

Pentecost Sunday 31 May 2020

The paper-version Service



The Good
Shepherd
Four Marks

Responding to God's Love

For now, we cannot meet in the building – but the church is still open!

All of our services are online www.goodshepherdfourmarks.org.uk but this weekly sheet captures our Sunday service for those without internet.

To Begin: Find a Bible. If safe, perhaps light a candle. Find a comfortable place and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the modern song from this Sunday's Service set out below.

Opening Prayer: Father God, thank you for your love, mercy and grace to us in Jesus. Help us know your welcome to us today, to receive your forgiveness and be filled to overflowing with your Holy Spirit. As we go forwards, help us, to grow in the power and fruitfulness of your Spirit declaring your love to the world by our deeds and words, to the glory of your name. Amen

Song:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways:
re clothe us in our rightful mind;
in purer lives your service find,
in deeper reverence praise,
in deeper reverence praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord
let us, like them, obey his word:
'Rise up and follow me,
rise up and follow me!'

O sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
when Jesus shared on bended knee
the silence of eternity
interpreted by love,
interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all
our words and works that drown
the tender whisper of your call,
as noiseless let your blessing fall
as fell your manna down,
as fell your manna down.

Drop your still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease; take from
our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of your peace,
the beauty of your peace.

Breathe through the heats of our
desire, your coolness and your balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire,
speak through the earthquake, wind
and fire,
O still small voice of calm,
O still small voice of calm!

Read: John 7:37-39

Living with the Spirit (a summary of the talk given by Howard Wright):

In Ezekiel 47 there is the prophecy of streams, a river, flowing from the temple bring life and healing to the whole earth.

For the Jews of the time, the temple was the symbol of the presence of God. It's in the temple that Jesus declares, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.'

At Pentecost, (Acts 2) the disciples are gathered almost certainly in the temple courts and the Holy Spirit comes. The disciples are changed such that others notice. They were already changed people after the resurrection of Jesus, but now there is an even more vibrant power at work, streams of life-giving power coming from them.

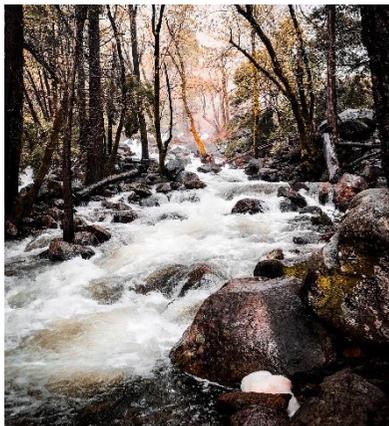
If the Gospels are the story of Jesus, then the book of Acts is the story of the Holy Spirit and one of the things we notice is how the presence of God is no longer linked to the Jerusalem temple or any particular place or time or even race. The presence of God is linked to a particular people – the people of God, the church.

The disciples of then, and us now, are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians puts it: *'Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.'* (Ephesians 2:19-22).

We have an attachment to our building, in Four Marks but for now it is closed. However, the presence of God is not hindered, instead it is properly dispersed.

God's Spirit is in us and we are dispersed, no longer risking being hidden in a building, we and God's Spirit is out. The river has flowed from the building; will it flow from us?



What does this river, these streams look like in us?

Dependence and trust upon the life-giving God who restores our soul (Psalm 23)

Hope (Romans 15:13).

Fruitfulness: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. (Galatians 5:22-23).

Power: Supernatural gifts including, prophecy (dreams and visions), miracles, tongues (languages), but gifts such as, faith, administration, leadership, etc. (See Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 13:1-11; Ephesians 4:11-13 and others)

Courage: The disciples were so changed that they were thought to be drunk – now do not be weird but be courageous. Speak of the reason for the hope you have (1 Peter 3:15).

What are we to do?

Turn to God: In Jeremiah we read: *'My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.'* (Jeremiah 2:13)

Galatians 5 lists the fruit of Spirit, but also has a list of things that get in the way of being Spirit-filled and fruitful – like trying to store water in a broken container. The list is introduced by the simple catch-all – love your neighbour. But also includes places we might go for

refreshment which fail to satisfy – lusts, envy, bitterness, selfishness and rage (Galatians 5:13-26). Be careful not to quench the Spirit but quench your thirst on God and his living water.



Jesus says: *'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.'* (John 7:37)

Be filled with the Spirit: Ephesians 5:18 says, *'Go on being filled with the Spirit.'* And Jesus says: *'If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'* (Luke 11:13). **So, ask!**

Seek after God, through his Word, the Bible; through prayer, listening and talking; through worship and; through fellowship with others, whether within a small group, one-one by phone, skype, WhatsApp, or a letter.

Dream: On the day of Pentecost Peter quoted from the prophecy of Joel. Much of Joel is like a scene from some disaster movie. We might feel we're living in some similar horror film today, but Joel points to this as a new beginning: *'I will pour out my*

Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.' (Acts 2:16-18). What dreams do we have? Are they big enough?

Prayers: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)*

- Pray for the day ahead and its tasks
- Pray for the nations
- Pray for organisations
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends
- Pray for the Church



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

The Lord's Prayer: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, COGS, the communities around us and our whole nation. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

The Notices: If you know of others who'd like to receive this, or you'd rather not receive it; or if you find yourself isolated and not able to get neighbours, friends or family to help, then ring Howard, 01420 563344.



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers