

Worship at Home – Easter 7

Sunday After Ascension – 16th May 2021

Prepared by Rev Adam Pawley, Rector



A prayer to start – The Veni Sancte Spiritus

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in [us] the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and [we] shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. **Amen.**

Bible Reading (Luke 24:44-end)

⁴⁴ [Jesus] said to [his disciples], ‘This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.’

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’

⁵⁰ When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

Thought

On Thursday, we celebrated the Ascension of Jesus from earth back to heaven. His earthly ministry was complete. On Sunday next week, we will celebrate Pentecost – the Festival when we celebrate the fulfilling of God’s promise of the Sending of His Holy Spirit upon all the Church. These eleven days from Ascension to Pentecost – the final days of the Easter Season – are traditionally days where we pray for the Holy Spirit to come and help us to live as witnesses for God, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Each day we might join in praying one of the most ancient of prayers – ‘Come, Holy Spirit’.

In recent years, Christian denominations across the world have united to encourage us to rekindle this ancient practice in praying those wonderful words found in the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy Kingdom Come”. Specifically, we are encouraged to think of five people whom we know and to commit to praying for them daily in this 11 day window of prayer for God’s Kingdom – God’s reign and blessing – to come into their lives. **Who will your five be?**

When we pray for these five people here are some simple ideas on what we could pray...

- 'Lord bless them'
- 'Lord help them to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour'
- 'Lord heal them'
- 'Lord forgive them'
- 'Lord strengthen them'
- 'Lord help them to know you are with them'

In other words, invite God to meet your five people 'where they are at'.

On Ascension Day this past week, the new Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, encouraged all those joining in this 11-day window of prayer, to pray for our five (and ourselves) to know God in two ways – As 'Emmanuel' – as God who is with us – as God who is here to meet us at whatever point we may be at in our lives. And as 'Jesus' – as God who saves us – who saves us from 'ourselves' – or further still as one who saves us from our selfish selves – or our sins – where we place our interests above His interests.

The Holy Spirit is often thought as 'fire' in the New Testament. A fire that purifies us. When gold or silver is heated to melting point it is cleaned and refined to its purest state. When we pray 'Come, Holy Spirit' we are asking God to fill us afresh with His Holy Spirit, purify our hearts, minds and souls and refine us of our sins. After we have prayed this prayer, God has before him in us, a beautiful new creation who is ready to praise him and ready to bring others that he can come alongside and bless, strengthen and save too.

How will you pray for God's Kingdom to reign in your life and the lives of your chosen five?

Prayers – for myself and my five

Pray the Veni Sancte Spiritus (above) and then:

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

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.**

We hope you are safe and well. Please get in touch if we can help. (Adam 01978 760439, Gareth 07731 827988). This Sunday (16 May) we have Holy Communion services at 9:30am in Penyffordd and 11am in Hope. Please get in touch with Jane, Liz or ourselves if you'd like to reserve a seat. Thank you.