

Pentecost

Worship at Home—23 May 2021

Call to Worship

“The heavens are telling the glory of God.
The wonder of his work displays the firmament.”
Let us join with the heavens in wonder,
to marvel at creation and to praise God, our Creator
who both creates and sustains,
and in every generation gives life to the earth.

Opening Prayer and Lord’s Prayer

God of wondrous love, who has the power to create the whirlwind
And the wisdom to speak to us in the still, small voice
Spread your loving wings and breath of love today
Wherever your people are praying and praising
Send your Holy Spirit upon us
As we witness to your presence and celebrate our church’s foundation
Come Holy Spirit, awaken within us the light of faith;
Come Holy Spirit in the quiet moments and in the business of our lives
you have touched our world and never left us in despair
You have held us in our grief or chaos
And you have never deserted us.
You paid us a divine visit
And that visit has never ended.

We think of the Church, as your people of the new creation
People in the Spirit are full of your joy, life and light
And yet, sometimes the Church puts your love to shame
The bible proclaims your love so vividly yet at times
We have at times mechanised our worship,
Limited our vision—
Or held onto attitudes which divides us.
Holy Spirit blow away our cobwebs and set our hearts on fire
We thank you that your Spirit moves where it will,
filling the world with joyful possibilities, revealing the music of the Creator.
Open our hearts to be caught off guard by new and holy possibilities.



Nairne Wight

Nairn’s ashes will
be interred in the
graveyard on
Wednesday
26 May at 2.00pm

In a world that can seem drab, dangerous, hostile, lonely
Energise us by your power and light to forgive ourselves for past mistakes
Free us from our bondage to past wrongs or mistaken ideas.

Join us together so that the Spirit's vitality can shout out a mighty "Yes" to the life we live and give us a renewed purpose which declares the source of all living to be in the One in whom we all live, move and have our being.

Hear us now as we share the prayer Christ taught us to pray. . .

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen

Scripture Readings

John 17: v.6-8 and v.20-23 and Acts 2: v.16-18

Read by Gordon MacKinlay

John 17: v6-9—Jesus Prays for His Disciples

"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

John 17: v20-23—Jesus Prays for All Believers

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Acts 2: v16-18

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.

Meditation

Today is Pentecost. The events of that first Pentecost were dramatic! The disciples were together to celebrate the Jewish Harvest Festival. After praying deeply for his disciples and promising to be with them, suddenly on this particular day as they prayed, there was a sound like a violent blast of wind and a warm sensation overwhelmed them like flickering tongues of fire coursing through them. Within moments, something had happened which transformed the disciples completely and forever. The Holy Spirit came upon them. Now, as promised, the disciples, as Jesus had prayed, were given gifts to share their living Lord's presence in many languages and with great togetherness.



When we learn about the Holy Spirit we know that it is an energy that blows where it will. The Spirit can adapt to languages and forms, sometimes a loud mighty wind, and other times a still small voice within. The Spirit of God gives gifts to our souls. The ability to preach or prophecy.

Traditionally we often refer to Paul's list of the gifts of the Spirit; Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, wisdom, self-control, perseverance and gentleness—to name a few wonderful gifts from God, but there is another clear and striking gift of the Spirit and that is the spirit of boldness. Shortly after Jesus was crucified we know that his followers were hiding, frightened and fearful in an upstairs room. But by the day of Pentecost they were emboldened to preach, to share the Good News.

By the power of the Spirit, Peter was transformed from a frightened disciple to a bold apostle. People were in awe of him. They thought, as they listened that the disciples must be drunk or something. As Peter proclaimed, they were not drunk on wine but filled with the Spirit of God. This was a moment that changed the world forever as these men and women began a movement that would sweep like a fire across Europe, the Middle East and the New Worlds.

On Pentecost, the apostle Peter joyfully and courageously explained to the crowds, “the time has come, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophecy, 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.”

There is a depth to Peter's sermon that invites reflection. In our Lent bible study Liz Babbs encouraged us to ask, “Are dreams and visions the same thing?” Is this just poetic Hebrew quotation from the prophet Joel and so, something we don't need to make too much a fuss about? Perhaps Peter's sermon harkens nostalgically to the past; to a sentimental time when young people had great vision for the future and older people might dream of a better day. Can the two things ever come together?

What visions are imagined by the young today? What dreams are dreamt by the old . . . in this strange time of Covid amidst all the chaos, anxiety and fear, the scourge of social media, the vast conflicts and climate crisis in our news, are the dreams of the young snuffed out by the harsh reality of our time, or the visions strangled by the trivial attitudes or terrible anxieties.

