

With You Always

The month of May is, I think, a wonderful time of year. In the woods where I walk the bluebells will still be out in the early part of the month, and the leaves of the trees in their surprisingly many and varied shades of green will still be sparse enough to allow the sunlight to penetrate deep down to the floor of the wood. As we travel around the countryside the drifts of heavily scented May blossom will be in profusion; all around will be birdsong and flowers. Yes, it is a wonderful month.

This is also a wonderful time of the Church's year: we shall be celebrating this month the great festivals of Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity. We celebrate the Ascension of Jesus - his ascension to glory in the Kingdom at God's right hand. We celebrate too the coming of God's Spirit at Pentecost - the transformation and empowering of the first apostles and disciples through the gift of the Spirit. And we celebrate the Holy Trinity - the Person of God revealed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These are all deep truths and very much at the heart of our faith. In one sense we remember the Ascension and Pentecost as events

in history 2000 years ago, and the Trinity as the understanding of the nature of the Person of God as revealed to his Early Church; but these are all very much things we celebrate and experience for the present, and in our own lives too. The Ascension is not just about Jesus ascending to heaven, but also about the call and invitation from God to us all to share in the heavenly life. Pentecost is, of course, about the Spirit coming in

wind and flame on Jesus' first disciples; but it also about the Spirit coming into our own lives - to strengthen and encourage, guide and empower us; the transformation of our own lives so we too

might become more like Jesus. And while the Trinity is about the perfect relationship of Love between Father, Son and Spirit, it is also about God enfolding us in that same Love and inviting us to encounter and share in that same perfect relationship.

A month, then, full of wonder. And one when, as ever, Jesus reassures us in all things, **'I will be with you always, to the end of time'**.

Fr. John



Chronicle

mothers
union



Christian care for
families worldwide

At our March meeting, Pat Chung, our Branch Leader, and gave us the opportunity to review the five objects of the Mothers' Union through individual's prayers:

- w To uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and to promote its wider understanding;
- w To encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the Church;
- w To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service;
- w To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children;
- w To help those whose family life has met with adversity.

We enjoyed the format which also enabled us to discuss a wide range of topics such as children's bereavement and children in church.

The theme for the year is *Sharing in Life* (the diocesan initiative) which will mean fewer visiting speakers but much more input from members. We made a good start at our April meeting. Rosanne Butler brought a flower arrangement to focus our thoughts during the discussion which looked at the first strand of *Sharing Life*: a life centred on God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At the end of the afternoon, each member took a flower home as a memento.

CRYSTAL HEWLETT

The minister was visiting a dying old lady. She told him she could not wait for the angels to come and carry her to Isaac's bosom. The minister knew the biblical passage she was referring to and gently corrected her. You mean Abraham's bosom, my dear! "Vicar," she said, "when you have been on the shelf as long as I have, I dare say you don't really mind whose bosom it is!"

Ascension Day

Thursday 9th May

ST FRANCIS

7.00 pm Holy Eucharist

ST JAMES

9.30 am Holy Communion

7.30 pm Sung Eucharist

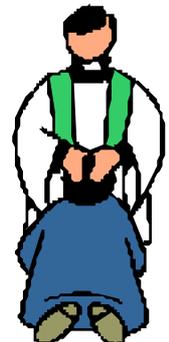


Healing Service

Wednesday 29th May 7.30 p.m.

St James Church

Receive Jesus' promise of healing through personal prayer



When God pours out his Spirit.... what should we call it?

This month the Church celebrates the Ascension of Christ (when his work on this earth was completed) and Pentecost (the coming of the Holy Spirit). Nearly 2000 years have passed since then, but until Christ returns one day, this is still the age of the Holy Spirit.

In recent years the charismatic, or Pentecostal experience, has intrigued a lot of people. Originally this spiritual experience was called the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Are Christians who have had this experience (using speaking in tongues) really 'baptised in the Holy Spirit', or what?

Ever since Adam was asked to name the creatures in the Garden, man has had a penchant for naming things. From the tiniest plant or insect to the craters and plains of Mars, all are likely to be listed in some learned tome with a name of ponderous significance.

Of course it is easy to put names to natural things. But super-natural things can't be pressed so easily into neat classification. Theology particularly struggles to define the ineffable acts of God and sometimes imagines, for example, that by calling God's work at Bethlehem, Incarnation, or God's work at the Cross Atonement, the mind can thus explain these mysteries.

