

Sunday May 31st *For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or at another time*

Call to Worship

God declares: I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Hymn StF 152 / H&P 197

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

Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people,

and kindle in us the fire of your love;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Methodist Worship Book

Lectionary Reading: Acts 2 v 1 – 21 : see below

For thought

Accompanying this sheet is a suggested way of re-living the events of the first Pentecost Sunday which you may choose to use but, if not, simply read the set reading as usual.

The events took place during the Jewish Harvest celebration 'Shavuot' or, in English, the 'Festival of Weeks'. This festival takes place 7 weeks and one day after the Sabbath following the Passover or, for Christians, the 50th day after Easter Day. N.B. The word Pentecost derives from the Greek for 'fiftieth'.

Hymn H&P 328 (if you don't know the set tune, sing to St Fulbert usually sung to 'Fill thou my life')

Upon the day of Pentecost / the Holy Spirit came –

like powerful, rushing, mighty wind / and leaping, living flame.

The friends of Jesus till that hour / were fearful folk and weak;

but now the Holy Spirit made / them wise and bold to speak.

With joy and confidence they went / to all whom they could reach,

in God the Holy Spirit's power / to praise and heal and teach.

God's Holy Spirit still is here / to guide our world today,

and helps the friends of Jesus Christ / in what they do and say.

Patricia Hunt (b. 1921)

For Prayer

We pray for God's Holy Spirit to come afresh into our own lives and into the lives of our families, our communities, and our world.

We pray for people throughout the world, for our country and government, for the Methodist Church and our own Central Norfolk Circuit, for all those we love.

We pray for everyone coping with the present emergency – those who are ill, those who have lost loved ones, those who are nursing and giving medical treatment, those who are serving and caring, those who are organising, those who are supplying, those who are responsible in government.

We pray with **Josephine Walker** (in her role as a Deputy Head Teacher at Bishop's CE Primary Academy in Thetford) for all returning to school during this coming week. We particularly think about staff and

children's health and mental well-being, in light of COVID-19 and the impact of the necessary changes in schools to ensure it is safe to return.

And we pray for Josephine, and for all teachers, with the double worry of making things safe for children and associated adults on the one hand and, keeping themselves safe on the other hand.

We say the Lord's Prayer...

Offer to God your offertory for the week: and, if cash, put it aside in a special place.

Message from a Circuit Friend

We've just bought a new lawn-mower so that Pat can mow the lawn during lock-down! It arrived gleaming bright, packaged, ready for assembly. With help, we got it together, only to find that it wouldn't work! Then we realised the battery had to be charged up! Immediately, it sprang to life! The simple explanation? It needed power within. In Acts 1:8 the risen Jesus promises his assembled disciples: *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you...."* Sure enough, it happened on this very day – the Jewish Festival of Weeks – until recently called Whitsunday ("White Sunday" - the day for baptisms and confirmations, when white was worn). The story is told in Acts 2, when the disciples were "altogether in one place" and they each experienced the descent of what seemed to be tongues of fire, and they found themselves speaking in many tongues – the tongues of those people in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the "ends of the earth". Suddenly, a group of seemingly ordinary friends of Jesus became transformed – alive – on fire – filled with POWER! (The New Testament word is "*dunamis*", from which we get the word "*dynamite*")! These people were dynamic - they were "*power-packs*" and nothing could stop them. It was said of them: *"These that have turned the world upside down, have come here also!"*

It all happened when the disciples were altogether in one place – they were the people Jesus had "called out" of the world to be His witnesses. The words "called out" in Greek provide the word "*ecclesia*" - i.e. "*the church*". So it was the beginning of the Church that saw the baptism of power through the gift of the Holy Spirit. All the wonderful happenings throughout 2000 years of Church history have been "*empowered*" by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is still within the Church today, even though we cannot for a while be altogether in one place. We can be together in prayer and worship – and through these activities, the power of the Holy Spirit will bless our witness everywhere. Praise the Lord!

Colin Garwood (Retired URC Minister and member with Wells Methodist Church)

Hymn StF 620 / H&P 777

O breath of life, come sweeping through us / revive your church with life and power;
O breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us / and fit your church to meet this hour.

O wind of God, come bend us, break us / till humbly we confess our need;
then in your tenderness remake us / revive, restore; for this we plead.

O breath of love come breathe within us / renewing thought and will and heart;
come love of Christ, afresh to win us / revive your church in every part.

Bessie Porter Head (1850 – 1936)

Collect

Almighty God, who on the day of Pentecost
sent your Holy Spirit on the disciples
with the wind from heaven and with tongues of flame,
filling them with you and boldness to preach the gospel:
send us out in the power of the same Spirit
to witness to your truth and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Methodist Worship Book

May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us (and all those we love) this day and always, Amen.

