Sunday 31st May 2020 - Day of Pentecost

From Simon

As the recent glorious weather continues, we will witness the gradual lifting of the lockdown provisions and the introduction of a 'track & trace' system. Discussions are continuing at the national level between the various faith groups and government. Whatever happens, this will not be like church as we have 'normally' experienced it.

I would like to pay tribute to our schools who are starting to open in the coming days. Staff and governors have been working long hours in the last ten days to put plans in place. Our own village school is a case in point - well done to Mr. Grey and his colleagues.

Nicola's time with us comes to an end next weekend. We would normally want to express our thanks and appreciation by a public celebration, but regrettfully this is not possible. We will do our best to offer our sincere thanks and appreciation for all that Nicola has contributed in her time with us.

Hymn: Come down, O love divine

1 Come down, O love divine, seek thou this soul of mine,
   And visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
   O Comforter, draw near,
   Within my heart appear,
   And kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

2 O let it freely burn, till earthly passions turn
   To dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
   And let thy glorious light
   Shine ever on my sight,
   And clothe me round, the while my path illumining.

3 Let holy charity mine outward vesture be,
   And lowliness become mine inner clothing;
   True lowliness of heart,
   Which takes the humbler part,
   And o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

4 And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,
   Shall far outpass the power of human telling;
   For none can guess its grace,
   Till he become the place
   Wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HPKL1wOVXk
Hymn:  Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire

1  Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,  
   And lighten with celestial fire;  
   Thou the anointing Spirit art,  
   Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart:

2  Thy blessèd unction from above  
   Is comfort, life, and fire of love;  
   Enable with perpetual light  
   The dullness of our blinded sight:

3  Anoint and cheer our soilèd face  
   With the abundance of thy grace:  
   Keep far our foes, give peace at home;  
   Where thou art guide no ill can come.

4  Teach us to know the Father, Son,  
   And thee, of Both, to be but One;  
   That through the ages all along  
   This may be out endless song,

   Praise to thy eternal merit,  
   Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjdMWFrd4Vo

Collect:
God, who as at this time taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

First Reading: Acts 2. 1 - 21
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? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.’ All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, ‘What does this mean?’ But others sneered and said, ‘They are filled with new wine.’ 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. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: “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. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12. 3b - 13
No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the
one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

**Gospel: John 20. 19 - 23**

It was evening on the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’

**Reflection on this Sunday’s readings:-**

Whitsun or white Sunday is the late Old English name for Pentecost. The fiftieth day after Easter Day, which is what Pentecost means. One of the major feasts of the Christian year it celebrates the occasion of the Holy Spirit descending upon the disciples; it also represents both an end and a beginning. The end of the Easter season, the period when the Risen Christ remained among his disciples. It is a moment of leaving behind what is past but launches us into something new. It marks the formal initiation of the Church’s mission to the world.

Luke in the book of Acts proclaims the gift of the Spirit as coming on the day of the Jewish Festival of Weeks, when the first fruits of the wheat harvest were presented and Moses’ giving of the law commemorated a festival that fell 50 days after Passover.

The gift of tongues given to the disciples, which Luke here interpreted as the ability to speak in different languages, but that Paul tended to explain as the uttering of incomprehensible babble, baffled the crowds who witnessed it. Some of the sceptical present wondered if the disciples were drunk! But Peter’s speech explains that it is not that the disciples were out of their minds but that the prophecy of Joel, is being fulfilled. On Peter’s lips this becomes a declaration of new life; for Peter the wonders that Joel prophesied were fulfilled in the life and deeds of Jesus ministry on earth.

Pentecostal fire touches each one of us: as young and old alike. And touched we too are changed. Wherever we stand, on the threshold of adult independence, in middle years, or at the end of life, every Whitsun takes us back to this pregnant moment in the life of the people of God and the relationship between God and his people: us.

To invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts and lives then, is not simply to hope for a gentle nudge from time to time, a quiet sense that things are going to be all right after all, though that is often how the Spirit’s presence is known. It is to take the risk of having all that wild, untameable energy sweep through us. The resulting transformation can be dramatic, something we are prone to forgetting.

Peter's speech on the day of Pentecost was an attempt to explain how God’s wind had come to blow in this way, how God's fire had escaped from the fireplace of the Temple and was striking flames all over the place. It was nothing short of the promised new creation, undoing the effects of the fall and of Babel. Don’t trivialise Pentecost. Think how the spirit imagery works. Wind and Fire can be gentle but are not tame and cannot be tamed.

**Hello Children**  Mary Mouse has gone to ground until we can all meet together again, but she will be sending regular letters.

**Sunday Club** will not meet until further notice. We will be offering a regular Mary Mouse letter. For details contact Gillian, gillian.pett29@gmail.com
INTERCESSIONS
Please refer any pastoral concerns for members of the congregation or members of the local community to any member of the Ministry team including our Co-ordinator for Pastoral Services, Mrs Frances Simms. Please pray for the sick, frail, housebound and those in care. Please let the Vicar know about all cases of sickness and others for whom we should pray.

PLANNED GIVING: If you would like to give by direct debit through the Parish Giving Scheme (our preferred option) please contact Pat Brown on - Mobile: 07811 563597 Email: patbrown2591@yahoo.co.uk. To give by other means please contact Mrs. Ann Seaman, mobile no. 07710 452647; email juliet.a.seaman@outlook.com. We are shortly going to provide a Giving Page on the parish website, which will enable you to donate directly.

