

# New Kilpatrick

Podcast

31st May 2020

## Introduction

Hello and welcome to New Kilpatrick's weekly podcast. I'm Roddy Hamilton the minister and thank you for inviting us to share in this time together wherever it is you are listening for the next 20 minutes.

This podcast is for Pentecost Sunday and today we gather from a whole range of places and countries, some folk are on line, others listening by phone, some out walking, others on their sofas. This is the unique community we are, and as such we embody perhaps the setting of the original story, where a whole bundle of folk, who didn't necessarily know each other, whose paths crossed only in one moment from different parts of the Ancient Near East found themselves caught up in what became known as the Day of Pentecost.

It is rather a strange and intriguing tale so let us gather in the community we are today, around the images, the poetry, the symbols in the story and hear what it might be saying to us in this equally strange and intriguing world we live in today.

## Gathering

Pentecost arrived  
With the noise and wind of God  
Coming in the Holy Spirit  
Descending upon the disciples  
Resting on  
Filling them  
Renewing them  
With the Word of God

The people gathered  
Jerusalem was alive  
What was happening?  
What could they hear?  
Hearing in their own language  
The Word of God

Eyes opened  
Ears opened



Hearts opened  
To the Word of God

How can this be?  
They must be drunk?  
Filled with new wine  
The prophecy of the Lord declares  
The Spirit gives freedom to hear  
The Word of God

## Prayer

Let us pray:

Holy Spirit  
May we simply  
draw breath in this time  
pause and know that which gives life  
O Spirit  
breath of God

May we know such creation  
and imagination  
that filled the heavens  
in that first breath of God  
over the world's first chaos

And bring that here  
into a world filled with  
a chaos of another kind  
where breath is so vital,  
and where story and reality mingle  
may we meet,  
and find in your promise  
of recreation,  
and renewal,  
an invitation for us all,  
now

Holy Breath,  
May we simply  
feel the heat of the sun,  
and know the fire and energy  
that brought the first stars to birth  
through the forging of new elements  
in those first creative moments,



And bring such faith here now  
in a new forging  
of past and present  
that shapes our future  
of what we need to render  
in ourselves,  
in our communities,  
born of forgiveness  
and renewal.

Holy Spirit,  
breath of creation,  
and fire or cleansing,  
hear us,  
hold us,  
come to us now,  
in this,  
our time together.

*Our Father who is in heaven  
Hallowed by your name  
Your kingdom come  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our debts  
As we forgive our debtors  
And lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil  
For thine is the kingdom  
The power and the glory  
Forever. Amen*



## Scripture Retelling

When the day of Pentecost arrived, everyone was together in one place. The disciples were sitting in the house together, alone after Jesus had ascended back to the Father. Suddenly, a great noise appeared to come from heaven, and a strong wind filled every part of the house. The Holy Spirit, God, descended upon each of them, resting on them, renewing them, and filling them completely.

The sound brought together all the people from every place, living in Jerusalem. Everybody heard. Gathered and confused and not understanding. The Holy Spirit enabled everyone to hear, in their own language, what the disciples were saying. Nobody was excluded. The Holy Spirit enabled everyone to hear the message of God.



Resting on everyone, the Holy Spirit, allowed them to hear and understand. Astonished and amazed their ears were opened. Their eyes were opened. Their hearts were opened to the life-giving message of God.

But some could not hear, as the Holy Spirit did not rest on them. They sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine!"

But Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit of God, spoke out against them. We are not drunk – it is only nine o'clock in the morning. This is the prophesy of the Lord our God who declared that his Spirit will be poured out on all people. The Spirit rests on all bodies offering a freedom to hear as the Word of God is revealed.

## Reflection

What to do with such a story? Pentecost is a festival I don't remember ever celebrating in childhood.

But today we tend to celebrate it far more, with some lively chaos in church on this Sunday normally, creative worship, people wearing red. Last year we built a great pillar of fire in the middle of the chancel if you remember.

But many have taken this multi layered, challenging and poetic story and reduced it down to a birthday party for the church. Perhaps for now, the birthday party image is fine given we are all crying out for a good party as we move one stage closer to unshackling lockdown, though I for one am quite happy to take the slow road towards that.



But Pentecost cries out for community and engagement and connections, but ironically, not in a church setting, or synagogue, or temple, but as the disciples found, in marketplaces and town squares, meeting places of cultures and economy, crossroads of traditions and languages.

The cynical comment, that the disciples must be drunk on new wine, is an important clue in the story, because of course who is new wine of the gospel but Jesus himself, and now he is set free by the spirit in this village square, this crossroads of the world.

And no matter where you came from, your tradition, your background, this great anti-babel story, of a riot of languages has everyone included, for each understood and heard in their own common language. There was no church-speak, exclusive rituals, or insider knowledge in this marketplace the spirit brought them to on Pentecost Sunday.

Perhaps the first time in many generations, with church online or worship through a telephone landline, we've found Pentecost in its contemporary form in this new online marketplace, a new town square.

Because Covid-19 has forced us to have a virtual presence, where we are alongside online shopping, online entertainment, Netflix and social groups.

And are we not endeavouring to make ourselves heard, find the right language, that people, in this new medium and age, can understand, and more, hear what we say of faith, of love, of justice, that all may hear God speak in our pandemic world.

The skill of the church will be found in speaking in the everyday languages of our own neighbourhoods and marketplaces; with words, yes, but activity and ideas too, reinventing ourselves, reimagining worship that people better understand, which include ourselves I dare say, better understanding who we are today.

Yet, I can't help think even then, we are holding the wrong end of this poetic tale. We're talking about being heard in this market place as if the church, as it is, needs to shout loud and create a space for itself.

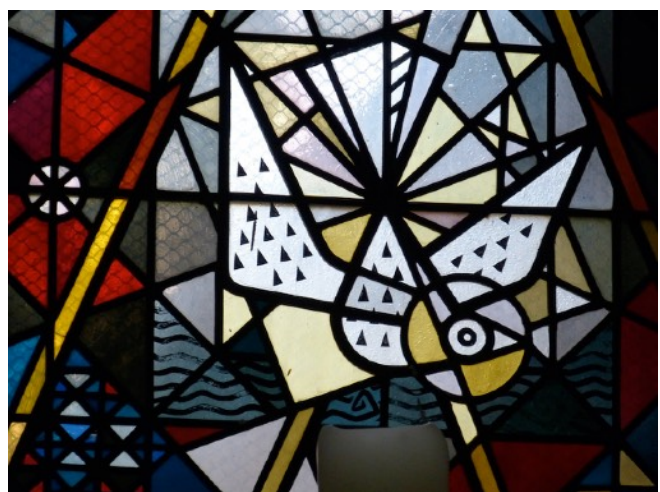
The more profound action to take would be perhaps rather to hear *others*. Is that not what the story says: everyone heard in their own language: to hear what culture, generations, pandemics, new normals are saying to us about who we are called to be.

Because that surely is the miracle of the story. You can have the flames and fire and wind if you like but the miracle is: people heard. Pentecost is not about shouting loudest in the marketplace, but hearing others' voices, listening, understanding what is being said.

This moment of Pentecost, begins with hearing what is being said through the pandemic. Then, having heard, we really do need to rely on the spirit to reshape and hone us anew, that we dream new dreams, prophesy in new ways, young and old, men and women, for this time, closer to the kingdom of God .

## Prayer

Holy Spirit  
Help me to know that I am always  
connected to you.  
I only need to pause, breathe and pray  
To listen to the still small voice within me  
And there You are.  
God You created the earth and the Holy  
Spirit hovered above  
Right from the start  
Holy Spirit the  
I Am of the earth





Holy Spirit, you are the rushing wind,  
Unseen but the effects are visible  
like wind ruffling the washing  
hanging on the washing line on a windy day  
Each breath is a sign of the gift of life within me.  
Breathe life of the Spirit in to me now.  
Holy Spirit the  
I Am of the Air

Holy Spirit  
Symbolised by baptism,  
the dove above the river Jordan,  
fountain of eternal life.  
Holy Spirit the  
I Am of the water

Holy Spirit  
You are the tongues of fire at Pentecost  
Burn away all that is not of you in my life  
Like after a forest fire  
let new growth start to refresh and regrow  
Holy Spirit the  
I Am of the fire.

Holy Spirit  
You fill us with prophecy  
To communicate your will  
Holy Spirit  
I Am of the word of knowledge

Holy Spirit  
You enable us to speak in tongues.  
It maybe a language others can understand  
or maybe only you.  
What language do we speak as a Church?  
Do we speak with a the languages of  
Love  
Hope  
Compassion  
Holy Spirit  
Ever present so be it  
Amen





## Epilogue

Lady Creation,  
I wish I had been there  
when through your imagination  
you gave birth to everything born:  
an eternity of sunrises promised in that first dawn,  
the whole philosophy of human life, and divine  
explored in the stories of the religions of the world;

I wish I had been there  
in those moments of birth  
when science and language  
created the poetry of wonder,  
where songs were composed  
in the star nurseries of the universe;



I wish I had been there  
when colours socialised  
and textures rendered  
in those first moments of everything;

I wish I had been there  
when the first sound tickled  
in the voice box of God,  
and the first smile was stretched  
on the face of the divine  
and the first love was loved  
by love itself;

I wish I had been there.  
Instead I bound you up

in doctrines and institutions  
in governance and rules,  
now themselves found wanting.

I am glad I am now here  
for in their paucity,  
Lady Creation,  
new birth is ready  
renewal promised  
and indeed, quickening now.

### **Benediction**

Go in peace  
and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ  
The Love of God  
and the Commonwealth of the Holy Spirit  
Be with us all  
now  
and forever more

### **Announcements**

Thank you for letting us accompany you today. It has been our pleasure. We provide a new podcast each weekend but there is also a different video service which you can find on the church website at [nkchurch.org.uk](http://nkchurch.org.uk) or YouTube searching for New Kilpatrick Parish Church Channel.

We are also online at the same address with daily, original prayers, a new psalm each week written in the context of lockdown by both myself and Kirstin Freeman the Episcopal Rector in Bearsden, and there are all our projects from mask bands to knitted hearts, food bank support to Malawi appeal and all our social events, discussions, community building every day of the week.

Thank you to Jeanette Peel and Lillian Johnston who both helped write and lead the service today. Please look after ourselves, stay well and stay safe and until next time, take care.

