

St Swithun's Church Family

Pentecost

Sunday 31st May 2020



A Service for all ages

Faith, hope and love



*Please use this booklet and our film to **worship with us** – ideally at 10am on Sunday so that we know we are joining our prayers together but any time is good.*

You will need a candle and something red as we join together in worship.

Today is an all age service – we are all worshipping together.

The photos in this booklet show some of those leading the worship for Pentecost in our filmed service. We are very grateful to all who took part – including Bishop Christopher and so many of our Church family – thank you!

This is a Service of The Word. It doesn't matter if you are one person or a family together – use the booklet and go through the words – stop and reflect as you need to. We will be filming today's service if you would like to join in with us, it will be uploaded to the website www.saintswithuns.org.uk

There are various prayer resources and other things to look at on the website – if you have any feedback or anything to share please let me know.

Thank you to all those who are continuing to support Saint Swithun's – money is a worry for so many and we are very grateful for your offerings in these challenging times. If you are able to give more – please do – if you are struggling and need to give less – please do – hopefully we will be strongest together.

Giving - if you usually give your collection on a Sunday morning in cash, and you are able to, please put this aside each week to bring to church when you are next able to. Even better would be to set up your giving online ('Saint Swithun's PCC' ; 60-05-11 ; 16126718 ; NatWest Bank) if you haven't already done this.

Introduction

Today is the feast of Pentecost. It is the birthday of the church and today is a big party for us to celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit – God with us.

The colour for today is red – you might like to wear something red as you come to worship and celebrate with us...

As we gather together – please light a candle as we remember the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Gathering

Lighting a candle

The Greeting

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Opening prayers

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.



Greeting from Bishop Christopher for St Swithun's



It is a great joy to share a message of encouragement with you on this day of Pentecost the Church's birthday. I am very grateful to Juliet for inviting me to participate in this way. Today, Pentecost Sunday we pray as the whole united body of Christ the world over 'come Holy Spirit fill the hearts of your faithful people and kindle in our hearts the fire of your love'. This is the day the small band of Apostles filled with the promised Holy Spirit became Church, a gathered body from all nations and peoples, a living community, of which we are fully part as its members today. We have amazingly continued to be a community in these strange days of lockdown, finding new ways to stay in touch and communicate with each other. Now as we begin to move into a new phase we ask of God who is always more willing to give than we are to receive that the Holy Spirit may breathe new life into our communities and deepen the bonds that tie us together. I know many of you will have faced many challenges in recent weeks but I pray that the healing power of Christ's love may bring you peace and strengthen you in faith and hope as we journey forwards.

The Pentecost Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (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.



Reflection and prayer for healing and renewal

Rev Frances



Today in church time, we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. That extraordinary event which led to the birth of the Church. No longer, following Jesus' death, were the disciples defined by terror, anxiety, and even after Jesus' resurrection appearances, confusion and spiritual blindness. The cataclysmic experience they underwent, like a rushing wind, descending fire, though ultimately eluding language to do justice to its impact, utterly changed them. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them transformed the abstract words of Jesus into the lived reality of God's eternal presence. The knowledge of the Holy Spirit within and outside. Previous fears and doubts were eclipsed by faith, hope and love. At the moment, for many, God feels distant or absent, particularly for those who are in hospital, isolated at home or unable to visit loved ones. It may be difficult to trust in the God to whom we pray for healing in body, mind or spirit. God's reality though does not depend on our perception and we are not required to try to force ourselves to suppress what we are experiencing. Just though, as the disciples' despair and desolation did not define the reality, neither does our own.

The witness of that collective Pentecostal experience altered everything for those first Christians, and in that shattering understanding was forged a community that understood in a new way what it means to live and dwell in the knowledge of Christ's eternal, healing love. A love which nothing can overcome, and which is always present however hidden it may sometimes appear. May we know that God walks with us always in desolation and in consolation. And may that love, presence and peace sustain, heal and strengthen us. Amen.

