

St Andrew's and St George's West Church

Order of Service 23 May 2021

Pentecost

Literally meaning 'the 50th Day after Passover'



God Breathes New Life into Us

Music

Spirit of God Unseen as the Wind

Scottish Folk Melody

Welcome and Introduction to the Theme: God Breathes New Life into Us

Welcome to this service coming to you from St. Andrew's and St. George's West Church here in the heart of Edinburgh on Pentecost Sunday. A warm welcome to those of you tuning in at home as well as to those of you physically present here in the sanctuary. Our theme on this Pentecost Sunday is 'God Breathes New Life into Us.' Nothing could be more basic than breathing. And during the pandemic we have become more aware than ever of the precious gift of breath. So before we come to our opening responses we are going to invite you to join in a breathing exercise which will be led for us by Sally.

“Take a deep breath” - it's a phrase we often hear when we need to cope with a tricky situation.

During the pandemic we've perhaps become more aware of our breathing, especially when we're behind our masks, in a public place or as we come out of lockdown. Articles in the press, the N.H.S. and mindfulness gurus advocate the health benefits of becoming more aware of our breathing.

Dr Rangan Chatterjee, the author and TV presenter says:

“Many of us spend too much time in fight-or-flight mode and not enough in relaxation mode. I've come up with a simple exercise called **3-4-5** breathing.

It couldn't be easier. Just breathe in for three seconds, hold for four and then breathe out for five”.

As we approach this Pentecost service let's focus on our breathing right now.

Sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor about hip width apart

Now breathe in....2.3 Hold it2....3....4 Breathe out ...2....3...4....5.

In2....3 Hold2....3....4 Out ...2....3....4....5

Once more In2....3 Hold 2.....3....4 Out2....3.....4....5

Try doing this a few times a day, and even better in the open air, and you'll notice the benefits

Call to Worship

Come out from the shadows
and into the light of morning.

Come, empty and depleted,
to be filled with God's Spirit.

Come, sober in sorrow,
and leave drunk with joy.

Come, expecting nothing,
but ready to be surprised.

Above all, come, and know
that you are welcome here.

Because God breathes new life into us.

Hymn: Spirit of God Unseen as the Wind

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as is the dove,
teach us the truth and help us believe,
show us the Saviour's love.*

You spoke to us long, long ago,
gave us the written word ;
we read it still, needing its truth,
through it God's voice is heard.

Spirit of God, unseen as the wind...

Without your help we fail our Lord,
we cannot live his way ;
we need your power, we need your strength,
following Christ each day.

Spirit of God, unseen as the wind...

Opening Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Lord God, as we greet you today may we know your Spirit rushing into our lives, surrounding us with love and with peace, with hope and with joy.

There are no barriers which can prevent your Spirit from entering our lives.
And so we worship and adore you.

In the knowledge of your healing Spirit,
we confess that we have not always served you well.
We serve you in fits and starts, singing your praises one moment,
forgetting your goodness the next.

God, keep us mindful of you so that we more fully see you at work in our everyday lives and more readily respond to your invitation to be involved in that work.
May your Spirit keep on nudging us.

May we be your delight as we breathe in air and breathe out light, loving and serving each other. Amen

Words of affirmation

Please join in the words of affirmation

**We affirm that we are made in God's image,
befriended by Christ,
empowered by the Spirit.**

**We affirm your gift of the Spirit,
poured out at Pentecost, breathing new life into us now and always.
AMEN**

And now we say together....

**Our Father in heaven.
Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Prayer and Breathing

Having taken part in a few guided prayer sessions during the course of the pandemic I have noticed that many of them begin with a focus on breathing as a way of stilling and

calming ourselves as we approach God in prayer. So as you sit at home or here in church I would invite you to become aware of your breathing. Focus on your body starting with your head, your face and your mouth.....and moving down through your neck..... shoulders, arms wrists hands fingers Now your chest stomach thighsknees calves anklesand feet. As you breathe in, breathe in God's love for you. As you breathe out, let go and let God.

'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.' AMEN

The Bible story of the coming of the Holy Spirit

as told in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 2 verses 1 – 21

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." ¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine." ¹⁴ But 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. ¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶ No, 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. ¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. ²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. ²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

A Song of Taizé: Veni Sancte Spiritus (Come Holy Spirit)

Who is the Spirit? A Dialogue about God's Spirit

Leader: Who is the spirit?

Voice 1: She shifts greyness into colour,

Voice 2: gathers silence into song.

All: She is the creator and we will sing of her.

Leader: Who is the spirit?

Voice 1: Composer of the chorus new every dawn,

Voice 2: the breeze making music through the leaves of the trees.

All: She is the song and we will sing with her.

Leader: Who is the spirit?

Voice 1: Maker, creator, inventor, weaver,

Voice 2: dancer, designer, disorder, discerning.

