

**Sunday 31 May 2020 - Pentecost**

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

**Opening Sentences**

Jesus breathed on them and said “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

On this day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, we shout with gladness, the Lord is here, his Spirit with us!

Hymn: Come down, O Love divine (Singing the Faith 372)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here asking for God’s Spirit to come to you this morning, right where you are.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HPKL1wOVXk>

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, thy holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn,  
till 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  
illuminating.

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.

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

*Branco da Siena (d.1434) translated by Richard Frederick  
Littledale (1833 – 1890)*

Let us pray together

Loving God, we are constantly amazed that you come to us in new and exciting ways. On this day we remember how your Spirit came and empowered ordinary people to become the Church.

We would pray like a diverse crowd gathered in Jerusalem and demoralized disciples in an upper room, come Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit of God, come to us now. Speak your peace to our hearts, send us your power, and your comfort that we may hear your call to us today and live as your people, today and always. Forgive us when we forget you are there and we struggle on in our own strength. Renew us and inspire us. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Our God is a gracious forgiving God. Jesus tells us we can start again. Our sins are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

**Today’s Reading from the New Testament**

Acts 2: 1 – 13

**Today’s Gospel Reading:** John 20: 19 – 23

## Time to Reflect

On Pentecost Sunday we have two pictures of how the Holy Spirit of God comes upon his people. In Jerusalem, people of many different nations and languages gathered together for a huge party. A mighty wind and flames of fire came upon them, they were full of excitement and energy, and they found themselves caught up in a new manifestation of God's power. The Church, of which we are a part, was born on this day. Of course, we cannot at the moment meet together in a church building and large gatherings are certainly not allowed, but we need to take time to celebrate we are part of something big that God hasn't finished with yet. What do you celebrate about your local church today? Are there large Christian gatherings you remember going to that have stayed with you?

The other picture is not about a large gathering, but is an upper room full of frightened and upset disciples after Jesus had died. Jesus appeared to them in their darkness, breathed on them, and said "receive the Holy Spirit." It was a pastoral gift to those who needed it in the state they found themselves in, reviving, restoring and putting them right. In these uncertain times, take time not just to remember the loud and vibrant coming of the Spirit to a vast crowd, but a quiet and gentle coming to us where we happen to find ourselves. On this day, we often use a slogan "the Church has left the building." In so many ways, the Church has done just that over the past few weeks, through looking after the vulnerable, supporting aid projects, keeping in touch with everyone and providing forms of worship like this one you share in with others today. What part of life do you need Jesus to breathe the Spirit into today? Take time to ask him to do just that.

God promises every day to put his Spirit in us so we can live. Today in exuberance and in

quietness we celebrate in confidence that the Lord is here, his Spirit is with us.

Take a time to sit quietly

## A time of prayer

After each bidding, "come Holy Spirit", you are invited to say "renew the whole creation."

On our world and its pain and uncertainty, come Holy Spirit.

On our nation, our Queen and our government, come Holy Spirit.

On the city, town or village in which we live, on those who keep us safe at the moment, come Holy Spirit.

On those who are frightened, unwell, alone, and especially those who are in the grip of Covid-19, come Holy Spirit.

On our church, on other churches we share with and the Church throughout the world, come Holy Spirit.

On each of us, right now, come Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

## The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father .....*

**Hymn: Listen to this worship song** or sing a verse of a hymn or song that comes to mind. As we ask Jesus to breathe new life in us, we recommit ourselves to be his Church, sharing his love and his peace.

Singing the Faith 371: Breathe on me, Spirit of Jesus.

[https://youtu.be/DMFZPqk2Q\\_Q](https://youtu.be/DMFZPqk2Q_Q)

Breathe on me, Spirit of Jesus. Breathe on me, Holy Spirit of God.

Fill me again, Spirit of Jesus. Fill me again, Holy Spirit of God.

Change my heart, Spirit of Jesus. Change my heart, Holy Spirit of God.

Bring peace to the world, Spirit of Jesus. Bring peace to the world, Holy Spirit of God

*Tina Pownall*

## **A prayer of blessing**

May God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, go with us now. May God's Spirit be on us, on those we love, and on those for whom we should pray, this Pentecost day and always.

Original materials by Rev. Ian Pruden; all hymns reproduced under CCLI 1144191.

## **Acts 2: 1 - 13**

### **The Coming of the Holy Spirit**

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.'

## **John 20: 19 - 23**

### **Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'