

This short act of worship has been produced for you by Helen Lunn. If you are well enough and able, why not spend a few moments with God, perhaps at a time when you would normally be sharing with others in church - pray for them as they pray for you.

Call to worship

Gathered disciples, tired and wary,
were looking ahead to a future so scary.
Jesus had left them, what to do now?
Then along came the Spirit and...WOW! WOW! WOW!
Everything changed on that Pentecost day.
Come, rejoice, and celebrate today!

Hymn – StF 385 – Holy Spirit we welcome you

Sing/read/pray/proclaim the words or listen to it here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDmqJoKexQk>

Holy Spirit, we welcome you,
Holy Spirit, we welcome you!
Move among us with holy fire
as we lay aside all earthly desire,
hands reach out and our hearts aspire.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,
Holy Spirit, we welcome you!

Holy Spirit, we welcome you,
Holy Spirit, we welcome you!
Let the breeze of your presence blow
that your children here might truly know
how to move in the Spirit's flow.
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,
Holy Spirit, we welcome you!

Holy Spirit, we welcome you,
Holy Spirit, we welcome you!
Please accomplish in us today
some new work of loving grace, we pray -
unreservedly - have your way.
Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit,
Holy Spirit, we welcome you!

Christopher Alan Bowater (*b.* 1947)

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A time of prayer

God of energy and purpose,
as lava erupts from a volcano,
so may your Spirit erupt today;
as water thunders down a waterfall,
so may your Spirit thunder today;
as a downpour refreshes a tired garden,
so may your Spirit refresh us today –
that, gathered together with confidence,
we may celebrate this special day.

God of all,
when we are tired, send your spirit of energy;
when we are jaded, send your spirit of refreshment;
when we are hesitant, send your spirit of confidence;
when we are complacent, send your spirit of challenge;
when we are afraid, send your spirit of courage;
when we are divided, send your spirit of unity;
when we are inward-looking, send your spirit of mission –
that your love and grace may spill out from us into your world.
In Jesus' name.

Forgive us, God of the universe,
when as individuals, as a church or as a nation,
we limit your love and hinder the healing work of your Spirit.
May we not be restrained or restricted in our faith,
but be agents of reconciliation,
praying that your saving grace goes out
into every corner of the world,
to your glory.

We praise you, God of all language and all culture,
that in the coming of your Holy Spirit,
Jesus' promise to be with us always is fulfilled,
and we are equipped and enabled to serve you
in the strength and with the energy
you delight to bless us with.
May every day be as Pentecost –
an opportunity to hear you speaking to our hearts,
a commissioning to share your gospel,
and a chance to celebrate your presence among us.
Amen.

Bible Readings

John 14:8-17, 25-27

⁸ Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

⁹ Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

¹⁵ “If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be^[c] in you.

²⁵ “All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?” ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and

Asia,^[b] ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “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.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.’^[c]

Time to reflect

What makes things start? In an oven? In a car? A rocket? A kettle? In all of these things, there is considerable power at work, but the action required to start them involves usually just one small step. Pentecost was the start of the Church, and we see how something seemingly so small – an event affecting a few dozen people in one city on one particular day 2,000 years ago – has led to the Church spreading across the globe. How might the Holy Spirit be at work in our generation? What small Spirit-filled steps might we be called to take right now?

The disciples had been told to wait for the Holy Spirit. They had received teaching on what the Holy Spirit would do. When the Spirit came, they recognised it as the work of God and joined in. Some of the crowd asked questions – they wondered what

was happening; some even dismissed it as the ravings of a bunch of drunkards. Peter and the disciples knew this was the work of the Spirit because they were well prepared. How should we prepare? Do we recognise the work of God – even if it might look to some as if it is something else entirely? Are we prepared to stand up and give an account of ourselves and the gospel?

Do you know anyone who has sought ‘Dutch courage’? People sometimes use alcohol to help them lose their inhibitions and gain confidence. The disciples certainly were different after being filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit made them bolder, gave them confidence and purpose. In later chapters of Acts, we see how they continued God’s work in the face of opposition and persecution. Paul, writing to the Christians in Ephesus, encourages people to ‘not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit’. What might it look like if we were filled with the Holy Spirit in a similar way today?

In speaking to the crowd, Peter draws on Scripture that would be familiar to those listening. What might we draw upon today – in a culture where most know nothing of Hebrew Scripture –

that would ring bells and make sense for people when we proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit? Joel’s prophetic message is one of restoration not just of Israel but of the whole of creation. How can we speak of the Spirit as the gift of the crucified and exalted Jesus, and the fulfilment of hope for a new creation, in today’s world?

We can do this by sharing our story with other people. research published in 2017 by Barna Group and ComRes has shown that 67% of the population know a Christian, 43% of the population believe Jesus rose from the dead and 20% or 1 in 5 people we talk to about Jesus want to know more. So, the course will help us to be able to share with people in a relevant way that will hopefully help them know more about Jesus.

We all have a story to share about how Jesus is working in our lives both in the past and in the present and we are going to be encouraged to share this. How many of you know how God is working within in other people? Maybe you could encourage someone and ask them each week how God has been at work during the week?

Pentecost completes the frame of the Easter season. We've rather lost that meaning: try saying 'Happy Easter' several weeks after Easter Day and you will get very strange looks, even from church-going people. But Pentecost is not a Christian invention – Luke gives the Jewish celebration of first fruits, (which is why so many people are gathered in Jerusalem) significance in the new order of things.

