

**Winchester, Eastleigh & Romsey Circuit
Service at Home for Sunday May 19th
Pentecost Sunday**

Prepared by Rev John Archer

Call to Worship

Come Holy Spirit, inspiration of prophets and strength of apostles, Come Holy Spirit, source of all joy and rest for the weary. Come, treasure of majesty and mercy of the most high, Come Holy Spirit, come

Amen

(Acts of Thomas, 3rd century Syrian Christian)

Read pray or sing StF 11

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty!

[Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty \(Singing the Faith 11 / StF11\) \(youtube.com\)](#)

- 1 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee:
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!
- 2 Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the
glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.
- 3 Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the sinful human eye thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in power, in love, and purity.
- 4 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and
sky and sea;
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!
*Reginald Heber (1783-1826) (alt.)
Based on Revelation 4:8-11*

Opening Prayer

Father we praise you. Your love for us is constantly renewed and your generosity never fails.
You came to us in Jesus and your Holy Spirit is always with us.

We thank you that we have heard this good news in our own language and have understood it.

We thank you that, with your help, we have welcomed your Spirit, drawn closer to you and begun to lead new lives.

We pray that, gladly accepting all your gifts, we may use them to help others and to make plain your gracious goodness.

May we rejoice to be your people and to reflect the light and love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

We ask it in the name of Christ.

Amen

We pray the Lord's Prayer.

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 trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen

Bible Readings

John 14 : 15 – 21

Acts 2: 1 – 11

Read pray or Sing StF 395

Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me

[Spirit of the Living God \(Daniel Iverson\) \(Singing the Faith 395 / StF 395\) with singing and lyrics. \(youtube.com\)](#)

Spirit of the living God,

fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God,

fall afresh on me.

Break me, melt me,

mould me, fill me.

Spirit of the living God,

fall afresh on me.

Daniel Iverson (1890-1977)

Prayers of Confession

There will be visions and dreams
But we are stuck in our ways and stopped dreaming.
Forgive us Lord.

The believers were together
But we are so divided
Forgive us Lord.

There were sounds of wind and sight of fire
But we expect nothing to change
Forgive us Lord.

They spoke with new freedom
But we are tongue tied, too dumb to speak for you
Forgive us Lord.

Everyone heard the message
But we try to reach only the nearest few
Forgive us Lord.

The Father will send another helper
But we are self sufficient, relying on ourselves
Forgive us Lord.

The Helper will teach you everything
But we have stopped wanting to learn or grow
Father forgive us.

Holy Spirit, come bless us.
Amen

Sermon

1 John at the last supper.

The disciples were enjoying an evening meal together. They were relaxed and the conversation flowed. Throughout the day they had to share Jesus with crowds who followed him, but at night they had him to themselves. But this night felt different. There was a heaviness in the air that could not be ignored. They had sensed danger as they entered Jerusalem – to both Jesus and themselves. Even the Romans were on edge. Jesus was a bit quieter. Then a strange thing happened. He took a bowl and a towel and knelt to wash their feet. He knew they were anxious and said *“Set your troubled hearts at rest. Believe in God. Believe also in me”* John realised a crisis was at hand. Jesus was warning them that he was going. How could they live without him. Their hearts were beating hard. Jesus saw that they were anxious and he quietly said *“I will ask the Father and he will give you a Comforter to be with you for ever”* But John did not want a comforter – he wanted Jesus. *“Don't worry, don't be afraid, you won't be left bereft. Keep*

my commands. Love one another. I shall be with you, you in me and I in you for ever.” But did any of them believe it at the time? I doubt it.

