



Highcliffe and Bransgore **Methodist Churches**

Sunday 31st May 2020, 10:30am, The Day of Pentecost

Prepared by Rev'd Phillip Dixon

This written worship has been prepared for you to use as we gather in separate places, united together in love for our Lord Jesus Christ and one another. The knowledge that we are sharing in this worship in our own homes is an encouragement to us and at a time of physical separation brings us together spiritually.

Today is Pentecost Sunday, a significant and foundational day in the life of the church, then and for us today.



Good morning church!

Opening Scripture:

O come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of
our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with
thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with
songs of praise!
For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it,
and the dry land, which his hands have
formed.

O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice!
Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

when your ancestors tested me,
and put me to the proof, though they had
seen my work.

For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, "They are a people whose hearts
go astray, and they do not regard my
ways."

Therefore in my anger I swore,
"They shall not enter my rest." **Amen.**

Psalm 95 NRSV

We light a candle:

We light a candle
and enjoy the flickering light
the fragrance
and warmth it creates.

(Pause)

But without the spark that ignites
there will be no flame
Without the wax
the source of power
the wick will not burn
Without the flame
there will be no fragrance
no warmth, no light.

(Pause)

And so it is with us, Lord

(Pause)

You are the catalyst that ignites us
and the fuel that sustains us
You fill us with your fragrance
as you enter our lives.
You empower us
to carry your flame in our hearts
To be the fragrance, warmth
and light of your love
in this dark world.

Lord, as we share this time together and
celebrate once again the memory of that
first Pentecost, may it be for us as it was
for them, a moment of empowerment
and awareness of your glory in this dark
and troubled world, a life changing
experience **Amen**

Kathy Mathew

Song: Holy Spirit

Sing/read /pray/proclaim.

There's nothing worth more
That could ever come close
No thing can compare
You're our living hope
Your presence, Lord
I've tasted and seen
Of the sweetest of loves
Where my heart becomes free
And my shame is undone
Your presence, Lord

Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the
atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long
for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord
Your presence, Lord

There's nothing worth more
That could ever come close

No thing can compare

You're our living hope

Your presence, Lord

I've tasted and seen
Of the sweetest of loves
Where my heart becomes free
And my shame is undone
Your presence, Lord

Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the
atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long
for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord
Your presence, Lord

Let us become more aware of Your
presence
Let us experience the glory of Your
goodness (Repeat x4)

Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the
atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long
for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord

Songwriters: Katie Torwalt / Bryan Wilson. This version sung by
Francesca Battistelli.

Prayer:

Creator God, we glimpse Your beauty
in the setting sun, in the forest, in the
garden birds and the waves on our shores.
We know Your promise in rainbows our
symbol of hope,
Creator God we praise You

Jesus, we see Your love
stretched out upon a cruel cross.
We stand in awe at Your sacrifice,
pure love poured out for humankind.
Jesus we praise You

Holy Spirit, we see Your power
in lives transformed, hearts on fire.
We listen for Your still, small voice,
comforting, guiding, calling.
Holy Spirit we praise You

From the moment we awake to face the
day ahead,
You are with us,
through times of isolation, through times
of sharing
Your presence enough for our needs.
Every day I will praise You
Through the routine of the day,
in our exercise, our shopping, our
communication
You are with us;
in decisions we must make,
Your wisdom enough for our needs.
Every day I will praise You
As we lay down to rest at the end of the
day,
You are with us,
as we lay our fears at Your feet,
Your peace enough for our needs.
Every day I will praise you. **Amen**

A prayer of confession:

Lord God, your love for humankind
present in the beginning of all things,
extends throughout history and touches
all our loves.
Your love sees failings
and forgives.
Your love feels pain
and wipes away our tears.
Your love knows grief
and comforts the sorrowful.
Your love sees sin
and still loves the sinner.
Forgive us when we fail to live lives that
reflect your love.
Forgive us the many times when we take
for granted

all that you have done for us.
Transform us, through your Spirit,
and empower us to serve you,
this day and all days. **Amen**

Both prayers contributed by Kate Phillips.

Reading: Acts of the Apostles 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they
were all together 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 who
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 parts 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:

“Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

“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.
Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.
I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and
glorious day of the Lord.
And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

New International Version

Song: All over the world
Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words

All over the world, the Spirit is moving
All over the world as the prophet said it
would be
All over the world there’s a mighty
revelation
Of the glory of the Lord, as the waters
cover the sea.

All over His church God’s Spirit is moving
All over His church as the prophet said it
would be
All over His church, there’s a mighty
revelation
Of the glory of the Lord, as the waters
cover the sea.