I was listening to BBC Radio 4 interviewing children in Palestine and also Israel on both sides of the current conflict. One little Palestinian girl spoke of her fear at night. But she also spoke of her dream to become a doctor and to use her education to help share the experience of Palestinians to the wider world. Powerful dreams. I know that older people sometimes speak only of hoping for survival, but many do continue to pray for peace.

How uplifting to hear, that despite the threat of persecution and suffering, possible death, these young people in the middle east could still dream dreams. We wonder, can those of us who are a bit older still have a hopeful vision for our own, and the world's future—or do many give way to cynicism and doubt.

Are we as Christians still capable of dreaming and creating vision and, with vision, hope for the future. These are questions for a deep conversation upon a long walk in the Pentland Hills. This week is the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. They say of this Pandemic, that the crisis sheds its true light on the nature of our society and the culture and values within our institutions. I will be interested to see how the Church nationally is shaping its vision, and more interested to see if it is a bold, faithful vision, rather than one that is concerned only with buildings and money and survival, which seems so often the case.

Peter's sermon reminds us that when we are filled with the Spirit, we are called to be bold, because Christ, with us and in us makes us bold, just as Jesus himself was courageous and bold. He dreamed audacious dreams. We think of the day when Jesus laid aside his carpenter tools for the last time to embark on a new adventure . . . it was a valiant plan to pick a dozen men, plain ordinary men with very ordinary interest in spiritual things and to try to build a Divine, heavenly kingdom on earth. We think of his bold courage as he faced seemingly insurmountable challenges and disappointments, from storms of opposition to the cross.

His presence through the Holy Spirit is what calls ordinary people to be saints—people with God's heart within them often find a certain boldness of spirit, a valiant way of thinking about life, a heroic belief that the highest and the best are possible—this is a courage that enables ordinary people to cope against difficult circumstances without giving in to defeat. Grounded in the love of God, the Spirit enables us to withstand through the tests and storms of life, knowing that not even death can win in the end.

We look at Peter's ministry, how he faced imprisonment and persecution and yet his faith did not falter. The Spirit of God held the disciples through their darkest hours—the same Spirit that brought Jesus out of the grave, took the disciples beyond despair enabling them to trust that with God, nothing is impossible. And the community that gathered round them knew it too. Young men like Saul of Tarsus began to see visions. Old men like St John of Patmos began to dream dreams, and the dreams and visions came together and because of them, we worship God today. The Spirit of God who came at Pentecost has not and never will abandon our world. The challenge is for those who are young to throw off the distractions and doubts that cloud their vision, and for those of us who are more mature to discard our cynicism or faithlessness and dream new dreams and for all of us to put the two together so that we make our hope a reality . . . and reassure everyone that God's vision and deepest will is that there should be health, not disease; service, not selfishness; giving, not greed; purity, not corruption; love, not hate. In heaven it is always so and when we pray for the coming of God's heavenly kingdom, as we do in the Lord's Prayer, we are joining our spirit with the holy heavenly Spirit and there we find our strength to dream audacious dreams.

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All sermons from Currie Kirk can be found on the Kirk's website and on YouTube—search Currie Kirk

Prayers of Concern

On the day when we celebrate the Church's foundation we pray for her work across Christ's world, in places whose stories we know and in places we can only leave to the knowledge of the heart of God. And especially we remember those places where those who confess Jesus as their Saviour are still persecuted for His sake. May they know the emboldening power of the Spirit of Pentecost and the loving assurance of the Comforter.

We pray for the Church of Scotland and its deliberations during this week's General Assembly. May the commissioners feel guided by the Spirit and discern God's will for the Church's future and her witness.

Bless churches of all denominations that share Christ's mission in our cities, towns, villages and countryside and islands.

We pray for those experiencing illness in body or in mind, and for those who practice the healing arts of medicine and nursing. We remember families and whole communities young and old emerging from pandemic still feeling the pain of loss of loved ones, loss of connection, loss of time or school.

May they experience God's love and comfort through our actions and our words. We pray for those who are feeling despair that with the assurance of the Spirit, our faith may bring hope. Anoint us with love so that through the practical resolve of Christ we may be ready to play our part in the work of healing, recovery and renewal.

Let us pray that in this land and in the world the Spirit will inspire and raise up women and men, young and old, to dream dreams and share a vision of a world where oppression is defeated by justice, where anxiety is vanquished by hope, where creation is cherished and the earth's resources are harvested responsibly for a just sharing, where people everywhere will not be judged by the colour of their skin, or their gender or their creed or their orientation but by the content of their character.

We pray for a world in which hate is overcome by love, and where the 'earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'

All this we ask through Christ Jesus, our Lord, Amen.

