

**May 2021**

**Theme: Come, Holy Spirit**

*This is 30 minutes of prayer-time with periods of silence throughout for your own private prayer. We celebrated Pentecost just a few days ago so we're going to take the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the gifts it imparts, as our theme today.*

We meet in the name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*The hymn "Breathe on me breath of God" may be played.*

*Let's just take a moment to still our minds as we prepare to come before God.*

Spirit of the living God, come to us now  
to still our hearts and minds  
that we may focus on you and your will for our lives,  
and the well-being of our community, our nation and our world.

*We'll listen to two short passages from the New Testament to remind ourselves of the gifts of the Spirit.*

**The Letter of Paul to the Romans** (chapter 12, verses 6-8)

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

**The Letter of Paul to the Galatians** (chapter 5, verses 22-25)

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Gracious God open the hearts and minds of nations, peoples, communities and individuals to receive the gifts of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. With these gifts in abundance around the world, the world would come to resemble the kingdom of heaven.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will be known in homes where children and young people are growing up, so that none suffer from neglect or abuse, none are exploited or bullied, none go unloved and unwanted. Let love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control be the watchwords of all who care for children, so that the young learn these qualities too and pass them from one generation to the next. May homes be places of safety and security, where trust is built and confidence grows; where all are nurtured and nourished as precious individuals in their own right.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will be known in places of education and learning so that all may flourish, gaining knowledge and understanding from those around them. Let love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control be the watchwords of all who are involved, both staff and pupils. May students receive the encouragement they need to develop their own particular skills and abilities. At this time we especially ask that the gifts of the Spirit will sustain and support all those who would have been sitting exams at this time and now feel unsure about their future. We pray that their hopes will not be crushed under the weight of uncertainty, that their dreams of employment or further education will not go unfulfilled.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will be known to all who work in the health-care system, and by those requiring their services. Let love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control be the watchwords of them all. We give thanks for all who have worked tirelessly to give loving care and support during this pandemic and pray for the healing of those still suffering the effects of coronavirus. We pray that a spirit of creativity will continue to inspire those seeking more effective treatments and vaccinations for this, and the many other diseases, that cause pain and suffering around the world.

*We've heard the passages from the bible where Paul names the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Let's now listen to the passage describing the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.*

### **The Acts of the Apostles (chapter 2, verses 1-8)**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 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. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?"

Gracious God open the hearts and minds of nations, peoples, communities and individuals to receive the Holy Spirit, enabling us to share a common language of love, and thus building trust, friendship and co-operation. For with trust, friendship and co-operation in abundance around the world, the world would come to resemble the kingdom of heaven.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will be known amongst the leaders of the nations, and all in positions of power and authority. Inspire them to put aside a desire for domination achieved by aggression and violence and to instead strive for peace and justice for all. At this time we pray especially for all parts of the world where there is currently danger and unrest, where lives are put at risk and communities torn apart. We ask that a spirit of reconciliation and respect will replace hatred and distrust. We pray also for a spirit of generosity among the nations so that wealth is distributed more equally; for with wealth comes both power and responsibility.

We pray that your Holy Spirit of inspiration and empowerment will be known by all those seeking to care for this beautiful, but fragile, planet. We pray that their many voices will be united as one voice, heard, and responded to, around the world, encouraging nations and individuals towards a more sustainable way of life. We pray for the humility to work with the natural cycles and rhythms of your created world, and a better understanding of the interdependence of all living things. And we ask that science and technology can be used to enhance the bounty of this earth, rather than deplete it.

*The hymn "Breathe on me breath of God" could be played again. May the words of this hymn be the prayer for each one of us today.*

Gracious God open the hearts and minds of nations, peoples, communities and individuals to receive the Holy Spirit, so that this world comes to resemble more closely the world you wish us to have, the kingdom of heaven.

*As we usually do, we'll join together in the words of the grace.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen