

St Peter's Scottish Episcopal Church, Kirkcaldy



Sunday 23rd May 2021, Pentecost (Whitsun)

Please note that we are not yet able to sing in church; the hymns are given for those who are unable to be here.

Please print and bring this sheet with you if you are attending the service and wish to follow the readings. (SPB refers to the Scottish Prayer Book Liturgy for those who follow this service)

Introit Hymn: Holy Spirit come confirm us

Welcome: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Collect for Purity: **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Gloria: **Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Collect: Almighty and everliving God, who fulfilled the promises of Easter by sending us your Holy Spirit and opening to every race and nation the way of life eternal: keep us in the unity of your Spirit, that every tongue may tell of your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Collect SPB: God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end **Amen.**

First reading: Acts 2. 1-21 (SPB 1 Acts2.1)

Second reading: Romans 8. 12-17

Gradual hymn: Oh thou who camest from above

Gospel acclamation: **Alleluia! Alleluia! I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord; I will come back to you, and your hearts will be full of joy. Alleluia.**

Gospel: John 15. 26; 16. 4b-15 (St John 14.15)

When gospel is announced:
Glory to Christ our Saviour.

At end:
Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel. **Praise to Christ our Lord.**

Sermon: *The Revd Canon Christine Fraser*

Let us pray: Most Gracious God, we are very grateful for the gifts that you give us, and in particular, we are grateful for the gift of the Advocate, the truth-teller. Give us courage to tell our truths, Lord Christ, that will lead to a world filled with justice and love. Amen.

The Wizard of Oz is a classic movie that was released in 1939. For years, it was presented as an annual television event, so many people have seen the film more than once. For those who have no connection to the Land of Oz, the basic premise is that a tornado touches down in Kansas and the main character, Dorothy, gets trapped in her house while the family takes cover in the basement. The house is knocked off its foundation and ends up in the mythical land of Oz. The young girl's only desire is to find her way back home to her family. Her search for a solution leads her to make three new friends: The Cowardly Lion, the Scarecrow, and the Tin Woodman.

Their adventures lead them to the Emerald City, in search of a wizard who will grant them their wishes. The lion is seeking courage, the scarecrow wants a brain, and the woodman is pleading for a heart. It is a fantastical tale with a very important message: Sometimes, we already possess the very things for which we are searching. In Jesus' final visit with the disciples, he once again reminds them of his imminent departure. He has been preparing the group for his return to his Father since he initially gathered them. Some may call it denial, while others are genuinely curious as to why the disciples never seem to understand what their rabbi is imparting to them.

In the text from John, Jesus also announces that they are not going to be alone when he leaves because he is sending the Advocate, the Spirit of Truth from the Father to guide them in their continuing ministry. None of the disciples speak during Jesus' last discourse, and he acknowledges that their hearts are filled with sorrow. Jesus, the omniscient Messiah knows that the disciples do not understand what he is saying, nor do they want to hear any more about his leaving. After all, it has been a tough season for all of them; they are still processing all that they have seen and experienced since Good Friday. They were overwhelmed by his disappearance from the tomb and his reappearance in the Upper Room where they were holed up out of great fear. God, in his infinite wisdom, will not leave them cowering and hiding indefinitely. Indeed, the Advocate is coming to provide them with the courage to speak the truth about the life and ministry of Jesus.

We are living in a time in which truth-telling is as critical as ever. The Spirit of Truth is a gift that has been given to every Christian disciple. The Advocate continues to live and dwell among us, and yet many of us act as though we do not recognize the Advocate and we do not know the Saviour.

Certainly, the last year-and-a-half has been very difficult. The world has been battling dual pandemics that were deadly and extremely stressful. COVID-19 swept through the world and impacted us in dramatic ways. At certain points, the nation was divided on the appropriate response to treatments and cures. There were lockdowns and we were asked to shelter at home for weeks and then months. Some protested the closing of businesses and life as usual. Churchgoers became increasingly frustrated as in-person services were suspended. People protested that going to church ought not to be denied even in the face of a highly contagious virus. On the other hand, some theologians urged us to consider what God was trying to say to the world in a time in which we were being urged to slow down, sit down, and wait for the still voice of God to give us new direction.

At the same time, the other pandemic, the roaring sin of racism swirled through the world like the cyclone in the Wizard of Oz. The Advocate, the Spirit of Truth, gave many the courage to speak up and to demand that the world be better. There was admonition that the status quo was no longer acceptable. The Advocate, Jesus said, was sent by the Father to help all disciples – including you and me – to speak truth to the world. Wherever we see injustice, we are duty-bound to address it.

Jesus, before he was taken to the cross, called his followers “friends” and released all from the second-class role of servant, thus creating a pathway for a society that is equitable. Additionally, we are all equal and Jesus wanted that message delivered to the world so that we might love one another.

Our faith in God gives us three magnificent gifts. God promises us the gift of eternal life if we will believe and follow. At funerals, you will often hear it said, “Though he were dead, yet shall he live.” Jesus gives us the gift of love. He modelled love and urged us to love each other as he loves us. Beyond human love and intimacy, Jesus gave us *agape* love, unconditional love that can only come from God. The Holy Spirit then descended to forever tie us to the love of God and the presence of the Lord. The advocate came to encourage us to devoutly and unapologetically speak the truth to a world desperately in need of truth-telling. The truth is we are all divinely created in the image of God. People of every nation have an equal right to live in the world without fear of loss of life at the hands of those who have a perception that they are less than equal. If we are ever to get to the Beloved Community, we must reckon with the sin of racism and eradicate it from our lands. This pandemic tears at the fabric of the world God calls us to. Let us embrace the Advocate, and with great courage proclaim the good news that God is love and that we all have an invitation to share in the beauty and wonder of God’s enormous capacity to hold us close.

