

# Sermon for Sunday 8th June 2025, Pentecost Sunday

By Rev Janet Bayly

## Bible Reading

### Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that

separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[a] as the Spirit enabled them.

**5** Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6** When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. **7** Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? **9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,[b] **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs – we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!' **12** Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?'

**13** Some, however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine.'

**14** Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. **15** These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! **16** No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

**17**

“In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

**18**

Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

**19**

I will show wonders in the heavens above

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

**20**



Pentecost by Jen Norton

*The sun will be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*

**21**

*And everyone who calls  
on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

## **Gospel Reading**

### **John 14:15-27**

**15** *'If you love me, keep my commands. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you for ever – **17** the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be[c] in you. **18** I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Before long, the world will not see me any more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** On that day you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. **21** Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.'*

**22** *Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, 'But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?'*

**23** *Jesus replied, 'Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. **24** Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.'*

**25** *'All this I have spoken while still with you. **26** But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.'*

## **SERMON**

Have you ever broken a promise? I'm sure most of us have been in that situation. We say: I will phone you, I will visit you, I will whatever it is. Then a few days, weeks, months later we realise that we have forgotten and the moment has gone. A broken promise. Of course as we look further afield we see many broken promises. Promises of peace and justice, promises of aid and help, broken day after day.

Promises are important in our lives because they build trust and show commitment. One person who never broke a promise was Jesus. During his ministry he made many promises often beginning with the words - I will. He said. I will never leave you or forsake you; I will make you fishers of men; I will give you rest. And the most appropriate promise for today, the day of Pentecost was Jesus' s promise: I will ask the Father and he will send you another Advocate to be with you for ever. What an amazing promise and on this day, 2000 years ago Jesus' words to his disciples were fulfilled.

The Day of Pentecost in the Jewish calendar was the equivalent of our Harvest festival. Jews gathered in Jerusalem from all over the Roman Empire. In our reading from Acts, read faultlessly by Averil, those nations were listed. In all there would have been close on a million Jewish people. God's timing was perfect. It was 50 days after the Passover celebration and over 100 of his followers along with the disciples were gathered in a house. No doubt they were bewildered and afraid. Their Lord was no longer with them and although they had been promised that they would receive an Advocate, a helper, a companion, a friend - all the things Jesus had been to them, they didn't know when this would happen. On this day they found out! They were together in a room, when there was a mighty wind and tongues of fire descended on their heads. They must have been terrified but they were filled with the Holy Spirit. I have shared with you the day that I experienced being filled with the Holy Spirit when I attended an Alpha course. I wasn't terrified but it was life changing as it was for the disciples.

The followers of Jesus were transformed. Being touched by the wind and fire filled them with power. They changed from being fearful to being bold and they went out into the crowds and began to speak in other languages. This was a gift from the spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us all many gifts. How many of you are encouragers, leaders, full of wisdom, humble, bring healing, show mercy and offer kind words? These are the gifts from the Holy Spirit and we all have at least one of them and probably more than one. And like the disciples the gifts are to be shared to build up others. On the day of Pentecost the Jews with all their different languages heard the gospel, the good news of Jesus in their own language. Peter, whom Jesus had particularly set aside for leadership, spoke with confidence and power and 3000 people became Christians and were baptised, maybe whole families as was the tradition.

I wonder what happened to those three thousand new Christians. We read that they were filled with the Holy Spirit, stayed with the disciples to learn about their new faith and to share in prayer. It would have been a completely new way of life for them after years of attending the synagogue and being led by Rabbis. And then they went back home transformed from when they left maybe several weeks before. We can only speculate as to what they said when they returned to their home, communities, and friends. I expect through their testimony many others would have become followers of Jesus Christ. And that is how Christianity began to spread across the world and why we are here today to celebrate their new faith, the birthday of the church worldwide.

Promises, power and lastly peace. Jesus gave his followers the promise of a new friend to be with them, the Holy Spirit who came with power. And then Jesus made a final promise:

*"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid." Amen*