
Lord**

**1 Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here ;
come bow before him now**

**with reverence and fear :
in him no sin is found —
we stand on holy ground.
Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here.**

**2 Be still,
for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around ;
he burns with holy fire,
with splendour he is crowned :
how awesome is the sight —
our radiant King of light !
Be still,
for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.**

**3 Be still,
for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place ;
he comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister his grace :
no work too hard for him —
in faith receive from him.
Be still,
for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.**

David J. Evans (*b.* 1957).

Prayers

A prayer of approach

Loving God, we are here to worship you.

**Help us to remember that you are here with us.
May we pray to you in faith,
sing your praise with gratitude,
and listen to your word with eagerness;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

A prayer of thanksgiving

Let us give thanks to God.

For the love of our Father, the Maker of all,
the giver of all good things:
let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For the world's beauty and the changing seasons,
and for the life that we have been given:

let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For Jesus Christ our Saviour,
who lived and worked among us:
let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For his suffering and death on the cross

and his resurrection to new life:
let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For his rule over all things
and his presence in the world:
let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For the Holy Spirit, the giver of life,
who teaches and guides us:
let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For the grace of the Spirit
in the work of the Church
and the life of the world:
let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

A prayer of confession

Let us confess our sins.

Silence

Loving God,

**we have sinned against you
in what we have thought, said and
done.**

We have not loved you with our

**whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as
ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry
and turn away from what is wrong.
Forgive us for the sake of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Silence

Assurance of forgiveness

Christ Jesus came into the world to
save sinners.

This is his gracious word:
'Your sins are forgiven.'

Amen. Thanks be to God.

Hymn: StF 370 Breathe on me, Breath of God

- 1 **Breathe on me, Breath of God ;
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.**
- 2 **Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.**
- 3 **Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.**
- 4 **Breathe on me, Breath of God ;
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.**

Edwin Hatch (1835–1889)

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

New Testament Reading

Acts 2:1-21

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

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.'

Peter Addresses the Crowd

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. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

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

And I will show portents in the heaven above

and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and
glorious day.
Then everyone who calls on the name of the
Lord shall be saved."

Ephesians 5:8-20

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

'Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.'

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hymn: StF 89 Strength will rise

**Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord,
we will wait upon the Lord,
we will wait upon the Lord.
Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord,
we will wait upon the Lord,
we will wait upon the Lord.**

**Our God, you reign forever.
Our hope, our strong deliverer.**

***You are the everlasting God,
the everlasting God.
You do not faint, you won't grow weary.
You're the defender of the weak,
you comfort those in need;
you lift us up on wings like eagles.***

Brenton Brown and Ken Riley

Sermon

I am not a morning person and so I'd much rather work late at night and sleep in rather than wake early. If woken too early I will spend the rest of the day with a headache, longing to go back to sleep. In my previous life I always had to tell the Registrars that if they needed to call me at night then there was a risk that I simply wouldn't make sense. If that happened, put the phone down wait a few moments and then call me back. That way they knew that I would be awake and able to give good advice or get in the car and get to them quickly.

In the Letter to the Ephesians Paul extols them to wake up. This is not a call to wake up from a lay in or the familiar chimes of an alarm clock. But instead a call to wake up from the dead. This is not from the death which marks the end of life, but that the person is in effect dead because they haven't been filled by the Holy Spirit. They are dead because they aren't yet alive.

Christ died for us at Easter. In his death he brought about salvation for all of humanity. This could be thought of as a corporate salvation which brings about the possibility of an eternity with God. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit entered

each of the disciples. This brings with it the personal element of salvation. God present within our very beings, within our souls. For some in the church this is a difficult concept, not because they do not believe in the Holy Spirit or in salvation but because they haven't experienced the Spirit for themselves.

I remember a few years ago hearing an explanation for how the Holy Spirit is experienced by different people. It is rather than the burner for a heating boiler. For some that burner goes at full strength, it quickly heats the water and then turns off again. For these people (and you might be one of them) the Spirit comes with a flash and brings about instantaneous change in the person's life. Often these people come with a story of how God changed them. For many this is not their experience of how the Spirit works. Instead their experience is more like the pilot light. A constant glow that is often or always present. Just as with anything which is always there it can be easily missed or overlooked. When experienced this way the changes wrought by the Spirit can often be slower, more medium term. That doesn't make this presence any less important or significant in the life of the believer. It is my experience that most Christians fall into this second category, yet they are still Spirit filled followers of Christ.

What matters is not how you experience the Spirit, but that you are being changed by the Spirit. Paul continues by advising the people how they should spend their time, the sort of lives they should lead. He compares wise to unwise; foolish to understanding; drunk or filled with the Spirit. Once awoken by Christ we have choice in how we live our lives. We can choose to live them for Christ or we can waste them by living foolishly. Living as wise people we live as people who are constantly giving thanks to God. This is achieved through constantly worshipping God

with our very lives. The NRSV translates the word, 'eucharistia' as, 'giving thanks'. If we have been made alive then we need to give thanks to the one who has brought about our salvation. Interestingly this is the same word used by some to mean Holy Communion (Eucharist), living in union with God.

As we move further away from the pandemic phase of Covid it feels like many are tired or have fallen asleep. The last two years of change and constant anxiety have taken their toll on us. Our being unable to meet for corporate worship, to disciple one another, to tell our stories or to undertake life giving mission has left us tired, or even fast asleep.

It is time for us to wake up to find life again, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The first step towards this is for us to open our eyes, rise and search for Jesus whose love with shine in our lives. It is through choosing to live our lives as worship that we will find ourselves drawn closer and closer to Christ. It is then that we will experience again the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Not that the Spirit hasn't been present, but we have been asleep and therefore blind to its work. Even when we have been awake we have often forgotten what it is to be the children of God and so have neglected the means of grace thus starving the Spirit of its much needed fuel, our discipleship. I encourage you this Pentecost to use your time wisely, to pray and seek the face of God that you too might be made alive in Christ in the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Wake up sleep, wake up!

Hymn: StF 404 God's spirit is in my heart

**1 God's spirit is in my heart ;
he has called me and set me apart.
This is what I have to do,
what I have to do :
*He sent me to give the good news to the
poor,
tell prisoners that they are prisoners no
more,
tell blind people that they can see,
and set the down-trodden free,
and go tell everyone
the news that the kingdom of God has
come ;
and go tell everyone
the news that God's kingdom has come.***

**2 Just as the Father sent me,
so I'm sending you out to be
my witness throughout the world —
the whole of the world :**

**3 Don't carry a load in your pack ;
you don't need two shirts on your back ;
God's workers can earn their own keep —
can earn their own keep :**

**4 Don't worry what you have to say ;
don't worry, because on that day
God's spirit will speak in your heart —
will speak in your heart :**

v. 1 and refrain Alan T. Dale (1902–1979)
vv. 2-4 Hubert Richards (b. 1921)

THE RESPONSE

Prayers of intercession

Holy Spirit,
We hold those words before you.

Holy, life-giving Spirit,
without your power, we are powerless.
without your help, we are helpless.
without your voice, we are silent.

So today we pray for:
a new anointing of your power,
a fresh outpouring of your help,
a new vocabulary that speaks of love and
hope.

Send your power, that we might be empowered:
so that we are not just passive observers, but

active agents in your purposes for the good of all humankind.

We pray your power, your help, your voice
for victims of oppression and injustice,
of war and conflict,
of modern slavery and domestic violence.

for all who are treated unfairly due to
race, gender, sexuality, disability or
perceived disability, status, or beliefs

for all who are seeking to slow the rise in
global warming.

We pray for the Methodist Church in the South
Warwickshire Circuit.

Holy Spirit, show us where you would have us
take action, or help, or speak. Give us boldness
and courage in these uncertain days. Let
everything we do be done in love.

We offer this prayer in the precious name of
Jesus, our risen Saviour.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

We say 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**

Hym:- O God of burning, cleansing flame

O God of burning cleansing flame

Send the fire!

Your blood-bought gift today we claim

Send the fire today!

Look down and see this waiting host

And send the promised Holy Ghost

We need another Pentecost!

Send the fire today!

Send the fire today!

God of Elijah hear our cry

Send the fire!

And make us fit to live or die

Send the fire today!

To burn up every trace of sin

To bring the light and glory in

The revolution now begin!

Send the fire today!

Send the fire today!

It's fire we want for fire we plead

Send the fire!

The fire will meet our every need

Send the fire today!

For strength to always do what's right

For grace to conquer in the fight

For power to walk the world in white

Send the fire today!

Send the fire today!

**To make our weak hearts strong and
brave**

Send the fire!

To live a dying world to save

Send the fire today!

**Oh see us on Your altar lay
We give our lives to You today
So crown the offering now we pray
Send the fire today!
Send the fire today!**

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THE DISMISSAL

Prayer & blessing

**The love of the Father enfold you,
the wisdom of the Son enlighten you,
the fire of the Spirit enflame you;
and the blessing of God, the Three in One,
be upon you and abide with you now and for
ever. Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

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Stf 20 Be still for the presence of the Lord David Evans (b 1957)

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StF 89 Everlasting God Brenton Brown and Ken Riley

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O God of burning, cleansing flame (Send the Fire)

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StF 404 God's Spirit is in my heart

v. 1 and refrain Alan T. Dale (1902–1979)

vv. 2-4 Hubert Richards (b. 1921)

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NRSV & NRSVA

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