Early Pentecostals faced the same problem when they entered into an experience of the Spirit that had been rare in their generation. What to call it? In searching the Scriptures they were influenced by Acts 1.5, in which Jesus promised the disciples: 'You shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

It was easy for those early Pentecostals to associate the supernatural occurrences of Pentecost in Acts 2 with the promise of Jesus. Tongues and

miracles, which were certainly a notable feature, were assumed to be the consequence of the promised Baptism in the Spirit. The Pentecostal experience was therefore classified by that name. To have a similar experience is to have 'the Baptism' so called.

By making this association, and calling it by this name, several real problems were created for many in denominations with long-standing and different theological traditions. The word baptism, for example, was and is understood to have very special significance as a means of incorporation. It is a word about initiation and association rather than experience. Baptism in the Spirit could be understood therefore as that act of the Spirit which produced the Church. The incorporation of the 3000 at Pentecost could perhaps just as easily have been called the Baptism of the Spirit. This view is encouraged by 1 Cor. 12.13: 'For by one Spirit we were baptised into one body...'

Classical Pentecostalism, for example, has often insisted that receiving Christ was a separate event from receiving the Spirit, thus violating centuries-old beliefs in many of the traditional churches.

Difficulties have also arisen through the fact that other traditional churches believed in a Fullness of the Spirit being received by faith as a post-conversion experience without any of the supernatural phenomena associated with Pentecostal experience.

It is important in all this to see that the confusion and theological dissonance surrounding the Baptism in the Spirit has become for many a major stumbling block in the discerning of what God wants for his Church. The problem of semantics has become a bottleneck

that is sometimes keeping God's Spirit from truly filling all his Church.

So what should we call this work that God has been doing in our churches? Whatever one chooses: Baptism in the Spirit, Release in the Spirit, Fullness of the Spirit, Receiving the Spirit, whatever, is problematic for somebody.

Perhaps the answer lies initially in turning away altogether from labels which produce hang-ups. This seems to be what Peter did. When asked very specially to explain the appearance of supernatural gifts and abilities (charisma) he replied: 'This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel...' Acts 2.16. Peter did not at that stage introduce theological labels to confuse and sidetrack the people. He drew their attention simply to God's promises to pour out his Spirit on all flesh in the last days, and he identified this moment in history with the fulfilment of that prophesy.

This is what some of us need to do when confronted with the phenomenon. This is the age of the Holy Spirit, until Christ comes again. The appearance of supernatural Gifts has obviously originated in God's purposes. We should therefore encourage the Church in its dryness and powerlessness to enter into Joel's prophetic promise and to discover the blessings related to it.





Rosanne interviews Norah Shallow Our New Churchwarden

Many readers will, I am sure, remember the long, bitter winter of 1962-63. It began to snow on Boxing Day and snow lay piled up on pavements until late March. It was hard enough for we locals so imagine what it was like for a young teenager who had left the glorious sunshine of the Caribbean to seek her fortune in England. Seventeen-year-old Norah arrived here three weeks before Christmas never having seen snow. She was born and brought up on the beautiful island of St. Vincent, nearly the youngest of a large family. She is a twin and because she was the shy, quieter of the two was expected to keep an eye on her sister. "She'd think nothing of popping up a tree to get a coconut" Norah said, "but I never would". The children were all expected to help at home and on the farm which was run by their parents. It was a busy life but on Sunday mornings the whole family, dressed in Sunday best, set off for church. In the afternoon it was Sunday School for the children.

By the time she went to school one of her elder sisters had a home and her

own business nearby. She is a dress-maker and Norah learnt needlework from her standing her in good stead when she had her own family. School days were happy except when she was required to read aloud because as a child she developed a nasty stammer. She struggled with this into adulthood but found amazingly that once she arrived in England it began to right itself. The stammer left Norah with a quiet personality. She speaks only when she has something to say. During the 50's the British Government invited citizens of the West Indies to emigrate to the UK. Two of Norah's elder sisters took up the challenge. At seventeen it was arranged that she should join them. Her long journey began with a flight from St. Vincent to Barbados then on to St. Lucia where she boarded a ship bound for Southampton. She describes how leaving home, at such an early age, was a huge wrench and told me she was heartbroken. However she made friends amongst her fellow passengers and when her sisters met her on a freezing dockside she had to come to terms with her new life. The journey had

taken two weeks.

