

Hailsham Methodist Church
Worship at Home
Sunday 23rd May 2021, Pentecost Sunday

Opening Prayers

Loving God, on this day of Pentecost, may we connect with others through this act of worship.
May your Spirit move among us.

God says: I will pour out my spirit on all people. **The Spirit has come. Alleluia!**

Christ says: I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever.
The Spirit has come. Alleluia!

Come Holy Spirit, gentle as a dove, burning as fire, powerful as the wind. **Come Holy Spirit, come.**

Hymn: Breath On Me, Breath Of God (StF 370)

Prayers of Adoration & Confession

Gracious God, in all places and at all times you are loving, generous, kind and compassionate.
From the beginning of time, your Spirit has hovered on the surface of the deep and in that Spirit you have formed us; cherished and valued us. Let this be our song of praise; we love because you first loved us.

Generous God, give us a heart of gratitude for all those things that speak of your love. For friends and family, for the gifts of your creation, and for all the places we have witnessed something of heaven. *(We call to mind those things for which we are grateful this week).*

Living and loving Lord, have mercy on us. Pardon and deliver us from all our sins, strengthen and renew us for your service, that we might live and work to your praise and glory, and the coming of your Kingdom on earth. **Amen.**

Christ tells us that we are saved, not condemned, by God. God is love; we are forgiven, and forgiven to the full. **Amen.**

New Testament Reading: Acts 2:1-21

Hymn: Spirit Of The Living God (StF 395)

Gospel Reading: John 15:26-16:15

Reflection: *"...in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." (v.11)*

Our passage today brings us the account of Pentecost. The disciples were sat locked in the upper room hiding and praying together. It was on this day though that they received the Holy Spirit and their lives changed in an instant. This outpouring causes them to pour out of the house and on to the street to proclaim the good news of Jesus to all who would listen. So exuberant were these proclamations that passers-by assumed they had drank far too much wine.

Jerusalem was a multicultural city and people would have been used to hearing lots of languages in its streets. It would have been a very normal occurrence and may beg the question why so much fuss is made about it in the story. If we read through those opening verses again, we can see it isn't the fact that the apostles were speaking different languages that was so striking. Instead it was that those representatives from the nations heard and understood what was being said.

When these people visited the Temple they would have heard the stories of God in one language. I am sure they would have understood what was said but it wasn't in their own tongue and so it would have always been a little remote. But the good news shared by the disciples was in the language they had grown up with. It was the language their mother and father spoke to them when they were children. They heard God in their own native language, and to this day God speaks to us in our own language.

One of the challenges of this passage is for us to remember that the people who need to hear the good news do not speak the same language as us. We can bring them to church, but they will be listening to something shared in a language they do not fully understand. If we want people to hear the wonders of God, then we need to speak to them in the language of their context.

To Ponder:

*Have you ever struggled to understand something in church? How did it make you feel?
How can you share the good news in a language others understand?*

Hymn: O Breath Of Life, Come Sweeping Through Us (StF 391)

Prayers of Intercession

Spirit of the Living God, from Holy Wisdom brooding on the waters of creation
To the Spirit with us now and enabling us to worship,
You have been gently and powerfully at work in our history.
We praise you, O God **for your wonderful gift of yourself.**

Spirit of the Living God, breathing life into all that lives and loves,
Inspiring work and choices, guiding and moulding,
You are still gently and powerfully at work in our world.
We praise you, O God **for your wonderful gift of yourself.**

Spirit of the Living God, from knitting us together in our mother's wombs
To embracing us while we draw our last breaths,
You are gently and powerfully at work in our lives.
We praise you, O God **for your wonderful gift of yourself.**

Spirit of the Living God, we ask for your holding particularly of these whom we name in our hearts who are ill...

We ask for comfort for those who mourn, especially for these we name in our hearts....

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us, freshen us, renew us,
Open our eyes to the needful tasks and our own abilities to fulfil the work.

Enable us to be identified as God's holy people
By our love and joy, our peace and patience,
Our kindness and generosity, our faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
May we shine as lights in the world to the glory of God.
We praise you, O God **for your wonderful gift of yourself.**

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

We pray together as Jesus taught us: Our Father

Hymn: Father Of Everlasting Grace (StF 378)

Blessing:

This Pentecost Sunday may we go from this private time of worship to walk in the light, be guided by the Spirit, and proclaim Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Reflection by Rev David Wynd, taken from 'A Word In Time', Methodist Church website
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