



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

'The Pew sheet without any Pews'

Bulletin No 12 / 31.05.20 Pentecost

Dear Friends

In company with all other organisations, the Church is following Government guidelines and not meeting for worship while the coronavirus emergency is on.

This weekly bulletin has worship, news, prayer requests, information about virtual services, plus anything else that might be 'in the notices'.

NEW this week – 'Roots' have started a weekly 'Family Time' Bulletin which we have added to this mailing. Please use and pass on to anyone who might be interested.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for:

- Families and friends of Gwen Hewinson
- The country as we start to slowly emerge from lockdown

If you know of anyone who would like to be added to the prayer list, please let us know and they will be included in the next bulletin.

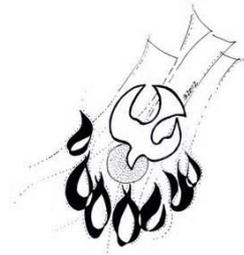
Lectionary Readings (Pentecost/Whitsunday)

Acts 2 v1-21

Psalm 104 v24-34,35b

1 Corinthians 12 v3b-13

John 7 v37-39



Virtual Services

For a comprehensive list of virtual services, please visit <http://www.urch.org.uk/news.aspx>
If you know of any others, please let us know.

Message from Bob Alger, realger@sky.com

Bob Alger is having his usual Sunday Coffee Morning at 11.30am. To join in, just go to <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6147530476>. Don't forget to bring your own coffee! **Bob**

Depending on your browser you should not need to give the meeting ID and password, but if you do then the Meeting ID is 614 753 0476 and the Password is 6Bcgyc

ST ANDREW'S

The Air Ambulance in Gloucestershire: Saving Lives by Saving Time

Our June Charity

If a patient can reach hospital within 60 minutes of serious injury – known as the 'Golden Hour' – the chances of survival are much increased. The Midlands Air Ambulance Service exists to provide such a response to emergencies in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire, and can reach 90% of the region within eight minutes.



Operating from strategically located

bases its helicopters can reach an emergency very quickly, and the maximum flying time to hospital from anywhere in the region is 15 minutes. It has three helicopters covering these counties. Since 1991 the service has responded to 54,000 missions, averaging 2,000 per year.

Most of these missions are to medical emergencies, or sports and leisure injuries, and 40% of them are road accidents. Each ambulance carries a pilot, two paramedics or a paramedic and a flight doctor, and a full array of life support medical equipment, so diagnosis and emergency treatment can begin as soon as the patient is on board for the short flight. On average each flight uses 130 litres of fuel and each mission cost £2,500. In all each year it costs in excess of £9 million to maintain the three aircraft and to provide all aspects of this life-saving service. The Air Ambulances do not receive funding from the government or from the Lottery, and rely on donations from businesses and from the public. They regularly make the difference between life and death, and it is the generous gifts and fund raising from local people which keep them flying. Please support this life saving service.

If you have not signed up for regular giving to our monthly charity, in lieu of the retiring offertory plate please see the document from Finance Committee sent out by email prior to the AGM in April.

Robin Derbyshire

Reflection from Rev Richard Atkins for Pentecost 2020

Today is the Feast of Pentecost; the spring harvest festival of the Israelites, where the version in Acts chapter 2 is set.

This Lukan Pentecost seems to have been a very noisy affair, no wonder that the locals thought the disciples were drunk and partying at nine o'clock in the morning.

Most of us love that noisy Pentecost, the banging and colour, the dressing up - the noisier the better!



But there is another Pentecost story that I want to focus on; not the noisy one in Acts but the version, so often neglected, in John 20 v19-22.

In this version of Pentecost it's not some later nine o'clock in the morning but the evening of that first Easter Sunday.

The disciples are frightened because of the events of the past few days and have locked themselves away.

Then the risen Jesus comes and stands in the room with them.

In this moment Jesus offers them evidence of the reality of what has happened on the Cross by revealing the crucifixion marks on his hands and in his side - and also evidence of the reality of his risen presence with them.