Giving during the 'Lock-down': We all deeply miss the opportunity to gather together for Sunday worship and the fellowship that this provides. One of the elements of our weekly coming together is the chance to making our regular offerings of money to support the work of the parish church. For some, donations will be continuing by arrangements with our banks, but a number of you give regularly by weekly envelope or open cash donation and no longer have this opportunity. We still have all our weekly costs to meet and your valuable and regular help is essential in seeing that this is funded. Please consider if you could continue to forward your envelopes and cash by asking a friend or neighbour to put them through the Vicarage letter box. Thank you in anticipation.

ST. MARY’S GREAT SHELFORD - WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Praying together as a community
At a time when we are all missing meeting to worship together perhaps there are things that we can do to help us feel that we are still a worshipping community, and that we are all thinking of one another. Here are three simple things that we could all do to pray together for each other and our community.

1. At noon each day we could say the Lord’s Prayer. You might like to go to the front door and stand in the doorway because we are praying not just for ourselves but for the whole community.

2. If you have a candle, light it at 7pm on Sunday evenings and put it in your front window. Pray for all those who are ill, all those who are alone, and all those who are caring for others. This looks beautiful and is a sign to other people that we are keeping the light of hope for them.

3. In the evenings before bed we could pray for each other, perhaps by saying the wonderful collect for aid against all perils from the Book of Common Prayer.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord, and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Services on video:
Simon and Nicola are continuing to celebrate Holy Communion and other services for the whole community. We hope to produce recordings or videos of the Parish Communion and Evensong each Sunday, and a midweek BCP Communion on Wednesdays. The videos and recordings will be on our web site. In addition you can see them on our Youtube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTxJ8yVmoDeV0r4KAyY5UYw /https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTxJ8yVmoDeV0r4KAyY5UYw) or on our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Stmarysgreatshelford/ - you don’t need to use facebook to see our posts).

As you watch you can make a Spiritual Communion. The term ‘Spiritual Communion’ has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist.

The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly ‘eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ’, although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves. Making a Spiritual Communion is particularly fitting for those who cannot receive the sacrament at the great feasts of the Church, and it fulfils the duty of receiving Holy Communion ‘regularly, and especially at the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun or Pentecost’ (Canon B 15).

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be
nourished by the one who tells us, ‘I am the Bread of Life’.

**Recorded Services:** At the present moment only one designated person is allowed to access a church building, accompanied by someone from their own household if necessary. Simon is the designated person for St Mary’s, so he is able to record (with Mary’s assistance) services from there. Nicola is recording services from her home.

**Daily HOPE:** This is an excellent new national Church of England initiative for those who are especially isolated and do not have access to the internet. Launched last Sunday, Daily HOPE is freephone line, available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044. Callers will hear a special greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury before being able to choose from a range of options, including Prayer During the Day and Night Prayer updated daily, from Common Worship, and a recording of the Church of England’s weekly national online service. A section called Hymn Line will also offer callers a small selection of hymns, updated daily. An option entitled ‘Hymns We Love’, provides a hymn and reflection.

**Doris Johnson RIP:** Doris lived with husband Roy in De Freville Rd.; Roy died in 2017 and recently Doris’s health deteriorated sharply. She was in Addenbrooke's for a time, then latterly in a care home in Huntingdon; she died there on 7th May aged 92. We pray for her sister Margaret and other family members at this sad time. Doris’s funeral will take place at Cam Valley Crematorium on Wed. 3rd June.

**Nicola’s Last Sunday:** Many of you will know that Nicola has been appointed Rector of Cottingham in the diocese of York, so her time with us is coming to an end. Her last Sunday with us will be next Sunday. She and the family will be moving to Cottingham over the summer, as soon as the house there is ready. Because of current circumstances, we won’t be able to say ‘farewell and thanks’ in person, but we’ll do our best to say goodbye and thank her for her contribution during her time here.

**Cambridge City Foodbank:** The Foodbank still very much needs our support at this difficult time. As St Mary’s is closed until further notice, and Great Shelford Free Church are offering a collection point outside their front door, please can food donations be left there for the time being. You can also donate money directly to the Foodbank; the details of how to do so are on the Cambridge City Foodbank website. [https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/](https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/)

**Kneelers:** A group of ladies, and at least one gentleman, have started work on some new kneelers for the church. The cost per kneeler is £54; if you would like to make a contribution, maybe with a dedication, please contact Mrs Margaret Stamper, 845134. Please also contact Margaret if you would like to sew a kneeler yourself; apparently it is very therapeutic!

**Stop Press!** The completed kneelers are being stored at the Vicarage until we are able to dedicate them during public worship; there are now over 26 and they look splendid. Well done to all those who have been hard at work.

Please note that the church is closed at present, so regrettably visits will not be possible.

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Children's work contact:
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Applications for baptisms, marriages and the calling of Banns of marriage should be made please to the Parish Administrator.

Please note that at the moment we are unable to hold public services in church, so weddings and Baptisms are not permitted (unless in very specific emergency situations and probably only in a hospital or hospice setting). It is unclear at present when we can open the church again, so any forward dates agreed may have to be changed.  31/05/20