

Littlehampton United Church

Mini
Newsletter 6



Keeping
our church
together

This coming Sunday we celebrate Pentecost.

Sometimes, when I have taken a service on Pentecost Sunday, Val has provided a birthday cake with a candle to celebrate the Birthday of the Church. For it was at the feast of Pentecost that the followers of Jesus were transformed from a disparate group of puzzled believers into powerful evangelists who, in one day alone, added 3000 people to their community. The number of "Followers of The Way" grew rapidly, spreading from Judea into Samaria and then to most countries around the Mediterranean Sea.

What enabled this to happen so quickly?

Nothing less than the power of God, given through the Holy Spirit. Jesus had promised his disciples that they would receive the Holy Spirit but the events of that Pentecost day far exceeded expectation and clearly took both the disciples and public by surprise.

What I find so encouraging, is that God still takes us by surprise. When we are provided for in ways we could never have imagined, when we hear of deeds or mission in amazing places, when God answers prayers in miraculous ways, then we know that His Holy Spirit is still at work and Pentecost still happens in the lives of His Followers.



Geraniums making a splash of colour in the church garden.

This newsletter was written and edited by Chris Azzaro, who can be contacted on 01903 718070 or by email: christopher.azzaro@sky.com

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome

There is also information about our church on the website:

Littlehamptonunitedchurch.org.uk

From the minister's desk:

This week I want to share with you on what have called the “Mistry Other” as I reflect on the first church’s foundation as recorded in the book Acts of the Apostles, (Acts 2:1-13). Acts is the only book that gives us an account of the foundation of the church in the whole Bible. I want to navigate the fulfilment of Jesus’ promise concerning the “Mistry Other” the Holy Spirit” and this promised “Mistry Other” that come on the day of Pentecost.

Firstly, Pentecost was an annual Jewish festival also known as the “Feast of Weeks” or the Day of First fruits”, a celebration of the first buds of the harvest. Only Jewish men were required by law to go to Jerusalem three times each year to celebrate the major feasts (Deut 16:16); Passover in the Spring; Pentecost seven weeks and a day later, (Lev 23:15-16) and the Tabernacles at the end of the harvest in the fall. Pentecost did not just come about because of the coming of the “Mistry Other” the “Holy Spirit, but it was a day of celebration of the “Feast of Weeks.” It is not a surprise that Luke only talks of men witnessing the coming of the “Mistry Other” the “Holy Spirit.” The law of the day was discriminative of women and children from attending the celebration of these festive.

What is so outstanding about Pentecost from other major feasts is the coming of the ‘Mistry Other,’ “when the day had fully come, they were all **with one accord in one place.**” The people who were promised the **Holy Spirit** were the disciples of Jesus who were asked to wait for the “Mistry Other” in Jerusalem where the feasts were taking place. And when they were together, “suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of rushing mighty wind and it rested/filled the whole house where they were sitting.” This marked the foundation of the ‘Church’ the ‘Way.’ This begun with the promise, the waiting and the filling from heaven by the rushing mighty wind that rested on each of the 120 disciples.

The call is for the churches to wait for the power of the ‘Mistry Other’ to fill us while waiting in Rustington, Littlehampton and Worthing for guidance from God through prayer, guidance from church leadership and government leaders for we are guided by law of the land. Our God will see us through this pandemic of coronavirus, when a vaccine would be discovered so that the coronavirus could be contained.

Peace and Grace

Naison M Hove

News of the Family

We give thanks that Jill Luff is now home. Having been fitted with a pacemaker, she is feeling much better. In fact, this good news arrived just as the last newsletter was being distributed. Jill would like to thank everyone for their prayers.

Please continue to pray for Pauline’s daughter Michelle who is suffering with the corona virus. The rest of her family are now isolated from her. Clearly a very difficult time for all.

Tom Bromley has now recovered from the coronavirus.

Erratum: The editor wishes to apologise to Joan Bromley following her contribution to “Where were you on VE Day?” Teddington is, of course, in Middlesex, not Surrey.—as someone who once lived in neighbouring Twickenham should know!

Prayers and Bible Reading for Pentecost

Provided by Roots—resources for the weekly lectionary



Prayer

Pour out your Spirit, loving Lord,
that your sons and your daughters may hear your prophetic word.
Pour out your Spirit, loving Lord,
that your sons and your daughters may know how to live according to your ways.
Pour out your Spirit, loving Lord,
that your sons and your daughters may worship you
in Spirit and in Truth.

Amen.

Read Acts 2: 1— 21

The miraculous events of the day of Pentecost reflect the stories of long ago: Elijah and the sound of the wind, Moses and the mountain enveloped in smoke and lightning. But now these elemental experiences have come indoors and the unapproachable has come close. The result is not fear and trembling but communication – speech in many different languages. The message shared is that God has poured out his Spirit upon all people. This includes people who would have been seen as having a low status – such as daughters, women and slaves. In fact, ‘slaves’ would include foreigners, and so people of other cultures and religions too. The use of the expression ‘all flesh’ underlines the universality and the importance of this moment. The people in Jerusalem at that time were witnessing the beginning of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel.

Prayers:

Holy Spirit of peace,
we pray for homes and nations where there is discord and conflict.
Pour out your breath of peace that people
may listen to each other;
may respect one another;
may honour each other.
Holy Spirit, hear us.
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Holy Spirit of hope,
we pray for those who live in despair;
for those who can see no purpose in their lives;
for those who cannot see a way ahead;
for those who feel completely alone.
Holy Spirit, hear us.
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Holy Spirit of unity,
we pray for your Church,
for its ministry to the faithful;
for its mission to the world.
May the Spirit of Pentecost breathe upon us,
that we may witness to the world
the comfort, meaning and love that you offer.
Heal our differences and make us one in you.
Holy Spirit, hear us.
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

In the name of our Saviour we pray.
Amen.



Come, Holy Spirit, fill our homes with peace.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with love.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our lives with your power

Amen

News from Turning Tides

Church members will be pleased to know that the Tenancy Agreement with Turning Tides has now been signed. You may have seen the Press release . Many thanks to Nigel and John for their tenacity in seeing this through. Nigel writes:

A New Partnership.

Good News! The new partnership between Turning Tides and the United Church has been sealed by the 10 year lease signed in mid May. This passes the management of the Main Hall and the house to Turning Tides to enable them to establish a more permanent base and to extend their activities to the homeless and vulnerable in Littlehampton.

Jesus has called the Church to continue his ministry, which he started with the commitment:

“to proclaim good news to the poor.

...to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.

We share in this commitment and vision with Turning Tides and all the other groups who meet on our premises who seek to support and enrich the lives of others. What we as a congregation can do has declined over the years, but we are part of a community that provides ‘salt and light’ to the people of Littlehampton as we share our buildings.

Although the church building is closed for worship, there is still activity through the work of Turning Tides. The following is from Richard Erdley:

Of course – there isn’t a huge amount we are actually using the church hall for at present, other than storage for all the continued food donations, and as a base to ensure staff can adhere to social distancing measures. We are providing food and other essentials for our own clients, and continue to work closely with the food bank and Littlehampton Community Fridge to assist other members of the community that may need assistance.

There is lots of planning around hall and manse development, and we hope to get the required works underway soon. We are still providing tenancy sustainment support and an outreach service to support newly identified rough sleepers, as well as supported clients that have been moved into temporary accommodation because of the coronavirus. We are working hard towards identifying suitable and sustainable accommodation to ensure that anyone placed under COVID-19 doesn’t have to return to the streets.