Let us pray: **Be with us, Spirit of God;
nothing can separate us from your love.
Fill us with your saving power.
Speak in us, wisdom of God;
bring strength, healing, and peace. Amen**

Glory to God

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to all people on earth.**

Find a way to rejoice knowing that God loves us, liberates us and makes us whole. Today we will be singing together with our virtual St Swithun's choir:



**Lord, the light of your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us
Set us free by the truth you now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me**

***Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth your word , Lord, and let there be light.***

**Lord, I come to your awesome presence
From the shadows into your radiance
By the blood I may enter your brightness
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness
Shine on me, shine on me**

Shine, Jesus, shine.....

**As we gaze on your kingly brightness
So our faces display your likeness
Ever changing from glory to glory
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story
Shine on me, shine on me**

Shine, Jesus, shine.....

The Collect Prayer

Let us pray that the Spirit will work through our lives to bring Christ to the world.

Silence is kept.

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



The Liturgy of the Word

The Gospel Reading

John 7.37-39

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John

Glory to you, O Lord



On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.” ’ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon – Izzy

Do you play that game at the moment? You know the one where you think about where you'll go and what you'll do when we're not in lockdown anymore. Which places do you miss most? We've whiled away quite a few minutes in the Warren house talking about where we'd go if we weren't having to spend so much time at home. David misses going climbing and Dorothy misses the swimming pool. I know Jon would love a trip out to the theatre, and me..... Well, some of you know, I LOVE amusement park rides like rollercoasters – generally the longer and scarier, the better.

So, let's rewind to April 2 years ago and Jon and I are celebrating being married for 18 years (I KNOW!!!!). Jon always gets me awesome and weird anniversary presents and this year was no exception – he'd planned a secret expedition for the whole family to..... Margate.... Yep you read it right.....Margate. The main reason for this was an excursion to Dreamland.

Now, I don't know how many of you have been to Dreamland in Margate, (I know Lucy and Bethany have) and it may certainly have had a bit of a make-over since we were there, but here is a picture of the Helter-Skelter on the day we went – you can see I've put a circle around the place where the slide just stops about 3 meters from the actual ground so you'd shoot off the end then plummet three meters onto the floor (luckily it was fenced off so no-one could actually have a go on it!).



End of slide!

Ground

So why had Jon taken me to this potential death-trap of a place to celebrate being married to me for 18 years? Yes thank you everyone – that was a rhetorical question.

Actually, he'd been doing some research and he'd found out that Margate has the UK's oldest roller-coaster, and he knows I love roller coasters.

In the book we're reading as a family at the moment – **Cosmic** the main character talks about going on a new ride at a theme park, '...at the top it just lets go of you and you feel lighter than air and not scared of anything at all, as though all the fear has been squeezed out of you.'

Later on in the book, he describes the feeling as if everything seems more in focus, 'crisper and brighter' a 'crispy new-world feeling'. I love that description, 'a crispy, new-world feeling', and I know what Liam, the main character is talking about – I know that feeling – that crispy new world feeling. Here's a photo of me on that rollercoaster at Margate - you can tell I'm happy, so are the children – Jon, in the background has a look of pretending to have fun but actually being slightly petrified (he is, after all, a scientist and knows a lot more about how rollercoasters are put together than I do).



So petrified!

So happy!

What about you? How do you feel about rollercoasters?

Well, I asked the Sunday School to draw me some pictures, and of course, you didn't let me down.....



Dorothy drew herself looking a bit like the person in Edvard Munch's 'The Scream' painting, and she tells me there's a combination of fear and excitement for her when she's on a roller coaster!

Shae's picture shows an awesome rollercoaster, and you can see he's the only person on it – he's shouting 'YEAH' and having the most amazing time – it's so long, it goes off the edge of the page. I'd LOVE to have a go on this Shae!