She came to Oxford and lived with her sister in Argyll Street. Her first job was in the catering department at the Radcliffe Infirmary. Her brother-in-law had a young friend who often dropped by and so it was that Norah met George. It was suggested that she might like a date at the cinema but the lady was not so easily won! When George, on several occasions, met her outside the hospital to offer her a ride home on his motorbike she declined and caught the bus only to find George, having followed the bus, was waiting in the Iffley Road to walk her home. Of course his persistence won the day. Father Betton married them in St. Luke's Church (where George already worshipped) in the summer of 1964.

Their first home was a large caravan in Marston where they lived until after their three children, Movoney, Andrew and Velma, were born. Norah was a busy mum with three small children to bring up but she took herself to evening classes – "to be my own person" – studying English, typing and book-keeping. In

1984 George gave up his job as a carpenter and set up his own business. He opened an office in the parish hall as a letting agency. Norah was his typist and book-keeper. His agency is still flourishing in its own premises and with Velma as his right hand assistant

After living for a while in Derwent Avenue, Marston, the family moved to Leiden Road and discovered St. Francis' church. Norah speaks enthusiastically of the warm welcome they received and the happiness shared there. She has served on many church committees, the PCC and has recently taken on the role of church warden, quite a challenge she thinks. As a child she had hoped to take up nursing, so when, six years ago, her sister told her of the opportunity to work at Longlands Home for the Elderly she applied and was accepted. She now works three days a week along side her twin doing the job she always wanted. She also provides respite care for the families of young people with learning problems or long term disabilities. She and George welcome the youngsters into their home for several weeks working closely with social services. Family life has been important to her all her life. With ten brothers and sisters, their children, her own children and grandchildren one can

only guess at the length of her Christmas card list!

How would you describe yourself as a small child?

Shy, quiet, mostly sociable (I had lots of friends). I was a good girl at school.

Do you have memories of childhood which make you think "I'll never forget...?"

I remember going to cricket matches with my father – he loved cricket – and he would buy my sisters and me ice-creams. That was a real treat.

Has God been part of your life since childhood?

Oh yes. We were taken to church on Sundays, a mile and a half's walk, in our Sunday best, and Sunday school in the afternoon. Mum taught us to say our prayers. My own children grew up at St. Francis.

What do you think is good about modern society?

Freedom and the right to choose what we want to do in life.

What makes you disappointed with life today?

I would like people

everywhere to be more peaceful and I hate the profiteering that goes on in the world.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I like gardening, I grow flowers. I've always liked reading, I enjoy a good family novel.

What makes you laugh?

We have a family gathering in our house every other Sunday, usually ten of us, and my four grandchildren make us all laugh with the things they say.

Do you have ambitions for the future?

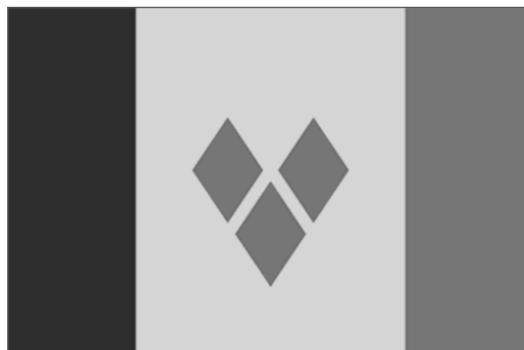
Just for my grandchildren, that they grow up and go into jobs that they enjoy.

How about your plans for ten years time?

Then, with God's blessing, George and I will have retired and returned to live in our house in the sunshine of St Vincent.

If you could change something in a spectacular way, what would it be?

I have never had a problem with racism but it does exist and it shouldn't. I would like to stamp it out for ever.



The flag of St. Vincent & the Grenadines

**Churches Together in Cowley
and District**

**UNITED SERVICE
FOR PENTECOST**



Sunday 19th May 6.30 pm

**Temple Cowley
United Reformed Church**

***Sunday Eve-
ning***



Praise

Pentecost - May 19th

On Ascension Day the sequence of events that began at Easter was completed. Christ ascended to his Father in heaven, and now it was the turn of the Holy Spirit to come down to earth (the story is found in Acts 2: 1 - 8). Pentecost is the feast on which the Church celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit. With his enabling power, the Church was soon off to a flying start, an incredibly dramatic expansion in its earliest, formative period.

