

The Feast of Pentecost

May 19th



Please remember in your prayers those who are unwell:
Glyndwr Wright, Connie Lewis, Peter Hagerty, Shannon Vincent, Mark Lewis, Deborah Stoddart, Anthony Evans, and Paula Jones.

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal Giver of love and power,
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom:
confirm us in this mission,
and help us to live the good news we proclaim;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Happy birthday to the First Merthyr Brownies, who held an 80th birthday celebration in All Saints hall this week. It was lovely to see the hall so full of children and parents

Congratulations and thanks to the Guiders for all their hard work.



Happy Birthday to the Church!

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples at Jerusalem like a mighty wind and tongues of fire. Their lives were changed in an instant: filled with joy and excitement, they rushed out into the streets and began preaching. 3000 people were baptised that day, so we think of it as the birthday of the Church.



Ministry Area Development Workshops

Three workshops have taken place, and the next three will take place in different churches;

All are welcome to any of these meetings:

- ◆ Saturday 25th May 9:30-12:30 (bacon baps) - St Tydfil's
- ◆ Wednesday 29th May 18:00-21:00 (cakes) - Merthyr Vale
- ◆ Monday 3rd June 11 - 2pm (soup lunch) - All Saints.

Weekly Service Times

Wednesday 10.30am Christchurch
- Holy Eucharist

Sunday 10am Christchurch -
Holy Eucharist
11am All Saints - Holy Eucharist
11am online Facebook and Youtube Service.

Parish Contact Details

Rev Caroline Owen	Home: 01685 558660
Mrs Barbara Edwards (Rector's Warden)	Mrs Dorcas Cox (People's Warden)
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The sale will be held
on Saturday July 13th,
10am - 12 noon
at All Saints Church Hall.

Stalls will cost £5 - tables provided if booked in advance .

Free entry for buyers, and tea and coffee £1—come along for a coffee and a chat!

To book, please ring 07810400068

Readings for May 19th - The Day of Pentecost

Collect

God, who at this time taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending them the light of your Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to have the right judgement in all things and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING **Acts 2. 1-21**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' ¹³But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.' ¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷"In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. ²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. ²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Psalm 104. 24-36

²⁴ O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. ²⁵Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great. ²⁶There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it. ²⁷These all look to you to give them their food in due season; ²⁸when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. ²⁹When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. ³⁰When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground. ³¹May the glory of the LORD endure for ever; may the LORD rejoice in his works— ³²who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke. ³³I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. ³⁴May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. ³⁵Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul. Praise the LORD!

SECOND READING **Romans 8. 22-27**

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. ²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

GOSPEL **John 15. 26-27; 16. 4-15**

'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. ²⁷You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. ⁴'I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, "Where are you going?" ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgement: ⁹about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; ¹¹about judgement, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. ¹²'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Thought for the Day

- The Spirit Lives in You and Me.

In our gospel reading last week, we heard that as he ascended into heaven 40 days after his resurrection at Easter, Jesus had told the disciples not to leave Jerusalem but to stay and wait: something was going to happen: they would not be left alone. Today's readings tell us that on the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after his resurrection, the Spirit came down into the room where the disciples were gathered and waiting, like a rushing mighty wind, with tongues of fire, and their lives were changed forever. That day 3000 people in Jerusalem heard their words of joy and excitement, and their lives were transformed too: they were baptised and joined the new church.



St Paul may or may not have been present but in his letters, he has lots to say about the Spirit, which was powering the Church in those early days. He tells us that the Spirit is a living thing, and anyone who does not have the Spirit, does not belong to Christ. The Church is a fellowship of the Spirit. We are members one of another because God, in his Spirit, is in our hearts: if you are baptised, the Holy Spirit lives in you. In that wonderful hymn, 'Come down, O Love Divine' we ask the Spirit, Love Divine to come down on us,

'For none can guess its grace, Till he becomes the place, In which the Holy Spirit makes His dwelling.'

You may not often FEEL it, but the Holy Spirit has been living in you since your baptism. Paul tells us 'Do you not know your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you, which you have received from God.' He may seem more like a lodger who lives in our house, but doesn't come down and see us very often, and join in our family life. Those of us who have had teenage children will understand this: technically, they live with us, but we rarely see them, sometimes for days. But they are there, its their home, they are part of the family.

We don't feel that Pentecost is as important as other festivals like Christmas and Easter, and we don't look forward to it with the same excitement. We're not like those disciples who were waiting, and anticipating. But Pentecost is our own festival, it's about us, it's for the baptised – supermarkets can't make money out of it – no Christmas presents, no hot cross buns, no Easter eggs. Ask children what Pentecost is all about and it's unlikely they can tell you. But Pentecost is the Birthday of the Church. We hang up balloons and we bring out Pentecost birthday cakes today to celebrate the moment when the Spirit gave life to God's new creation, the Church. St Paul uses the image of pregnancy and birth, 'we know the whole Creation has been groaning in labour until now...waiting to give birth...and we, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for our redemption.'

The Greek word for Spirit – Pneuma – and the Hebrew word Ruarch – mean both Spirit and breath, in both languages. We speak of respiration meaning breathing, and we speak of inspiration meaning creativity. That's how basic the Spirit is to our lives, he is our breath of life: Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on the disciples and they're inspired to go out into the world.