Amari's rollercoaster is called 'The Racing Rainbow' – look at those amazing loop-the-loops, and the steep slope up to that first one – I can just imagine the excitement of the feeling as the rollercoaster clicked up that slope ready to whizz down the other side and round the loop – I wish it was real!

Two images of Bethany's amazing Bee rollercoaster picture from *their* trip to Dreamland. I had to include the second one, because 'that pink thing', as Bethany explained beautifully,

'is mummy's hat'. As you can see, the family are having a lovely time on the ride, and Mummy's hat has flown off and is on the ground.





And I've got a feeling that Lucy feels the same way as I do about rollercoasters, because in this picture she has the biggest smile on her face, whereas that person behind is not having so much fun!

I love your pictures of rollercoasters and I definitely think I'd have a 'crispy new-world feeling' going on any of them!

So let's think about Pentecost. Picture the disciples. They're together in a room. Their leader, Jesus, has gone to Heaven, they know they need to continue to be disciples, to continue to be Christians, but they don't know what's going to happen or what to do next or how things are going to work out. I can't help thinking of Amari's rainbow rollercoaster here, and that slow journey up the steep slope - there's a mixture of fear and excitement, a realisation that they are about to be launched into the unknown—the disciples know something is going to happen, but they don't know what – and they are scared, and maybe wondering if they should have got on this crazy Christianity ride in the first place.

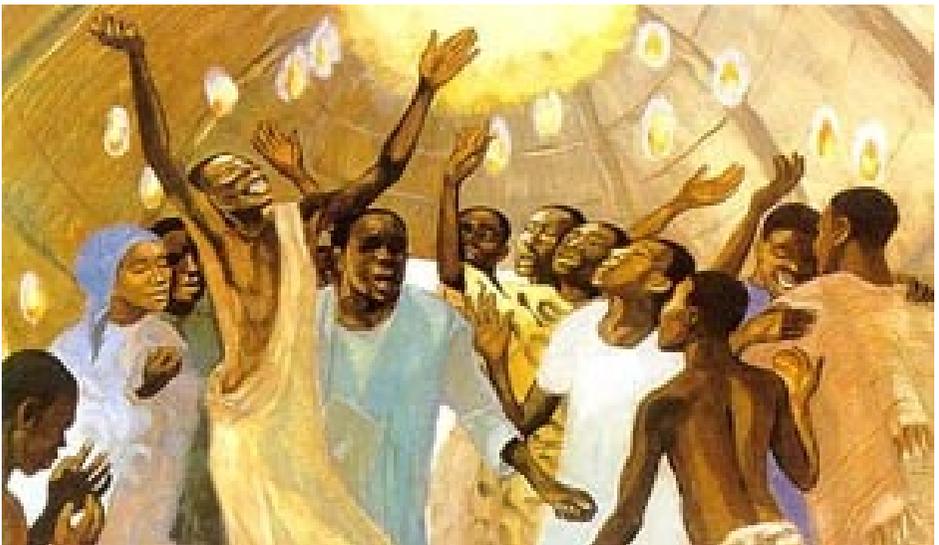
And then, 'Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.'

Filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples are unstoppable. They have been promised this advocate - this link to God through Jesus – it's like suddenly they've got to the top of their rollercoaster and now, filled with the Holy Spirit, the way ahead is suddenly clear and obvious. And it must feel scary, but it is exciting. Of course, some people can't understand what's got into them, but they're filled with that 'crispy new-world feeling', and they have to share it.

And we have the gift of the Holy Spirit too. Of course our way as Christians will be scary at times – we might even do a loop-the-loop or lose a hat along the way, but, like the disciples on that amazing Pentecost day, filled with the Holy Spirit, feeling that rush of wind, and the Holy fire guiding us, we can be unstoppable.

Amen



We Believe

An interview with Richard about how his belief in God impacts his daily life...