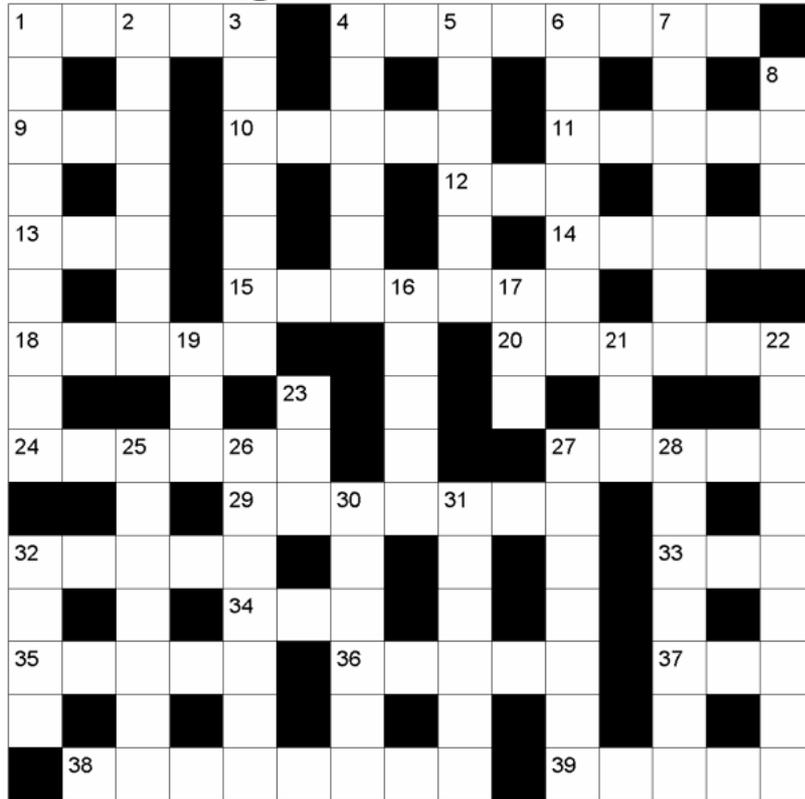
So no wonder Pentecost Sunday is a major feast in the Christian year. In fact, in many Christian traditions, Pentecost comes second in importance only to Easter itself. Pentecost is sometimes called 'Whitsun' (literally, 'white Sunday') on account of one tradition where clergy wearing white robes on this day.

The Holy Spirit is of major importance to Christian thought and life. When we read through the book of Acts, we find evidence of his presence everywhere - guiding, encouraging, and empowering the apostles. In

more recent times, the rise of the charismatic movement within the worldwide church has led to an increased awareness of the powerful role of the Spirit in each of our Christian lives.

Pentecost falls on the fiftieth day after Easter, when, according to Luke's account, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples in Jerusalem, who were gathered there on Jesus' instructions. ('Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised.') Even so, the Holy Spirit's arrival astounded everyone. The disciples certainly did not expect a sound like a mighty rushing wind from heaven, tongues of fire coming to rest on their heads, and the gift of being able to praise God in languages unknown to them. Luke's description of Pentecost focuses on the impact of the event on people: the disciples were empowered to preach the gospel, and to break down the barriers of language separating them and their audiences. Theologically, the coming of the Spirit thus occupies a significant role in the scheme of salvation, in that it can be seen as a reversal of the 'tower of Babel' (Genesis 11: 1 -32).