Right here in this place, the Spirit is
moving
Right here in this place as the prophet said
it would be
Right here in this place, there’s a mighty
revelation
Of the glory of the Lord, as the waters
cover the sea.

All over the world, the Spirit is moving
All over the world as the prophet said it
would be
All over the world there’s a mighty
revelation
Of the glory of the Lord, as the waters
cover the sea. Roy Turner, Thankyou Music.

Introduction to a Pentecost Poem:

The Holy Spirit is described in various ways in the Bible: like water that fills and refreshes; like fire that burns and purifies; like wind that brings life and power. These pictures of the work of the Spirit are important but some of us may think of the Spirit as a thing, rather than someone. The Holy Spirit is a person ready to be welcomed into the life of anyone who invites Him. When this person, the Holy Spirit, comes into our lives, He makes all the difference. The Spirit makes Jesus real to us. He makes the Christian life possible and He makes our lives new. Perhaps this short poem can help sum up the difference that the third person of the Trinity makes to a Christian's life.

When the Spirit comes:

Before the Spirit came, you were just
words on a page,
Black on white and yellowed with age.
Simply a story of long ago,
Of a man who had so much love to show;
Who healed the sick and cured the lame;
Took our guilt and bore our shame.

It sounded so good, but it just couldn't last.
It was not for today but locked in the past.
Until the Spirit came.

Now the Spirit has come, You are here at my side,
Larger than life and ready to guide;
Making real to me all that You said
And doing through me the things that I read.

I am the glove that Your hand has filled;
I am the cup into which You have spilled
All the love and the power which You promised would come,
Right now in the present and for everyone.

Since the Spirit came.

Contributed by Kathy Mathew

Song: Shine Jesus Shine
Sing/read /pray/proclaim.

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
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

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
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
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
Let there be light

Kendrick Graham A. Make Way Music

Preaching notes:

We Pray: Dear Lord, pour out Your Spirit that we may hear Your prophetic word, that we may know how to live according to Your ways and worship You in Spirit and Truth. **Amen**

I was tempted to start this talk with a rendition of Happy Birthday. A familiar song, especially as we have all been washing our hands to it over the last

couple of months. Why happy birthday you might ask, well Pentecost is the Church birthday, and while we are talking about birthdays I don't know about you but I agonise over what presents to get for birthdays and Christmases but unlike me God knew exactly what gift people needed and still need today. He sent the Holy Spirit, the greatest gift of all.

For just a moment I want you to put yourselves in that room where all the disciples were gathered, how do you think they were feeling? They were quite possibly confused, frightened, emotionally exhausted not really knowing what was going to happen next. They had just been on a roller coaster of a few weeks. They had been with Jesus when he turned over the tables in the temple, they had seen him arrested; they had heard the people baying for his blood. They were there at the agonising death and then they ran away. They heard about the resurrection, then come face to face with Jesus in the flesh and finally the Ascension into heaven. All very emotionally draining! Maybe they now hoped for a period of stability.

So here we find them, gathered together for the major Jewish festival ready to celebrate and to meet with God as they always had done. Pentecost was originally known as the Feast of Weeks and Feast of Harvests and is known as Shavuot in Hebrew. It was the second of three major feasts in the Jewish year. It was originally a harvest festival but in time, also turned into a day to commemorate the giving of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai. Jews of many nations would gather in Jerusalem to celebrate this important festival.

But things are different now - and God uses this moment to fulfil His promise and send the Holy Spirit upon them. The disciples were together, probably praying, and a wind like a tornado fills the house, tongues of fire rest on each believer, and they begin speaking uncontrollably in tongues. The scene was so bizarre that there could only be one, rational conclusion: the crowds of people around them thought that they were drunk.

But no...Peter assures them all that what they are experiencing is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit: the gift of God to the early church – and to us.

When it comes to the Holy Spirit many people are confused and sometimes afraid, afraid because people don't understand or indeed know what the Holy Spirit is. But we do not need to be afraid the Holy Spirit is, in simplistic terms, the presence and power of Jesus. It is the spirit of Jesus; it is how Jesus is with us. God intended that we should have a comforter, a helper and the Spirit of Truth and it is from this Holy Spirit that we can draw courage to be confident and experience God in our lives. It is the Holy Spirit that makes God real to us.

The fact is, if you have asked Jesus into your lives, you have already received the Holy Spirit. Jesus says "here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with Me. When we open our hearts to Jesus, we open our hearts to His Spirit. But being filled with God's spirit is not a one-off occurrence. In Ephesians Paul instructs the Christians to keep on being

filled with the Spirit to go on being filled over and over and over again?