When we feel innately loved, we are much more likely to extend that love to others, including strangers, our neighbours, and especially those who do not look like us. Whenever it becomes difficult to determine how to share the love of Christ with others, go back to the basics, the parables, and review the lessons that Jesus shared with us. Think of the Good Samaritan who showed such compassion for the injured stranger in the road. Think of the woman at the well, who went to get a jug of water for cooking and feeding the animals and instead received the gift of grace that washed away her sins and cleansed her soul. Think of the love of the resurrected Jesus, who loved us so much he was willing to die for us and take away our sins forever.

On this Feast of Pentecost, let us with gladness receive the holy and everlasting gift of the Advocate, who guides us to be our very best selves. We can exude the light of God because the Advocate strengthens us. So, proclaim the truth from the rooftops and the mountaintops and down in the valleys where people are hurting – proclaim that Jesus Christ is alive and lives in us. Help those who do not yet know Christ discover that he loves them and will never abandon them.

In the end, we will never need a wizard or a magician to trick us into believing what we already know in our hearts and minds: We are loved by God and our mission is to go out and spread that love in our communities and across the world. When we are unsure where we are going or how we will be received, we are led to lean on the Advocate who will provide the strength that we need to heal a broken world. Amen.

Nicene Creed:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not
made, of one substance with the Father.
Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came
down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of
the Virgin Mary, and was made human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he
ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father.
Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified.
and has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Intercessions: *Composed and prayed on behalf of the congregation by a member of the Intercessors Group*

The Spirit of God unites us as a people and enables us to pray and intercede for the needs of others. As we gather together in God's love, we offer our prayers and thanksgiving to the Father for the sake of the Son and through the Holy Spirit.

Mighty God, breathe your power into all of the activities of our church family here at St Peter's.. Empower all those who minister to us with the gifts that your Holy Spirit makes available. Give them wisdom in their decision making and the ability to have a deep understanding of the way that actions taken are in accordance with your will.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Creator God, help us to be constantly aware of the world's needs and problems. Give the leaders of the world the courage to oppose sin and tyranny that there may be a greater unity among nations seeking to halt the threat of war and terrorism and that the common good of all humanity is served by their decisions and action.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Father God, we thank you for the gift of hospitality and all of the opportunities that we are beginning to share food and fellowship with our families, friends and neighbours. We also give thanks for the gift of languages which enables us to communicate, even in a very small way.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Merciful God, we pray for the gift of healing to restore those who are sick, injured or suffering. We especially raise before you now those who have asked for healing prayer for themselves or a loved one.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Holy God through the death and resurrection of your son Jesus Christ you gave to all of us the wonderful gift of eternal life. Though we mourn their passing we remember before you those who have recently died and those long passed but still missed.

From our years Mind we pray for Edwina Goulder, Mary Frew, William Galbraith and Ivan Gillespie.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Faithful God, as we go out into the world we pray that this Pentecost may bring our church community a renewed sense of unity with all Christians around the world. May we use the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given us to spread the good news and live the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Merciful Father: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Confession

and Absolution: God is love and we are God's children. There is no room for fear in love. We love because God loved us first. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Silence

**God our Father, we confess to you
and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed,
and in what we have failed to do.**

We are truly sorry.

**Forgive us our sins,
and deliver us from the power of evil.**

**For the sake of your Son who died for us,
Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

(May) God, who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace: We meet in Christ's Name let us share his peace.

The service continues in the Yellow Liturgy Booklet at Page 5. There will be no offertory collection during the service, please place your offertory in the dish at the door before or after the service.

Offertory hymn: All for Jesus

Communion Prayer:
(For those at home)

God of infinite mercy. We thank you for Jesus our Saviour who feeds his people and gives them eternal life. Though we cannot consume the gifts of bread and wine we thank you that we do receive Christ's saving presence, the forgiveness of sins and all other benefits of his passion. Grant that we may continue for ever in the risen and ascended life of our Saviour. Amen. (This prayer is said during the online Provincial service).

The Lord's Prayer:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;
thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive
those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Communion hymn: Come down O love divine

Sentence: We give thanks to you Lord, for you are gracious
And your mercy endures forever

Concluding Prayer: **Father, may we who have received this eucharist live in the unity of your Holy Spirit, that we may show forth his gifts to all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Blessing: The Spirit of truth lead you into all truth, give you grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and to proclaim the word and works of God; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Dismissal: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Recessional hymn: The Church's one foundation

7pm Candle Prayer

**God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
We thank you for all that we have received from your hand.
We thank you for the life you have given to us
And your presence with us in all we face.
Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

**God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
We thank you for all that we have received from your Son.
We thank you that he has prayed for us
And that he continues to uphold us in all we face.
Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

**God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
We thank you that you watch over us and protect us.
Watch over us as we continue the journey we have taken in past months
And protect us in days to come.
Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

**God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
We thank you that you watch over and protect this world.
Watch over us as we give thanks for the gift of Creation
And enable us to better care for the world you have entrusted to us.
Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

**God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
We thank you that your Son is Risen and Ascended.
We join with the community of all your people
And anticipate the outpouring of your Holy Spirit.
Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

**God and Father
Of our Lord Jesus Christ,
We thank you that your Risen and Ascended Son prays for us once more.
We join with all your people in every place
And ask that you might renew us by your Holy Spirit.
Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**