

Texts: Acts 2.1-21; John 14.26-27; 16.4b-15

This weekend, the Church celebrates Pentecost, one of the most important feast days of the year that concludes the Easter season after 50 days, and celebrates the beginning of the Church. It marks the beginning of the Christian church's mission to the world then – and now 2000 years later – doing the work of Christ's commission ...which is why it is so important.

Thank you to all for preparing the church

Carmelite candle – the Holy Spirit and Love

Balloons – breath into them

Bubbles – and rainbows – unseen breath – beauty results

Candlelight....breath (Not seen but the result is experienced)

Pentecost

Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ, God in action, sent as our friend/advocate – disciples – and us – were not left friendless once Jesus returned to heaven at the Ascension)

Holy Ghost (from O.E. meaning Holy Gust!!!! The breath of life – the mighty rushing wind)

“Happy birthday to you, dear Church” – PARTY POPPERS

As with all birthdays there are gifts – gifts of the Holy Spirit. In order to do Christ's work on earth

Wonderful phrase for us to take on “...sons and daughters will prophecy, young men and women shall have their visions, and old men and women shall dream their dreams...men and women alike shall receive the Holy Spirit...”

What a picture for us as a church !!!

Acts

Apostles (no longer disciples) fired up by being filled with the Holy Spirit- God's power house- His action in the world.

It is like that old advert for Heineken, The Holy Spirit reaches the parts that other spirits can't!!!

Many languages used that day – reversal of Tower of Babel...then to confuse peoplenow to enable people to understand that NO-ONE is excluded from hearing the Gospel.

The signs of the Spirit in wind and fire. Arson – people watching the excitement of the results of fire – but re Holy Spirit watching re the excitement of the results of that spiritual fire burning within us.

“Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire!!! and lighten with celestial fire !!!!!”

Our Gospel today – all about the Holy Spirit confirming all that Jesus taught us – it is all coming true !!!! – the disciples initial confusion about being leaderless and comfortless when Jesus returns to his Father, is all overcome.

Major turning point – things can be daunting – new relationships, new job, NO job, new home

AND even more appropriate to the loss of Jesus for the disciples, the sadnesses of the loss of a loved one - how do we move on?!

So in the same way, how were the disciples to move on without Jesus physically and yet still keeping him alive in their hearts....to still feel his influence on their lives? The answer to both is in the experience of the disciples/ apostles – through the Holy Spirit we can open our hearts to growth and change

BUT IT IS UP TO US TO LET HIM WORK IN US !!!!

We do Christ's mission work on earth as a result of him working in us. Mission – (i.e. sending out) – in the power of the Holy Spirit.

So at Pentecost we give thanks that the Holy Spirit who inspired the apostles as they had become, can work in our lives too – changing us, charging up our spiritual batteries, breathing new life into our faith, firing us up to take Christ into the world

The language of Pentecost is such an exciting language, isn't it?!

Tongues of fire – we need to be fired up in reaching out - and let it begin here, this morning, with us, at All Saints, Dedworth – are you fired up to do his work in the world?

O Breath of life come flowing through us.....hymn words

Rushing wind – breath of life in the world – that 'breath of fresh air' – new life, new world. Revived church – lets Have our visions and dream our dreams.

The breath of life filling us – balloons, bubbles (rainbows!)...it makes the difference – life into Adam, making the dry bones live, giving us spirit in times of weakness.....

Jesus talked of the baptism by John in water, but that through him we receive the baptism of the Spirit

At Baptism we don't actually see a flame of the Holy Spirit on his head! BUT at the end of the service we receive a special candle to represent the light of Christ in our life....

As a reminder that Christ is very much alive in our lives we too all lit our candles on Easter morning to represent the risen Christ - because through the work of his Holy Spirit that he left his Jesus is ALWAYS with us!

Each time we light a candle we will once more see the effect of what it is to experience the light of Christ spreading throughout the world in the same way we did on Easter morning.

We can't SEE the Holy Spirit but we can SEE the result – today as the Paschal candle is extinguished – breath is invisible, but the result is there to see – smoke rises like incense – and like Jesus disappearing from sight, the apostles had to go out and do the work – so it is symbolic for us that the candle

is extinguished, but the light of Christ remains in our heart!!!!

Like the apostles we have to take up our commission and spread the word.

O Breath of life come flowing through us –

Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting,

Equip Your church to spread the light.

We don't need to worry about what or how to pray as the Holy Spirit intercedes with and for us – and also gives us the words, but I finish with The Carmelite 'The Fire of Love' prayer that goes with this Carmelite love light.

Come to us, Holy Spirit, as you came to the apostles. Transform our lives and open our minds that we might see the hidden things of God. Send love into our hearts like a flame of fire. May our lives be changed by the presence and the power of your Spirit to do God's work on earth, and to bring people, with us, to you.

Amen