We are blessed to know that every Christian has the power of the Holy Spirit within them. It gives us the power to communicate the gospel and that is what we are called to do. We have to equip ourselves, be intentional and always looking for opportunities. It is also good to remember that when you may feel your words are falling on barren ground not to worry it is your job and my job to witness and not to judge, you have to leave the results up to God.

As we go through these difficult times, allow God to use you and grow your spiritual gifts. Allow the Holy Spirit to give you the words to say and the actions to go with it. Let's stop telling God what we think He should be doing and allow Him to use us in His power and glory. Mighty things happened on that Day of Pentecost. Mighty things can continue to happen through the power of God.

Conclusion:

God is moving. Are you where you are supposed to be and are you ready to watch Him work? The Church must lift up Jesus Christ during these times so that people are saved, healed, and renewed. With the Holy Spirit within us, we are the presence of Christ in the world today. We are His hands, His feet, and His eyes. Through us, Christ reaches out and serves the world in love.

I can't wait to get back into our building, not because it is comfortable or easier; but because I believe people will want to be there to worship God with one another. However, my pray is that we don't forget all that has happened and all

we have learnt over this difficult period, we don't forget how church is and works outside of the building and how our awesome, mighty God is working. May the power of the Spirit challenge us. May the peace of the Spirit comfort us. May the presence of the Spirit enable us to live in love and service in the name of Christ.

Happy birthday Church, happy birthday to you. **Amen**

Contributed by Diana Middleditch

We pray:

Almighty and powerful God of love and mercy - with so much going on in our world that we don't understand, and with things that have brought us to be still, and turned our lives upside down, we ask you to help us through the troubled times of this pandemic

We pray for the leaders of our country and all those who advise and help - please Lord bless them with wisdom and strength in making the decisions and plans that will affect us all.

We think of those working so hard to help us through the effects of this pandemic, those in the health and care sector, the scientists working hard for a cure, and also the many ordinary people who go about their daily work, providing for the needs of our country.

We think of those in hospital and those who have lost someone to the virus or other illness, and also those who are suffering from other illnesses and not able to get the medical help or support they need at this time.

We think of our local community and all those worried about work or businesses. The children will be returning to school, we pray and ask that you would help them to enjoy their lessons and friendships

safely, and to respect and help their teachers, we pray for anxious parents and the teachers with their worries and new responsibilities.

And in these times of quiet in our normally busy lives, help us to spend time with you, to deepen our relationship with you, to come close and share our thoughts and worries with you, and recognise and thank you for all that is good.

We pray for and think of the members of our Church and especially of those who are unwell, in care homes, and all who may be lonely, worried or fearful.

We pause for a time of silence and to name our personal requests.

We pray for our Church that it may come through this lockdown stronger, Bring us a fresh coming of the Holy Spirit that we may have the passion and excitement and gifts that we read of at Pentecost and to be eager and ready to let others know just how good it is to have faith and walk through troubled times with a loving God, knowing the peace that comes from you. How blessed we are, thank you Father. We bring all these prayers to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Contributed by Janine Witts

Blessing:

Lord of Power, just as the outpouring of Your Holy Spirit on Pentecost so drastically changed the lives of the early disciples, may the burning fire of Your Holy Spirit refine and renew us today, so that we will never be the same.

May we move in the power of Your Spirit, and may our lives be infused and aflame with Your divine, supernatural touch and authority.

May Your Spirit, of Wisdom and Revelation, cause each one of us to grow in our knowledge of You, now and always. **Amen.**

A blessing over the UK: With participation from 65 churches encompassing many Christian denominations and groups.

The LORD bless you and keep you,
make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you,
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth”
Acts 1:8

Notices: Thank you to everyone who has participated in this Pentecost celebration, what a wonderful witness, believers who are willing to step forward and take risks in His service, so that the world may know and accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Saviour.

With many thanks to our brilliant Tech Team who do so much behind the scenes to make everything work.

I would like to highly recommend a wonderful and blessed resource called Daily Hope, provided for those who do not have internet connection but of course available to all, a completely free phone number 0800 804 8044 with options of recordings of hymns, reflections and prayers, updated daily from CW.

Until we meet again, God bless. Phillip
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phillip.dixon@methodist.org.uk YouTube links are external resources and are provided to help you engage with the songs. Singing the Faith and Hymns and Psalms resources are provided under license: CCLI 178182