Movement, energy and confusion abound in this narrative from Acts. There is the gathering of the crowd for the feast, the dancing tongues of fire, the chatter of language, the noise of the wind, and then some calm descends as Peter talks. While you can picture and hear the hubbub among the people, a bird's-eye view would suggest that the principal vector of the movement is downwards, and it's unexpected: 'suddenly from heaven...'.

Through the centuries and across the mythology of the Jewish nation, the burning bush that Moses encountered, and the pillar of flame that ran before the Israelites, as they escaped out of Egypt, prefigure this outpouring of God's Holy Spirit. God's intervention with Moses was because God had heard the cry of God's afflicted people. God led them out of slavery into

freedom – to the Promised Land. As the people of the new covenant – the Easter people – our freedom and our holiness are focused in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Romans 8 ties this together, in the suggestion that, as children of God, we are also heirs with Christ of this priceless inheritance of freedom.

Pentecost provides another cairn or marker point in the Church's year, demanding again that we ask ourselves and our church communities: who is this Jesus for us now? This is more of a spiral than a cycle since we will not be the same people as last year, either individually or collectively. And the gift of the Spirit demands action as well as reflection. The hymn often sung when people are ordained, 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire', is a call to vocation for all, encouraging the final stage of a dynamic: belief/baptism/table fellowship/proclamation. How do we encourage the energy of the Spirit to move through our congregations?

It is interesting that the final image of the Pentecost readings in John 14.27 is peace. Perhaps this picks up the calm of Peter after the amazement and confusion of the Jerusalem scene; but it is not the sort of peace that the world gives. Peace as the absence of conflict has not been the leitmotif of the early

growth of Christianity narrated in the Acts reading of this Easter cycle, nor of Jesus' own life. Nor can it be ours if our engagement with faith is really Spirit-filled. Rather, this peace is our assurance of salvation in this world and the next - no need then to be troubled or afraid.

As disciples keep praying and encouraging each other so that you think of ideas and ways that you as a church can reach out to the people in the area, sometimes you may need to think out of the box and look at what the needs are of those around and think how can we help them. Even if we can't attend personally, we should pray for the work of those that do attend for more people to attend.

The disciples' choice to share the good news impacted upon the people who heard their message. So, let us share the good news and how it has impacted us with the people we meet and use the infectious Holy Spirit to get Enfield Circuit churches somewhere that the local community want to come too.

Thank you, loving God, for the freedom that the Spirit gives us. Help us always to choose prayerfully and lovingly

so that the power of the Spirit may unite our love with your love
to make the world a more loving place.
Amen.

Hymn – StF 394 – Spirit of God unseen as the wind

Sing/read/pray/proclaim the words or listen to it here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hayhpBnPrc>

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as is the dove,
teach us the truth and help us believe,
show us the Saviour's love.*

You spoke to us long, long ago,
gave us the written word;
we read it still, needing its truth,
through it God's voice is heard.

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as is the dove,
teach us the truth and help us believe*

Without your help we fail our Lord,
we cannot live his way;
we need your power, we need your strength,
following Christ each day.

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as is the dove,
teach us the truth and help us believe,
show us the Saviour's love.*

Margaret V. Old (1932–2001)

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Buckinghamshire. MK2 2EB From *Sing to God*

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray
Loving God, we pray for the struggling world,
A world which is full of activity and noise,
A world obsessed by getting.

At this time, we think of those around the world that are needing your help. We pray for the areas of the world that are searching for peace, we think especially at this time of the people in Ukraine, Israel, Sri Lanka (pause). We think of those effected by gun and knife crime. Be with the family of those effected and wrap your arms around them showing them your love.

Lord of life, show us your truth
And change us.

Loving God, we pray for your struggling Church,
A church which is full of division and anger,
A church turned too much in upon itself.

At this time, we pray for the work that goes on here in the Enfield Methodist Circuit and in the surrounding area, give the people in these community the strength to do your work as you are asking them and to do this together.

Lord of life, show us your truth
And change us.

Loving God, we pray for our leaders

For those in authority, those who hold power:

Fill them with your spirit of wisdom;

Fill them with your spirit of compassion.

We pray this jubilee weekend for Her Majesty The Queen as she celebrates 70 years on the throne.

Lord of life, show us your truth

And change us.

Loving God, we pray for those who we know who are ill or need your help at this time, Lord, we may not name them here but you know who they are and are keeping them in our hearts.

Lord of life, show us your truth

And change us.

Loving God, we pray for those seeking new meaning in their lives.

Use us to help them find you.

Lord of life, show us your truth

And change us.

Loving God, we pray for all those who have just begun to know you.

May the forces of this world not get in their way?

Lord of life, show us your truth

And change us.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.

Amen.

Hymn – StF 397 – The Spirit lives to set us free

Sing/read/pray/proclaim the words or listen to it here

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33pmw_ubKRc

The Spirit lives to set us free,

walk, walk in the light;

he binds us all in unity,

walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*

Jesus promised life to all,

walk, walk in the light;

the dead were wakened by his call,

walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*

He died in pain on Calvary,
walk, walk in the light;
to save the lost like you and me,
walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*

We know his death was not the end,
walk, walk in the light;
he gave his Spirit to be our friend,
walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*

By Jesus' love our wounds are healed,
walk, walk in the light;
the Father's kindness is revealed,
walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*

The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light;
his light will shine for all to see,
walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.*

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A prayer of blessing

May the Holy Spirit of God
breathe hope into your hearts,
transform your fears,
and bless you with the gifts of courage, compassion and
understanding,

that you may share your faith with renewed confidence and
new commitment.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

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