My faith is a relationship with God so every day I nurture that relationship and try to get to know God better. That starts with prayers first thing in my day and all the way through the day, I remember that God is with me. Because God loves everyone it means that my relationships with other people have to reflect that. I know that each person I meet is beloved of God, just as I am, and that means that the way I react to them has to be different, whether that is at work or in family life.



How does your belief and trust in God impact *your* life?

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in God.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in God.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to
the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in God.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

Prayers

You might like to use the actions written in italics to join in with our prayers today.



Let us pray:

Life giving Spirit, as you moved over creation
bringing life to the world
and filled the disciples at Pentecost:

Come to us now, refresh and renew us

Stretch up and shake hands in the air

Come to us now, refresh and renew us

Stretch up and shake hands in the air

Empowering Spirit,
we remember today how you transformed the early Church.
Meet us as we are,
take our hesitant faith,
take our fears and anxieties,
and fill our hearts with enthusiasm for the Gospel.
We give thanks for our Church and community
The unique gifts we each have.
Help us to reach out and include others,
and where we are separated,
reassure us of your presence and peace between us all.

Come to us now, fill us with peace

Start with hands outstretched then bring your hands together

Come to us now, fill us with peace

Start with hands outstretched then bring your hands together

Reconciling Spirit,
guide all politicians,
particularly those deciding the way ahead,
holding in balance complex decisions.
We remember all key workers and frontline workers
in health care and other essential services,
and pray especially for schools
as they reopen to more children this week.

Come to us now, with wisdom and understanding

Put your hands on your head and then up in the air

Come to us now, with wisdom and understanding

Put your hands on your head and then up in the air

Healing Spirit,
we pray for those who are sick
in hospital or isolating at home,
in intensive care or in recovery.
We pray for all who are bereaved and traumatised
and struggle with their mental health during lockdown.

Come to us now, with compassion and care

Wrap your hands around your body and give yourself a hug

Come to us now, with compassion and care

Wrap your hands around your body and give yourself a hug

Eternal Spirit,
giver of life and life eternal,
we ask your blessing upon our loved ones departed,
that in you they may know the fullness of life and joy
of your presence

Come to us now, bring life and hope

Lift up your candle

Come to us now, bring life and hope

Lift up your candle



The Prayer Jesus taught us

May we pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**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.**

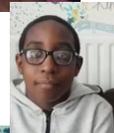
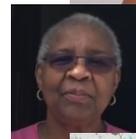
The Peace

God has made us one in Christ.
God has set a seal upon us and,
as a pledge of what is to come,
has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts. Alleluia.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Peace be with you....

*Who needs your peaceful words or
actions this week?*



Dismissal and Blessing

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 our lives and our world.

The Blessing

May the boldness of the Spirit transform you,
may the gentleness of the Spirit lead you,
may the gifts of the Spirit equip you
to serve and worship God;
and may God the Trinity
Creator, Friend and Spirit
bless you, now and forever.
Amen.

The Dismissal

Filled with the Spirit's power,
go in the light and peace of Christ.
Alleluia, alleluia.
Thanks be to God.
Alleluia, alleluia.

Birthdays:

- Happy Birthday David whose Birthday was celebrated recently and Evelyn whose birthday – the big 40 - is today and all others who have their birthday this week – Happy Birthday!



Organ

Trumpet Voluntary, Jeremiah Clarke played by Phillip Bell

Please pray for:

Elisabeth and family, Lena, Olivia and family, Louise, Joshua, David, Carmel, Cynthia and family, Ivy, John, Shonette, Susan, Sydney, Edith, Vanda, Lorna, Ena and Stephen.

And those who have recently died - Griham, Roy, William, Peter, Lorraine, Nell, Alfie, Eustace.

Notices:

- Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.
- In the absence of foodbank collections Olivia invites us to donate online <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-involved/ways-to-give/make-a-one-off-donation/>
- If you know of anyone in any need – please let Mother Juliet know as we are working with others who can help.
- Stay safe – and keep others safe.

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