The words of peace in v 19- 21 are in one sense the words of a common greeting - meaning no more than "May all be well with you".

But they have already been given far greater significance by John in earlier sections of his Gospel in John 14v27 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you' and 16v33 'I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace'

It is in the context of this resurrection encounter and of the giving of peace that Jesus breathes on those who are gathered and invites them to 'Receive the Holy Spirit'

In John 20 there is no waiting for the day of Pentecost (unlike the account in Acts 2) - but it is on the evening of the day of resurrection that the Spirit is offered and given.

But Jesus doesn't encourage the disciples to stay in and feel good about being gifted with the Holy Spirit and that's important in the context of life in this or any other Christian community.

Rather, Jesus challenges those present to look outwards, beyond the walls of that upper room.

Here is a reminder that the Spirit is not given to us simply for our own benefit, a toy to play with, to make us feel good to give us a 'religious high', but is offered to enable us to do the work of the Kingdom.

Even or particularly, at a time of pestilence and lockdown.

On this day of Pentecost we are once again invited to encounter the risen Jesus.

No we can't all meet together like the disciples in that upper room.

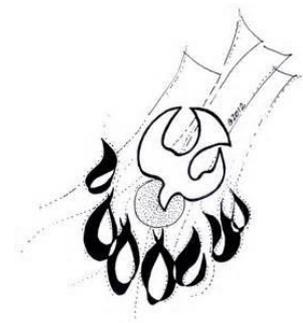
Many of us remain in lockdown, cut off from what we would see as normal life and worship.

But behind our 'locked doors', as we celebrate Resurrection, we are also once again offered that gift of the Holy Spirit; not to make us feel better but that we may better serve Christ in the world.

In that encounter we hear his words, spoken first to those behind locked doors two thousand years ago, spoken today to each one of us, "Receive the Holy Spirit".

Amen

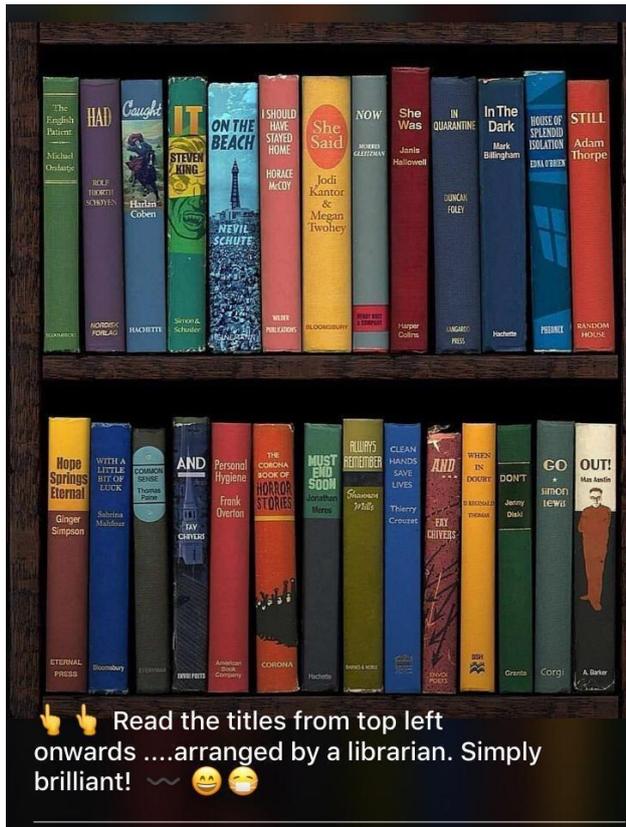
1. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.
2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.
3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this 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)



A Bookshelf for this time of Crisis



Sent to Janet by a friend – anon. You will need to expand it to get the best effect!

All around the world

Lord Jesus, all around the world
your followers are facing difficult times.
Please protect them from harm
and help them build their faith in you.
Amen.

***Roots – The world ablaze, Prayers for
difficult times May 2020***

Janet, Fiona & Brian

Mary Cummings

