

Sunday June 5th 2022: CIRCUIT BIG SUNDAY!



Churches throughout the Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit, and the morning online service via the Zoom platform, are using this material today. The YouTube recording of the worship sheet is also available (on the Watton Methodist website) for use by individuals and churches. The zoom service is at 10.30 am on the usual Circuit Worship link (text 07912379101) for details of link.

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to our fourth Big Sunday Worship. And this time, it is a very Big Sunday indeed! Not only is it the Jubilee weekend but it is the Christian Festival of Pentecost so we are incorporating three aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit into our service.

Hymn StF 152 / H&P 577

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made;

We will rejoice, we will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it.

This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

This is the day when he rose again... This is the day when the Spirit came...

Anonymous

THE SPIRIT OF JUBILEE

Old Testament Reading: Leviticus 25 v 8 – 17



Talk

Nestled within the rules and laws of Leviticus, sits chapter 25, given over entirely to the sovereign law that had been given to Moses about governing the land that has been promised to the people, which belonged ultimately to God (I find it helpful to think of it as a leasehold type arrangement). Just as the people are commanded to rest on the Sabbath, so too God has set out plans for the land to rest. Following every sixth year, the land must be left fallow. After a series of seven cycles (equating to 49 years) the land is to have an extra fallow year, this is a Jubilee year. The Jubilee year had a significant impact on ownership and the management of land in Israel. People were returned to their property, land released back to previous owners, bound Hebrew workers were released, debts would be forgotten and the people of Israel had firm faith that in a Jubilee year, the mercies of Yahweh would be particularly generous.

There is a little bit of scholarly debate about the origin of the word Jubilee; which either comes from the Latin iobeleus, which comes from the Hebrew word of olbel (which means ram's horn), or from the Latin word iublio, which means shout for joy. Whichever etymology we favour, the Jubilee year was sounded in by a gusty blast from a ram's horn, called a Shofar. The closest modern alternative is a bugle, both equally relying on a player's embouchure to change pitch and both beautifully loud!! As Christians, the spirit in which we sound in this Jubilee year is equally important; whether we're playing instruments, joining in a street party or raising a cup of tea whilst watching celebrations on television we welcome a time of thankfulness, community, sharing and remembrance. And of course, the opportunity to pray that God's mercies will be generous for all this Jubilee year. **Pioneer Samantha Parfitt**

Prayer

We thank you for the biblical concept of Jubilee with its joy and its freedom: **We thank you, Lord.**

We thank you for this special weekend of celebration, and for 70 years of faithful service by Queen Elizabeth II combined with a strong witness to her Christian faith: **We thank you, Lord.**

We thank you for Pentecost – for the first coming of the Holy Spirit and for the continuing gift of the Spirit in our own day and age: **We thank you, Lord.**

We are sorry for the ways in which we block the Spirit's work in our lives: **We are sorry, Lord.**

We thank you for your gift of unconditional love and forgiveness in Jesus: **We thank you, Lord.**

We commit ourselves once again to your service and to bringing about your Kingdom. **Amen.**

Hymn StF 94 / H&P 463

To God be the glory, great things he has done! So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life in atonement for sin / and opened the life-gate that all may go in:

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the earth hear his voice!

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son; and give him the glory – great things he has done!

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood / to every believer the promise of God!

and every offender who truly believes / that moment from Jesus a pardon receives:

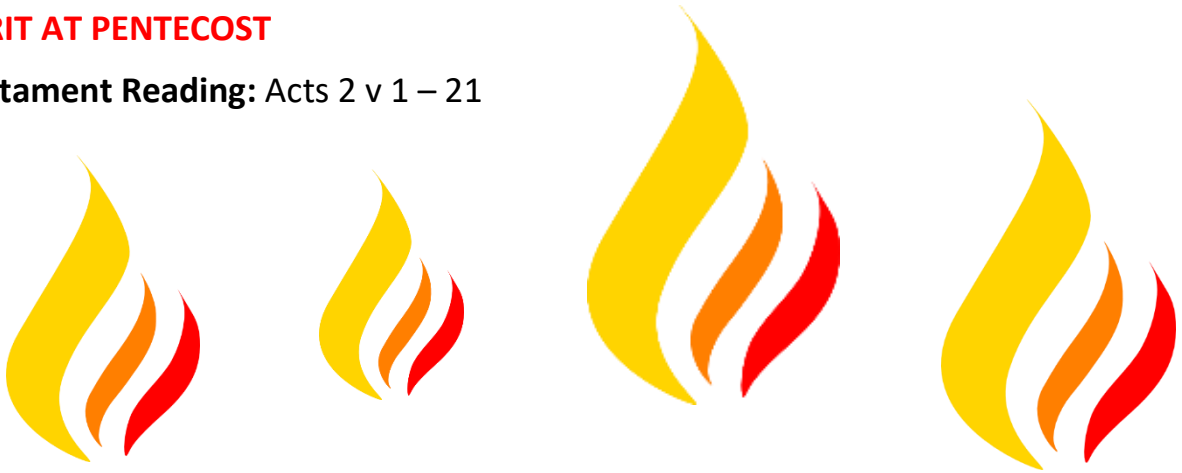
Great things he has taught us, great things he has done / and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;

but purer, and higher, and greater will be / our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see:

Frances Jane van Alstyne (Fanny Crosby) (1820 – 1915)

THE SPIRIT AT PENTECOST

New Testament Reading: Acts 2 v 1 – 21



Talk

This Sunday we celebrate the feast of Pentecost. On Pentecost, we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles gathered full of fear in the upper room in Jerusalem. This marks the beginning of the Church. Like the disciples on that first Pentecost, these past few years with the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic and the fears that came with it, this has been a time of waiting for the Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth. We welcome the Holy Spirit into our hearts and lives to give hope to the hearts that are frightened. Today's Gospel tells of how Jesus gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to his disciples. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit into the disciples and by doing so he re-creates them. Jesus' life-giving breath mirrors the breath of God given to human beings at the beginning of creation when God breathes life into the clay and made humans a living creation. It is because of this divine indwelling that we have the power to forgive and thus continue Jesus' saving mission. We are the incarnation of the risen Lord in our world today. We are re-created by the Holy Spirit. The sign of this re-creation is forgiveness. The Feast of Pentecost reminds us that there is an important connection between the gifts of peace and forgiveness and the action of the Holy Spirit. We are reminded that the Church is called to be God's reconciling presence in the world. This reconciling presence is also to be a way of life for Christians. In situations of conflict, we are to be agents of peace and harmony among all people. Jesus greets his disciples with the gift of peace. "Peace be with you," he says. Jesus then commissions his disciples to continue the work that he has begun: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." He breathes the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and sends them to continue his work of reconciliation through the forgiveness of sins. As we celebrate this great feast of the Church's fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus, how have we been a sign of reconciliation in our families, in our world, and among people of faith everywhere? Have we been an instrument of God's peace to everyone we meet? If we have been, if we are, and if we are continuing to be, then praise be given unto God. In the name of the Father, Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rev Cliff Shanganya

Song

TBC... *For those using this material at home (with hymn books) OR as a basis for church worship then suggestions are: StF nos. 395 (Spirit of the living God) or 397 (The Spirit lives to set us free).*

THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM SPIRIT



Introducing 'The Faithful Queen' booklet

There is a new publication entitled 'Our Faithful Queen' by Catherine Butcher (available from the Christian Publicity Organisation or from the Hope Together website). Some churches have ordered these to give out at outreach events. The book is a moving and deeply encouraging one as it draws on daily prayers that were written for the Queen in 1952 by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher. The Archbishop provided short readings, reflections and prayers that the Queen used in the month before her coronation. For the first time, these devotional writings have been made available to a wider public and Catherine Butcher draws on them for her book – which Jen is going to refer to as she talks to us.

