

24th May, 2026

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle 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 song from this Sunday's Service.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn:

Come down, O Love divine,
seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour
glowing;

O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame
bestowing.

O let it freely burn,
till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat
consuming;

and let thy glorious light
shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my
path illuming.

And so the yearning strong,
with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the power of
human telling;

for none can guess its grace,
till Love create a place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes a
dwelling.

The Sermon by Rev Howard Wright

PENTECOST. Read Acts 2.1-21 and John 7.37-39.

(There's a lot of verses to look up today – but I'd really encourage you to check them all out 😊)

Today is Pentecost. If we read on from the story we heard this morning, there is an offer of salvation and a promise of the Holy Spirit – read Acts 2:38-39

God offers life to us and it is the Holy Spirit, who gave birth to Creation (see Genesis 1:1-2), that gives us birth into his Family – read John 3:5-6

The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to be God's children and the Holy Spirit comes to live in us. A Christian is someone with Christ-in them – the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit – read Ephesians 1:13-14

The Holy Spirit brings Salvation and life: *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.* And transformation. Transformation into the likeness of Christ: *And we all, ... are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.* 2 Corinthians 3:18

We might respond: 'I am not good enough to revive this gift.' No, you are not good enough, and neither am I, but God is. We can receive forgiveness because of Jesus and by the Holy Spirit we can receive assurance that we need not carry guilt or shame – read Romans 8:1-2.

'I can't live like Jesus.' No you can't on your own, but the Holy Spirit lives in you, and wants to transform you into the likeness of Christ and shine through you. Notice how the disciples were transformed. And remember your own testimony and the testimony of others around you. Ezekiel, moved by God, foretold this: *'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.'* (Ezekiel 36:26-27 & 11:19). Read also, Galatians 5:22-23. And reflect upon Jesus promise in our John passage of streams of living water.

'I can't talk about Jesus - I don't have the words.' No you can't on your own, but the Holy Spirit will give them to you. Notice how the disciples, were given words at Pentecost and see also, Acts 4:13 and Luke 12:11-12

'I don't know anything – I don't know the Bible or enough about Jesus.' No, you probably don't know as much as you might, or perhaps, as much as you should, but the Holy Spirit comes to help us – read John 14:26, and see also 1 Corinthians 2:12-16. And, we can practice, be disciplined, a disciple, and read God's word ideally daily, but at least regularly.

'I don't know how to pray, I'm no good at it.' No you probably don't but the Holy Spirit does – read Romans 8:26. And again, practice. Take a time each day talk with, speak and listen to God. And in each moment of each day, keep talking to the Father, through Jesus and by the Holy Spirit.

'I've nothing to offer.' No probably not, but the Holy Spirit, brings gifts, life giving, life inspiring gifts – read 1 Corinthians 12:7-11. And remember the living water that God promises.

'Surely God won't give the Holy spirit to me!' Yes he will! God says three times he will: Ask – yes! Seek – yes! And knock – yes! Read Luke 11:9-13

So, ask him – and go on being filled with the Holy Spirit – see Ephesians 5:18.

Pentecost Sunday: 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 forever. Amen.*

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, St Andrews and The Good Shepherd, 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).

At the Church of the Good Shepherd:

- Tea and Chat and Bowls: June 17th at 2pm in Church Hall & Church.
- Coffee and Questions: May 27th and June 24th at 10.30am in Church Hall.
- The Community Cupboard, 2:45pm every Thursday in Church.

For Further information:

This paper and all parish details are on the website at <https://www.parishofmedsteadandfourmarks.co.uk>