

2022 – 5TH JUNE – WORSHIP AT HOME – PENTECOST

Dear friends,

Sometimes we feel that we are running on empty – we feel exhausted and that we have no reserves to get us up and going again. Today we explore how God comes to people who feel empty and fills them to overflowing. Whenever you feel as if there is nothing left in you to keep going, let God enter into you and fill your life to overflowing also.

Every blessing to you all, *Margaret*

Call to worship: Whoever you are, come together, and come to God.

Wherever you come from, come together and come to God.

Whatever you bring, come together and come to God.

However you feel, come together and come to God.

Wherever you are, God is with you, and God is good!

The words to ‘Come down, O Love divine’ written by Bianco da Siena [d. 1434] – translated by Richard Frederick Littledale [1833-1890] Singing the Faith 372

1 Come down, O Love divine, seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,
and kindle it, flame bestowing.

2 O let it freely burn, all earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes, in its heat consuming;
and let thy glorious light shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round the while my path illuming.

3 Let holy charity mine outward vesture be,
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;
true lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part,
and o’er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

4 And so the yearning strong with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the power of human telling;
for none can guess its grace, till he become the place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

Prayers including Lord’s Prayer:

Holy Spirit, we rejoice that, as you came to the Apostles on that day of Pentecost, so you keep on coming to us today, making yourself known in different ways – at different times – and in different places, but always there, constantly moving in our lives.

You come when we are most aware of our need – bringing comfort in times of sorrow – courage in times of fear – peace in times of trouble – and hope in times of despair.

You come also when we forget our need of you – challenging, searching, refining, cleansing and inspiring us to greater vision and renewed commitment.

You come to us in power – releasing unimagined potential – imparting unexpected gifts and cultivating undreamed of fruits.

You come to us in quietness – coaxing us to new initiatives – nurturing confidence and deepening our faith. Holy Spirit, we welcome you again – opening our minds to your guidance – our hearts to your love and our lives to your purpose.

Breathe upon us – fill and enthuse us – and send us out in the service of Christ.

For your presence at work within us, we give you our praise. In his name we pray. **Amen.**

Spirit of God, we acknowledge your transforming power, and confess our lack of faith. Forgive us and renew us, fill us with your strength.

Spirit of God, you came on the disciples in wind and flame, giving them your power and authority.

We confess that our lives show little of your power and our witness little of your authority.

Forgive us and renew us – fill us with your power.

Spirit of God, you come to bestow your gifts and blessings on the Church.

We confess that we have been satisfied with the earthbound poverty of our lives.

Forgive us and renew us – fill us with your life.

Spirit of God, you come to equip your people for witness and service.

We confess that we have resisted your gentle, yet insistent, leading.

Forgive us and renew us – fill us with your love.

Spirit of God, you come to make your people one in the risen Lord.

We confess that we have maintained barriers and tolerated division.

Forgive us and renew us – fill us with your unity.

Release our lives from self-interest and guilt, and our tongues to declare the praises of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, pardons and forgives all our sins and by his Spirit makes us one in him, and with each other. **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.**

John 14: 8-17:

Philip said: 'Master, show us the Father, then we'll be content.'

'You've been with me all this time, Philip, and still you don't understand? To see me is to see the Father. So how can you ask, "Where is the Father?" Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is me? The words that I speak to you aren't mere words. I don't just make them up on my own. The Father who resides in me crafts each word into a divine act.

Believe me. I am in my Father and my Father is in me. If you can't believe that, believe what you see – these works. The person who trusts me will not only do what I am doing but even greater things, because I, on my way to the Father, am giving you the same work to do that I have been doing. You can count on it. From now on, whatever you request along the lines of who I am and what I am doing, I'll do it. That is how the Father will be seen for who he is in the Son. I mean it. Whatever you request in this way, I will do. If you love me, show it by doing what I have told you. I will talk to the Father, and he will provide for you another Friend so that you will always have someone with you. This Friend is the Spirit of Truth. The godless world can't take him in because it doesn't have eyes to see him, doesn't know what to look for. But you know him already because he has been staying with you, and will even be in you.

Acts 2: 1-14a:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were altogether 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 that 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, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the part 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.

