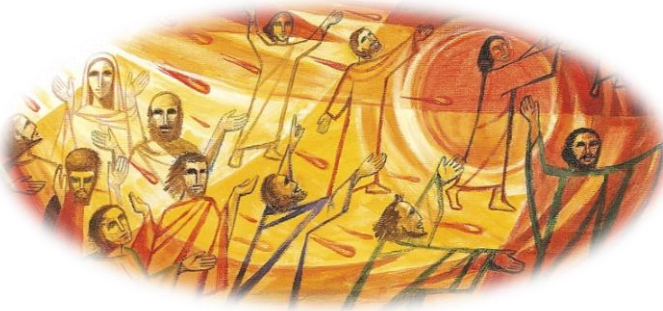


Worship at Home – 23rd May 2021

Pentecost

Prepared by Rev Gareth Erlandson, Curate



Prayer to start

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father,
ignite in us your holy fire;
strengthen your children
with the gifts of faith
revive your church
with the breath of love,
and renew the face of the earth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Bible Reading (Acts 2:1-21)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 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.

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

“In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.
Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.
And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

Thought

The first thing to note from this passage is stay off the wine before 9am!

But seriously, one of the striking things about the Bible's account of Pentecost is Peter's immediate understanding that the Holy Spirit brings with it the gift of prophecy. I wonder what we understand by prophecy today? It might have something to do with tea leaves and crystal balls, but all of those prophets in the Old Testament weren't interested in things like that – they were concerned with their calling to "bear witness to spiritual truth."

What on earth does that mean? I suggest three things:

1. Communicate well with others – listen carefully to each other. "Speak each other's language" to share the word of God.
2. Call out injustice in the world. Peter quotes Joel, who elsewhere says that God will restore the fortunes of desolate Israel, so that her "mountains will drip with new wine and hills will flow with milk." Who do we see going without today?
3. Find our centre of being in Jesus. We are told to called on his name – the name which means "God saves." Who do we need to share the love of Jesus with?

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can do all of these things.

Prayers to end

Heavenly Father, open our lips by your Spirit, that every tongue may tell of your glory; through Jesus 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.

*Please do get in touch if you want to talk about anything.
Services this Sunday: Morning Worship at 11am in Hope (book with Liz) &
Communion at 11am in St John's (book with Ann)
God bless – Adam (01978 760439) and Gareth (07731 827988)*