

Written Service May 28th 2023
A service of worship for use at home
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All Hymns in Singing the Faith (StF)

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Call to worship The Spirit comes!

In **Joel 2, 28-29**, Joel prophesies:
*I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.
Your old men will dream dreams,
and your young men will see visions.*
²⁹ *In those days I will pour out my Spirit
even on servants—men and women alike*

Hymn StF 106 *God, whose almighty word*

1. God, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,
and took their flight:
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel-day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light!

2. Saviour, who came to bring
on your redeeming wing
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind:
O now to all mankind
let there be light!

3. Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving holy Dove,
speed on your flight!
Move on the waters' face
bearing the lamp of grace
and, in earth's darkest place,
let there be light!

4. Gracious and holy Three,
all-glorious Trinity,
wisdom, love, might:
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride
through the world far and wide,
let there be light!

Praise and worship

Spend a few moments in thankful and joyful silence. **Amen**

Let us praise God who creates and sustains all things, in love. Let us give thanks for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who comes to the rescue, who lived, died and lives for evermore. Let us rejoice in the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life: unseen wind, living water, the bright and burning fire, nourishing the fruitful earth. Let us praise our God. **Amen**
We continue in worship as we sing again

Hymn StF 109 *In the darkness of the still night*

In the darkness of the still night
in the dawning of the daylight,
in the mystery of creation,
Creator God, you are there.
in the breath of every being,
in the birthing and the growing,
in the earth and all its fullness,
Creator God, you are there.

In the homeless and the hungry,
in the broken and the lonely,
in the grieving of your people,
Creator God, you are there.
in the tears and in the heartache,
in the Love through which we serve
you,
in the anguish of the dying,
Creator God, you are there.

In our hearts and in our thinking,
in the longing and the dreaming,
in the yearning of our heartbeat,
Creator God, you are there.
In the love for one another,
in the sharing of our being
in receiving and forgiving,
Creator God, you are there.

In our joys, our hopes, our healing,
in awakening to revealing,
in your call and our responding,
Creator God, you are there.
In our prayer and in our service,
in our praise and in our worship,
in your love that is eternal,
Creator God, you are there.

Our First Reading

John 7, 37-39

Living water

³⁷⁻³⁹ On the final and climactic day of the Feast, Jesus took his stand. He cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Rivers of living water will brim and spill out of the depths of anyone who believes in me this way, just as the Scripture says." (He said this in regard to the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were about to receive. The Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.) [*The Message*]

Our Second Reading

Psalm 104, 1-18

He makes his messengers winds and fire

¹Bless the LORD, O my soul!

O LORD my God, you are very great!

You are clothed with splendour and majesty,
covering yourself with light as with a garment,
stretching out the heavens like a tent.

³He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters;
he makes the clouds his chariot;
he rides on the wings of the wind;
he makes his messengers winds,
his ministers a flaming fire.

⁵He set the earth on its foundations,
so that it should never be moved.

You covered it with the deep as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.

At your rebuke they fled;

at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.

The mountains rose, the valleys sank down
to the place that you appointed for them.

You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover the earth.

10You make springs gush forth in the valleys;

they flow between the hills;

they give drink to every beast of the field;

the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;

they sing among the branches.

From your lofty abode you water the mountains;

the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

14You cause the grass to grow for the livestock

and plants for man to cultivate,

that he may bring forth food from the earth

and wine to gladden the heart of man,

oil to make his face shine

and bread to strengthen man's heart.

16The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,

the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.

In them the birds build their nests;

the stork has her home in the fir trees.

The high mountains are for the wild goats;

the rocks are a refuge for the badgers.

Reflection *The Spirit comes*

The Spirit is many things: wind, fire and living water; creating the good earth from the dark waters of chaos in the beginning.

The Spirit comes.

Blowing, burning, shining, refreshing; giving light and life to all things.

The Spirit comes.

There is a popular American pop-group from the seventies called *Earth, Wind & Fire* and I recently read a book, published last year, written by James Dyke, with the title *Fire, Storm & Flood*. I don't know if either of them consciously makes reference to the Holy Spirit but it's not impossible. Consciously or not, they both pick up on the Classical understanding, found in both eastern and western thought, that there were four basic Elements from which everything else was made: Earth, Wind, Water and Fire.

Jesus and his followers, living geographically and intellectually halfway between Greece and India, would have been familiar with this. It was the paradigm of their day, a view of the world within which they lived. So, when they speak of the Spirit as wind or fire or living water they allude to the whole of Creation and to the way everything works.

It was a lot to take in. The friends and followers of Jesus must have been very confused. What was happening to them! It is only now, perhaps, that they begin to piece together the things Jesus said that they probably did not understand at the time: 'I am the Bread of life'; 'I'll give you Living water'; 'I am the Light of the world'; 'The Spirit blows like the wind'.

The Spirit is Jesus returned. God is all around. In Genesis 1 & 2, God breathes everything into being and breathes life into soil – clay, earth, dust, mud - creating us, humankind. This – Pentecost – is, in a sense, a new Creation. Paul says as much in his letters. God breathes new life into us. In one resurrection appearance, Jesus breathes and says: 'Receive the Spirit'. Receive the Spirit: receive this Wind, this Fire, this Flood. Be energised! - with the energy of a Creator God, to live God's life in the world. It is no accident that the book by James Dyke called *Fire, Storm & Flood* is about climate change. This world is God's world. We need to live in the Spirit if we are to avoid the catastrophe awaiting us. We need all of 'God's riches in glory', as Paul puts it, to once again 'turn the world upside down'. **Amen**

Hymn StF 370 *Breathe on me breath of God*

1 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love the way you love,
and do what you would do.

2 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with yours,
to do and to endure.

3 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
so shall I never die,
but live with you the perfect life
for all eternity.

Prayers of Intercession

O Lord, we pray for your people everywhere, that we may live in the Spirit as you intend us to and so influence and change our world for the better.

The Spirit comes! Receive the Spirit!

O Lord, we remember all the people displaced from all they have known, by war or weather; economic migrants, dissidents, asylum seekers and refugees of the spirit, looking for a home. Show us how to help.

The Spirit comes! Receive the Spirit!

O Lord, we pray for people everywhere who are in need of help today: people we know, people we hold in our hearts, neighbours and community, families

who cannot afford food or fuel, young women, mothers & children and victims of discrimination. Show us how to help.

The Spirit comes! Receive the Spirit!

As we remember those who have died, we bring our sense of grief and loss to you but also our gratitude for the joy friendship and the love of family.

As Jesus taught us, we pray: *Our Father ...*

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin
against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Take a moment to bring to God your own concerns and listen. Listen.

Hymn StF 99 *All creatures of our God and King*

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
The burning sun with golden beam,
The silver moon with softer gleam!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for your Lord to hear,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
The fire so masterful and bright,
That gives to man both warmth and
light.
O praise Him...

The rushing wind that is so strong,
You clouds that sail in heaven
along,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
The rising morn, in praise rejoice,
You lights of evening, find a voice!
O praise Him...

And all you folk of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
You who, long pain and sorrow
bear,
Praise God and on Him cast your
care!
O praise Him...

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the
Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!
O praise Him...

Closing prayers

Go in peace. Walk in the light of the fire of God, breathing in the wind of God and drinking deep of the living water God supplies. And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Maker of heaven & earth, go with you. **Amen**