2. John in a room 50 years later

It was 50 years ago but the old man John – probably the last disciple alive – remembered it as if it were yesterday. He now was spending his evenings with young friends who had become followers of Jesus. Together they had come to the conviction that the only way they could make sense of Jesus teaching, his death and his many resurrection appearances, was in terms of God. To speak of Jesus was to speak of God. John and his community of disciples were trying to write it all down. Those few who knew Jesus personally were dying or being killed. John himself was an old man. It was important to tell the story and have it recorded. But tonight as they took bread and passed the cup those words of Jesus came back into John's mind. *I will ask the Father and he will give you another comforter to be with you for ever.*

3 Another John – the Scotsman in the first world war.

Here is another testimony from a man also named John. A tough, respected Doctor. A man who kept his emotions well under control. As a young man he had just qualified with a brilliant university degree., but now he was scared out of his life in the trenches in France. He cared for the wounded but he'd never dreamt of such carnage and he found it hard to cope. His faith was almost shattered by the monstrous evil around him. As night falls he finds himself with 4 others in the back of a truck. One is the chaplain. He reads the words of Jesus *“Let not your hearts be troubled”*. Then he breaks a dry biscuit and they all share it. He passes around a flask and they all drink. There is a powerful silence and the chaplain then declares the blessing of the Father Son and the Holy Spirit.

And that promise had been kept. The Comforter, The Holy Spirit, had come and in him God was with them.

John, his eyes bright with tears remembers this and remembered the real presence of Christ in the back of the truck. There was no flesh and blood Jesus, but there was certainly another Comforter promised to be with us for ever., God alive and

present – John knew that was the truth in the back of the truck.

Through the centuries people have had difficulty in understanding the Holy Spirit. Experiences have been so varied.

- a) Speaking in tongues, miracles, prophecies were attributed to the working of the Holy Spirit.
- b) Others have been deeply moved by the beauty of the landscape or music – strongly aware of the presence of God
- c) Yet others (many, many more) have found the fellowship of the Holy Spirit as they have met for worship, praise and prayer in the presence of God
- d) Finally we plug into the power of the Holy Spirit, who empowers us in our daily life as we pray to God

We are not alone in an alien Universe. As the first disciples knew, God had come near to them in Jesus. So in this other Comforter, this alter – ego of Jesus, God was with them. God is with us. When Jesus went from this earth, the great gift, not of a separate God, but of the same God could be with us in Spirit.

Conclusion

We have looked at 3 pictures

1. The upper room gathering for the last supper together
2. An early church congregation
3. A small group in the back of a truck in time of war

It is in such varied places that people have found God's love for them , and it is in the power of the Holy Spirit that we are able to be held and strengthened and empowered to live and work today.

Whatever life brings us we can know that God has kept his promise'

"I will ask the Father and he will give you another Comforter to be with you for ever" **Amen**

Read pray or sing StF 370

Breathe on me breath of God

[StF 370 - Breathe on me, Breath of God \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

- 1 Breathe on me, Breath of God;
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.
- 2 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.
- 3 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.
- 4 Breathe on me, Breath of God;
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.

Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)

Prayers for Others

Spirit of God, breathe into our lives

We are here, Lord. You have brought us here
And now we bring to you those in need of our
prayers,

The sick, the bereaved, the anxious.

Come Holy Spirit to those in distress, to those afraid.

Bring comfort, bring peace.

Come to us when we seek to help.

Guide our words and the ways in which we care

Spirit of God breathe into our lives

We are here Lord, you have brought us here.

And now we bring to you the needs of our society

Which seeks new values and a sense of purpose

In an unstable and changing world.

Come Holy Spirit, bring neighbourliness into our
communities.

Bring hope to our young people

Bring harmony where there is discord

Spirit of God, breathe into our lives

Breathe into the church, breathe into the world

Amen

Read pray or sing StF 372

Come down O love divine

[StF 372 Come down, O Love divine - YouTube](#)

- 1 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.

- 2 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.

- 3 Let holy charity
mine outward vesture be,
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;
true lowliness of heart,
which takes the humbler part,
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with
loathing.

- 4 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 he become the place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

Bianco da Siena (d. 1434)

translated by Richard Frederick Littledale (1833-1890)

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
The love of God the Father
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with us all and those we represent
Now and always.

Amen