All: She is our freedom and we will play with her.

Leader: Who is the spirit?

Voice 1: Breathes new life into all we are now,

Voice 2: re-imagines always who we might yet be.

All: She is our adventure and we will follow her.

Leader: Who is the spirit?

Voice 1: The artist that colours outside our lines,

Voice 2: the invitation to go there and learn something new.

All: She is our diversity and we will explore with her.

Leader: Who is the spirit?

Voice 1: She is the energy of God within us,

Voice 2: the spirit of Jesus between us.

All: She is the Church and we will celebrate her.

A song of Taizé: Veni Sancte Spiritus (Come Holy Spirit)

Sermon God Breathes New Life Into Us

Anthem Come, Holy Ghost, the Maker, come;
Take in the souls of thine thy place;
Thou whom our hearts had being from,
O, fill them with thy heavenly grace.

Thou art that comfort from above,
The highest doth by gift impart;
Thou spring of life, a fire of love,
And the anointing Spirit art.

Words: translated from the *Veni Creator*
Music: Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

After his baptism, while Jesus was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in bodily form like a dove. In this hymn the Holy Spirit is similarly likened to a bird.

Hymn She Sits Like a Bird *Verses 1 and 2.*

- 1 She sits like a bird, brooding on the waters,
hovering on the chaos of the world's first day;
she sighs and she sings, mothering creation,
waiting to give birth to all the Word will say.
- 2 She wings over earth, resting where she wishes,
lighting close at hand or soaring through the skies;
she nests in the womb, welcoming each wonder,
nourishing potential hidden to our eyes.

Prayers of the People

Lord God, we thank you that if we cannot find the words, your Spirit prays for us,

Remembering the ecumenical vigil for peace in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, we join with other Churches and Christian Aid in praying for a just peace that would enable all to thrive as equals.

.....for Palestinians living under military occupation, the blockade in Gaza, facing eviction from their homes, and those subject to airstrikes and shootings.

..... for Israelis living with indiscriminate rocket attacks and mob violence in Israeli-Arab communities.

In particular, we pray for children and young people caught up in the terror, for those who have been killed, maimed and bereaved.

Spirit of life, fill us with your love

We pray for your healing of creation. That the Spirit will inspire women and men, young and old, to dream dreams and share the vision of a world where oppression is defeated by justice, where anxiety is vanquished by hope, where creation is cherished and the earth's resources are harvested responsibly, where people everywhere will not be judged by the colour of their skin, gender or creed.

Spirit of life, fill us with your love

We pray for all who lead and give wise counsel.
May they lead with justice and compassion, and build on a foundation of love.

Especially for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and every Commissioner meeting this week in Edinburgh; The Lord High Commissioner, Prince William; the outgoing Moderator the Right Reverend Dr. Martin Fair, and his successor Jim Wallace (Lord Wallace of Tankerness).

Especially we pray for the work of the Assembly Trustees and that the challenges set out in their report will help us to have the faith and the imagination needed to see and do things differently.

Spirit of life, fill us with your love

And we pray for all whom we know, struggling this day with loss, with disappointment, with illness, with bereavement, with lack of hope and purpose.

Spirit of God, breathe change through our hearts, our lives and our world.
Amen.

Hymn She Sits Like a Bird *Verses 3 and 4*

- 3 She dances in fire, startling her spectators,
waking tongues of ecstasy where dumbness reigned;
she weans and inspires all whose hearts are open,
nor can she be captured, silenced, or restrained.

- 4 For she is the Spirit, one with God in essence,
gifted by the Saviour in eternal love;
and she is the key opening the scriptures,
enemy of apathy and heavenly dove.

Blessing as you are sent out with the Breath of God

Sisters and brothers in Christ, go into the world with the breath of God in your lives.
Realise the visions.
Fulfil the dreams.
See new visions.
Dream new dreams.
And as you do, know that God breathes new life into you, that the Holy Spirit is
guiding you and encouraging you every step of the way.

And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon you and remain
with you, now and always. AMEN

The Bells of St Andrew's and St George's West

Organ Be thou my vision

Zsolt Gárdonyi

Worship Leaders: Rev Colin Douglas, Sally Evans, Nick Evans,

Scripture Reader: Alan Taylor

BSL Interpreter: Mary McDevitt

Director of Music: Brigitte Harris

Vocal ensemble: Frances Cooper, Mary Godden, Susan McLarty, Crispin Longden, Tim
Cooper, Drew Crichton, Andrew Carvel

Violoncello: Joanna Stark

Piano: Max McWhirter

Technical team: Alison Bruce, Andrew Carvel, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott,
Philippa Burgess
Digital Coordinator: Andrew Carvel

Sources:

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Hymns from Church Hymnary 4th edition

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