Rev Jacqui Horton

Talk

On two occasions I have been amongst the crowds lining the Mall in London for a significant royal event. Both occasions were very different, one being the funeral of Princess Diana and the other being the celebration of the Queen Mother's 100th birthday. Of course, there was a hugely different atmosphere at each of them, but there was a great similarity in there being a great number of people who wanted to mark the occasion and to feel a connection with the Royal family. They were occasions that showed an institution of immense influence, wealth and privilege which is led by the Queen in a very public, powerful position. But, as we celebrate 70 years of the Queen's succession, I want to reflect, not on the public face of the Queen with all the pomp and circumstance, but on her life as a servant to the country, the people and chiefly to God. The booklet 'The Faithful Queen' tells us that the young Elizabeth had a real sense that God was leading and calling her into this role. As a young woman of just 27, and in humility, she knew that it would not be through her own strength that she could fulfil the role of being the monarch. She would always need to rely on God and the Holy Spirit, with Jesus as the model of supreme service. In her preparations towards the Coronation, the Archbishop wrote these words for her to say: *'The whole of life is a journey to God... I have not chosen this office for myself: he has appointed me to it, and I go to be consecrated to it by him... And because he leads, I may follow him in complete trust.'*

It seems to me that as she became more experienced and accustomed to her role, it would have been easy for her to believe in her own importance and power. But it has become apparent over the years that her faith, and her dependence on the Holy Spirit to equip her, has become ever more evident. This can be seen in the Christmas broadcasts. The first one she gave was in 1952 in which she acknowledged that she needed the people's support and God's help. As she faced a lifetime of service she asked for this prayer. *Pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve him and you, all the days of my life.* As far as I remember the Queen has always cited her faith as a source of comfort to her. In 2000 she said: *I know just how much I rely on my own faith to guide me through good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning, I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, ... and to put my trust in God.* Through the Queen's lifelong trust in God, those early prayers, before the coronation, have been answered. In her worldwide position of influence, she has been a faithful servant and witness. The ability for this has been given to her through the Holy Spirit as can be seen in **Acts 1:8** ⁸ **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."**

As we ourselves trust in God, and grow in our faith, we will always be empowered through the Holy Spirit in whatever path we are called to tread.

Deacon Jen Woodfin

Powerpoint slides for Reflection: Photos of our 'faithful' and 'faith-full' Queen through the years

Prayers of Intercession

Gracious God, whose Spirit helps us in our weakness and guides us in our prayers,
we pray for the Church and for the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

Renew the life and faith of the Church; strengthen our witness; and make us one in Christ...

Grant that we and all who confess that Christ is Lord may be faithful in your service and
filled with the Spirit, that the world may be turned to you. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Guide the nations in the ways of justice, liberty and peace; help them to seek the unity and welfare
of all people... we pray for all governments, rulers and leaders, praying particularly today for our
own Queen, and giving thanks for her 70 years of service. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Comfort those in sorrow; heal the sick in body or in mind and deliver the oppressed...

Grant us compassion for all who suffer, and help us so to carry one another's burdens that we may
fulfil the law of Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive our thanks and praise for all who have served you faithfully here on earth, and especially
those who have revealed to us your grace in Christ... May we and all your people share the life and
joy of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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The Lord's Prayer and Dedication of Offertory

Hymn StF 705 *Written for the Queen's silver jubilee in 1977, it is the suggested hymn on
Methodist websites for the platinum jubilee in 2022. In churches – use all verses.*

It is God who holds the nations / in the hollow of his hand;
it is God whose light is shining / in the darkness of the land;
it is God who builds the City / on the Rock and not on sand:
may the living God be praised!

When a thankful nation, looking back / has cause to celebrate
those who win our admiration / by their service to the state;
when self-giving is a measure / of the greatness of the great:
may the living God be praised!

God reminds us every sunrise / that the world is ours on lease:
for the sake of life tomorrow / may our life for it increase;
may all races live together / share its riches, be at peace:
may the living God be praised!

Fred Pratt Green (1903 – 2000) CCL no. 667973

Blessing or The Grace

To go out: StF 397 MP 664

The Spirit lives to set us free / walk, walk in the light; he binds us all in unity / walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light, walk in the light, walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.

Jesus promised life to all / walk, walk in the light; the dead were wakened by his call / walk, walk...

He died in pain on Calvary / walk, walk in the light; to save the lost like you and me / walk, walk...

We know his death was not the end / walk, walk ...; he gave his Spirit to be our friend / walk, walk...

By Jesus' love our wounds are healed / walk, walk ...; the Father's kindness is revealed / walk, walk...

The Spirit lives in you and me / walk, walk in the light; his light will shine for all to see / walk, walk...

Damian Lundy (1944 – 1996) CCL no. 667973

With prayers and blessings to everyone for a joyful and meaningful Jubilee weekend