Blessing

May the Spirit
who hovered over the waters when the world was created
Breathe into you the life she gives.

May the Spirit,
who set the Church on fire upon the Day of Pentecost,
bring the world alive with the love of the risen Christ.

And the blessing of God
the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit,
be in you and remain with you always.



Currie Kirk Lenten Appeal— St Luke's Leprosarium, Tamil Nadu, South India

Thank you to all who donated to our Lenten Appeal for St Luke's. The total, generously donated by Currie Kirk Congregation, was £1600 and thanks to the efforts of Eunice Stewart, who went round collecting gift aid forms from those who gave, that brought our total to around £2,000.

On this occasion, rather than donate to another feeding day (as we did in 2003), we agreed to contribute to a much-needed digital x-ray machine for St Luke's. At present they still rely on old-fashioned film which requires a laborious process of developing and is bulky to store.

We have sent our donation via Kathy Miller whose Neem Tree Trust: <https://www.neemtreetrust.org.uk> raises funds both for St Luke's and the nearby disabled boys home for boys with polio.

Kathy has sent our donation, together with funds from her brother in memory of their parents, bringing the total to £7,000. This will approximately cover the cost of a refurbished digital x-ray machine.

Dr Haebus Vethabothagam, Medical Superintendent at St Luke's, has sent his thanks to the Currie Kirk Congregation for the gift. He says that *"your help is a boon to our medical services in our time of need, thank you once again for all for your care and concern for our cause"*.

Gordon A MacKinlay, OBE



Zoom Quiz Night Saturday—29 May at 7pm



If you'd like to take part, please contact Nina at the Kirk Office to register (currie_kirk@btconnect.com). Entry is free but any donations to the work of Christian Aid will be very welcome.

Pentecost

These resources are designed to help you explore the Bible as a family together at home while we can't go to church. Be as creative as you want to be and enjoy spending time with each other and with God.

Prepare yourself...

Lord,
help us to look out and listen for your Holy Spirit.
May we welcome you with open hearts and minds.
Call us, inspire us, surprise us and challenge us.
Give us confidence and calm assurance.
Lead us to your power and love.
Amen.



Question...



Can you speak any other languages?
Can you think of any languages or ways to communicate that don't involve talking?

Read the Bible...



Today's verses are found in **Acts 2:1-21**. You can read them in a Bible or find them [here](#).
Jesus had promised his disciples he would send them a gift, something that would help them to tell others about God and to help them live God's way, but they had to wait for it. They didn't know when it would come but they were probably all surprised by what happened when it did! When we choose to follow Jesus we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit too, it can help us to be bold in telling others about God and helps us to live God's way.

Here's a video of today's story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtTjgmlUtps&t=40s>
You could each try to draw a picture of what you think Pentecost might have been like.

Talk together...



- * What does it feel like to wait for a gift?
- * What is the Holy Spirit?
- * What do you think it felt like to be in the room when the Holy Spirit came? What noises would they have heard? What questions might people have been asking?
- * What did the Holy Spirit help the disciples to do? What does it help us to do?
- * Have you ever experienced the power of the Holy Spirit?
- * Imagine that today was the day the Holy Spirit came. You've received this gift from God, and you have witnessed thousands of people becoming followers of Jesus. What now? Where would you go from here?

Play together...

Charades

Play a game of charades. Can you pass on a message without using words? Act out some book or film titles for your family to guess.

Coded messages

Create a message for someone else to decode and read. Give each letter of the alphabet a number or a shape, then write your message down for someone to solve. Just make sure to give them a key of the cipher you use!

Pray together...

Popcorn reflection! You'll need popcorn (kernels/ready made/microwave bags) Think about a popcorn kernel, it's small and can't be eaten, but it can be transformed into something very different! (Now's the time to pop the popcorn if not using ready made!) Once popped it's very different and is something much better. That's just like how the Holy Spirit transforms us, it's God's spirit working in us! Popcorn prayers are short prayers that shout out to God some of the things we're thankful for. Say some popcorn prayers together, it doesn't matter if more than one person "pops" at once, God can hear everyone at once!

Do something...

You'll need: a cup, 100ml vinegar, a heaped teaspoon bicarbonate of soda.

You may want to do this outside, in a sink/bath/large bowl, on a binbag!

Pour the vinegar into the cup then add the bicarbonate of soda. You won't have to wait long for something to happen!

Could we say that Pentecost was like this? The mixing of people and the Holy Spirit caused a reaction. The effects were first seen by the people in Jerusalem, but soon spilled out to people far and wide.



Praise together...

[Holy Spirit lives in me](#)

[Shine](#)

[Holy Spirit, living breath of God](#)