Comment: [after reading a piece by Pete Townsend in A Common Worship Year A Miscellany compiled by Nick Fawcett]

Each day our actions, from morning to night, depend upon having energy. Initially we need the physical energy to propel ourselves [or crawl] out of bed, amble to the bathroom, show our face in the mirror, and then head for a bowl of cereal. After that, the whole day becomes one chaotic jumble of movement which, hopefully, results in us performing the right actions at the right time!

However, although we require our physical energy to move around, we are also totally dependent upon other forms of energy to help us complete both simple and complex tasks throughout the day.

Simple functions, such as heating, water, light, communications – each require an energy form to work.

This energy isn't a hidden or secret power source. We know of its existence – we understand [basically] how it is made and how it works – and we know of its effects on our daily lives. The energy is something we usually take for granted and simply expect it to be there when we need it. But when that energy source isn't available, even for a short time, we feel isolated, frustrated, deprived.

In the reading we find the Lord's followers meeting together in Jerusalem not really sure what the future holds for them. They had no idea how they could fulfil what Jesus had asked them to do when he told them: 'Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples, baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit'.

Without warning – and totally unexpected – on the Day of Pentecost, the Lord's followers were given an energy source which would give them the power to perform all that Jesus had asked of them. The Lord's followers, and countless others, now knew that the Lord was going to be with them wherever they went. They knew they could depend upon God – that he keeps his promises, and that he wouldn't ask them to do anything without giving them the right power source.

This same power source also provides us with the strength that we need to work through the questions and hassles that confront us each day.

Do not underestimate the wind. – by Mary Hathaway:

How the wind blows! Sweeping the grass, tossing the trees, hurrying from nowhere to nowhere; turning, twisting, and then returning in a flurry of nothingness – movements without purpose and without pattern. And yet the wind roars and can savage the defenceless earth.

Trees are torn up, buildings destroyed, floods let loose – and people can be tossed like matchsticks into the air.

Do not underestimate the wind.

So is the Holy Spirit of God, sweeping unseen across the uplifted faces of the nations; moving in ways far beyond our understanding.

Who would not smile at children trying to catch the wind in their hands?

Yet we try to confine him in flurries of words that disperse into nothingness.

But he is the all-powerful God, surging through history – piercing dark clouds of sin, ignorance, and fear. He tosses aside the strong and the wise like fallen leaves – and lifts up the weak, the foolish, and the lost. He blew across the road before time was – and will again when time is no more. Do not underestimate the Holy Spirit of God.

Prayers of Intercession:

Holy Spirit, coming as wind and fire, free and irrepressible, we pray today for all who long for change – and we pray for all who fear it.

We think of the poor and hungry – the homeless and refugee – the sick – the downtrodden and oppressed – the unemployed; these and so many others, who yearn for a new beginning, an opportunity to start afresh.

May their prayers be answered, and their dreams realised.

We pray for those who see change as a threat – a sweeping away of everything that is tried and trusted and the imposition of unknown challenges, and an uncertain future.

May they rest secure in the knowledge that, whatever else may change, you will remain constant.

Holy Spirit, coming gently as a dove – we pray for all who long for peace, and all who have lost sight of what peace really means. We think of those in homes racked by tensions, families split apart by petty disputes, communities scarred by prejudice and intolerance – and countries torn apart by war, praying especially just now for the Ukraine.

May dialogue triumph over confrontation, and unity replace division.

We pray for those who fill their lives with noise or activity, afraid of facing themselves in a time of quiet reflection – attempting somehow to mask their sense of emptiness – and we pray, too, for those who seek fulfilment in things which can never finally satisfy, wanting wealth, power, possessions, success.

May they discover the secret of true contentment – the peace which passes all understanding which only you can give.

Holy Spirit, you changed the lives of the Apostles and of countless people through history, just as you are changing our lives in turn, each renewed through your sovereign power. Come now and change our world in all its need, so that it may enjoy hope and peace, healing and harmony, and so that it may come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.

As you came at Pentecost, come again today for we ask it for his name's sake. **Amen.**

The words of 'Spirit of God' written by Margaret V. Old [1932-2001] Singing the Faith 394

[the tune for this hymn is Skye Boat Song, arranged by Paul Leddington Wright [b. 1951]

*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.*

1 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.....

2 Without your help we fail our Lord, we cannot see his way;
we need your power, we need your strength, following Christ each day.
Spirit of God.....

Blessing: May the blessing of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – be with us all, transforming us this day and for ever more. **Amen.**