But that work of the spirit does not always happen as dramatically as it does in the readings today. As the prophet Elijah found, the voice of God is not always in the rushing, mighty wind, or in the storm, but can be a still small voice: much of the work of the Spirit is quiet, gradual, year in, year out, as we are transformed into the likeness of Christ. Paul identifies the fruits of the spirit as: 'love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.' Those are not noisy qualities. The Spirit is at work in the ordinary, in the normal, quietly transforming us.

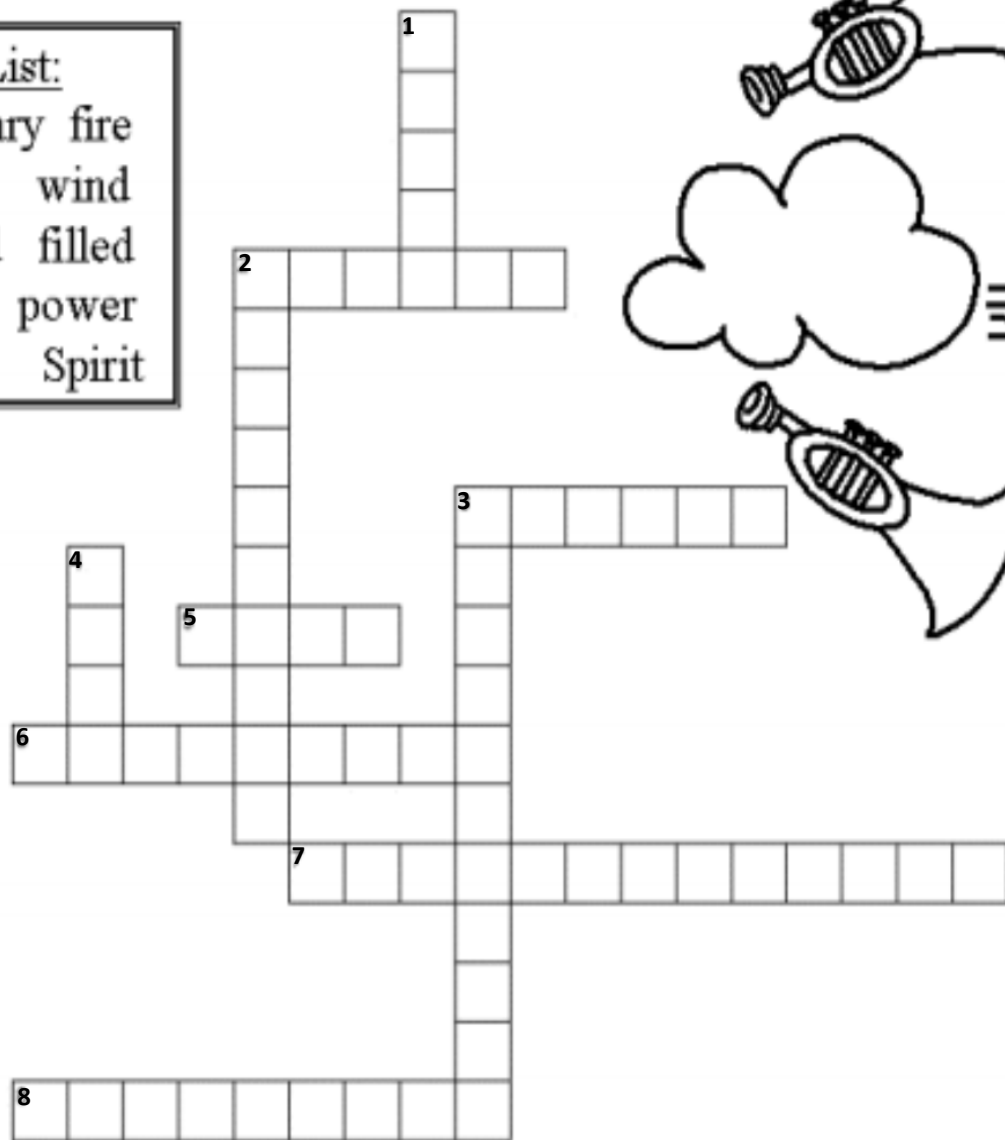
Today is a wonderful occasion. Easter is over, and the resurrected Lord Jesus has ascended to his Father. He promised we would not be left orphans, and now we know that the Spirit lives in us, and we can do all things in the power of that Spirit.

Happy Birthday to you all.

Pentecost Crossword

Word List:

extraordinary fire
languages wind
symbolized filled
firstfruits power
Pentecost Spirit



Across

2. This Pentecost was special because the Holy ____ filled the disciples.
3. Only after they were ____ with the Holy Spirit did the disciples speak in tongues.
5. A violent ____ from heaven suddenly came into the house where they were gathered.
6. This is the Greek word for fiftieth (the fiftieth day after Easter).
7. The day of Pentecost was a very special day, not ordinary but ____.
8. All of the disciples began speaking in different ____.

Down

1. Because of the Holy Spirit now the believers had this to be witnesses to everyone.
2. The fire from Heaven ____ the new power and presence of the Holy Spirit in them.
3. Pentecost was also called the day of this, when the people brought an offering.
4. It looked like tongues of this separated and came to rest on each of the disciples.