May Crossword



- 7 Who was the wife of Nabal who subsequently married David (7)
- 8 The mother of Jesus (8)
- 16 Capital of Morocco (5)
- 17 It is (3)
- 19 Pig (3)
- 21 The first woman and wife of Adam (21)
- 22 The mother of John the Baptist (9)
- 23 French vineyard (3)
- 25 A giant Philistine soldier (7)
- 26 Pertaining to ethics (7)
- 27 Insanity (7)
- 28 One of the Archangels (7)
- 30 Flowering (6)
- 31 Energetic activity (6)
- 32 An increased advantage (4)

ACROSS

- 1 Yogi (5)
- 4 A prophetic book of the Old Testament (8)
- 9 Set sail with a handwoven Scandinavian rug (3)
- 10 Notable sounds (5)
- 11 Coniferous evergreen forest (5)
- 12 Cereal grass (3)
- 13 The sleepy land where Cain lived (3)
- 14 Intoxicating (5)
- 15 Very alert person (coll) (7)
- 18 One of the gifts brought by the magi (5)
- 20 How many spies did Moses send into the land of Canaan (6)
- 24 Short swordlike weapon (6)
- 27 French. thank you (5)
- 29 Large New Zealand reptile (7)
- 32 Australian cockatoo (5)
- 33 Seed of a legume (3)
- 34 Unwell (3)
- 35 The son of Abraham and Sarah (5)
- 36 What type of branch did the dove return to Noah in the Ark (5)
- 37 High scoring card of low value

(3)

- 38 An epistle of St. Paul (8)
- 39 Slender graceful woman (5)

DOWN

- 1 Aforementioned (9)
- 2 Cotton fabric (7)
- 3 Resembling a ram (7)
- 4 Who was the successor of Moses (6)
- 5 Recover (6)
- 6 The first gospel of the New Testament (7)

April's Solution

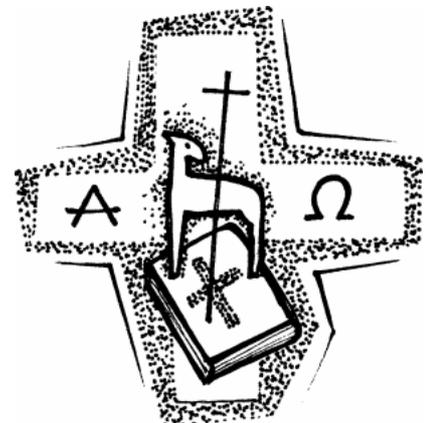


Morning Prayer

& Breakfast

St Francis Church
Saturday Mornings
9.15 am

all welcome



Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist (<i>exc 2nd Sunday</i>)
	Family Service (<i>2nd Sunday</i>)
11.15 am	Sung Eucharist (<i>2nd Sunday</i>)
6.00 pm	Evening Praise <i>[1st Sunday of the month]</i>

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

8.00 am	Holy Eucharist
10.30 am	Parish Eucharist <i>[Family Eucharist - 2nd Sunday of the month]</i>

Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St Francis</i>
	8.00 pm	St Francis Discussion Group – <i>4 Long Close</i>
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St Francis</i>
	9.30 am	Eucharist – <i>St Francis</i>
	10.10 am	Mothers and Toddlers – <i>St Francis</i>
	12.00 pm	St James Prayer Group – <i>13 Clive Road</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Thursday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	9.30 am	Eucharist - followed by coffee – <i>St James</i>
	11.00 am	St Francis Prayer Group
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St Francis</i>
	7.00 pm	Eucharist – <i>St Francis</i>
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St Francis</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Friday Club – <i>alt Fridays at St Francis</i>
Saturday	9.15 am	Morning Prayer & Breakfast – <i>St Francis</i>

Arrangements for Baptisms, Banns of Marriage, Weddings, Confessions and Home Communion can be made with any of the clergy.

Days Off

Stephen has Friday off and Fr John Monday. Except in emergency, please try and respect these days of rest. Sr Margaret Anne works within the parish on Tuesdays, Thursdays and alternate Sundays

Parish Directory

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JAMES

Team Rector:

The Revd Stephen Hartley,
Cowley Rectory,
Beauchamp Lane
Tel: 747680

Email: stephen.hartley

@btinternet.com

Team Curate:

Sr Margaret Anne
All Saints Convent
St Mary's Road

Tel: 249127

Licensed Lay Minister:

Eric Uren

Tel: 770696

ST FRANCIS CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

Team Vicar:

Fr John Tomlinson,
St Francis' Vicarage,
2 Meyseys Close

Tel: 748915

Email: fj@care4free.net

CHURCHWARDENS:

Gwen Ranklin

Tel: 451417

Norah Shallow

Deputy Wardens:

Rosanne Butler

Tel: 453257

Pat Chung

Tel: 767124

HALL BOOKINGS

OFFICER:

773620

weekdays only