

# Cupar Old Parish Church

*Where Everyone Matters*

## Newsletter 3 June 2022

Dear Friends:

I have many memories of the Christmases of my childhood, and I have some recollection of Easter, both at home and in church, but I have absolutely no memory of any Pentecost celebrations. In fact, I can't even remember when I realised that Pentecost was a thing.

But Pentecost is a good and necessary partner with those two better-known holidays: in Christmas and Easter, we focus on God's gifts of life and salvation that we receive in Jesus. We might have warm, fuzzy feelings of gratitude and go no farther. Pentecost demands action from us. God's Spirit inspired Jesus' followers, and the Church was born and moved into action. Pentecost reminds us that God's Spirit continues to work today, in and among and through us.

Pentecost is God's message to us: the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus are not merely historical events that we commemorate; they are instead life-giving, life-changing events that inspire us into service, witness, and praise.

Warm regards,

Jeff

[jmartin@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:jmartin@churchofscotland.org.uk)

### From Our Prayer Team

Janice: [janice.geddes2@btinternet.com](mailto:janice.geddes2@btinternet.com)

Please continue to pray for all the members of our church family who are unwell - some very seriously.

Please pray for the families, children, school staff and the community after the shooting at the school in Texas.

The Prayer Team continues to meet weekly through Zoom. If you would like to join us, have a prayer request, or would like a member of the team to pray with you, then please contact either Jeff Martin or Janice Geddes.

### **Congratulations and Thanks**

Accolades to the Guild and the Sunday Club for a delightful and delicious Jubilee Tea last weekend. In addition to a happy time together, the event has also raised over £570, which will be given to Guild projects.

### **2-4 June: Jubilee Teas at the Lighthouse**

The Lighthouse Christian Bookstore and Cafe will host afternoon teas from Thursday the second through Saturday the fourth. Tea will include a sandwich of choice; tray bake or sponge; scone with strawberries, jam and cream; and tea or coffee for £5.99. Booking is requested.

### **5 June: Worship**

Please join us for worship this Sunday at 11:00am in the sanctuary and at 4:00pm in the Old Parish Centre. We will celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and the festival of Pentecost with songs of praise, traditional in the morning and contemporary in the afternoon. The reading for the day is Acts 2: 1-21. The Sunday Club meets during the afternoon service; they'll start a new Bible story for the month of June. The morning service will be available later in the day at our YouTube channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdOxFrZ\\_kg94DYogyIFAVEQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdOxFrZ_kg94DYogyIFAVEQ)

### **8 June: Church Family Lunch**

Jill Logan: 07929 444 246

This is an opportunity not to be missed: Lunch at Loch Leven's Larder on Wednesday 8th June, 12 midday. The cost of the meal is £15 per person, and includes starter and main course, followed by coffee and traybake.

This is a very generous offer from the venue, as the cost is the same as three years ago. We have had enjoyable meals there with plenty opportunities of retail therapy before or after, in the expansive shop.

Please let Jill Logan know if you would like to join us so that we can confirm numbers and menu choices, or if you would like more information: 07929 444 246

## **12 June: Holy Communion**

We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion at both worship services on Sunday 12 June, using the hybrid distribution that we introduced in March, which allowed the return of individual glass cups.

## **25 June: Annual Meeting of the Congregation**

The annual stated meeting of our congregation will take place on Saturday 25 June, beginning at 10:00am, with coffee and tea available from 9:45. We will meet in the lounge of the Old Parish Centre. In addition to receiving our 2021 financial report, we will also have an update on the decision of the presbytery regarding the future of our congregation.

## **Reflection from Peter Meager**

Peter: [meager52@btinternet.com](mailto:meager52@btinternet.com)

When we went through the front door of a friend's house in England a couple of weeks ago, we were met by a lifesize cardboard cut out of Her Majesty the Queen. Our instinct was to bow or curtesy! Many of our friends were looking forward in excited anticipation to events being planned to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. These included street parties, afternoon teas, bonfires, songs of praise services and concerts. As the bunting went up and they waited for the dates in the diary to arrive, they were busy planning and organising to ensure that everyone will have a great and celebratory time. One thing is sure: this weekend's all about the Queen.

Our Bible passage this week follows on from a period of waiting for the disciples. It tells the story of the birth of the Church on the annual day of Pentecost, a couple of months after Jesus' death and resurrection. (Acts chapter 2) In Acts 1:4, during a meal together, Jesus had told his followers, '*Wait for the gift my Father promised.*' A few days later (Chapter 2 verse 8) he had left them and been taken up into the heavens after promising that they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, he didn't tell them how long they would have to wait. So, they returned to Jerusalem as they had been commanded and began to wait. But, they weren't idle. Although life was on hold, they had things to do to ensure they would be ready when the great day arrived. Notably, they committed themselves to prayer. (Acts 1:14)

After only ten days the promise was fulfilled in the upper room where they had shut themselves away. It began with a gale-like noise and what appeared to be tongues of fire resting upon each of them. (Acts 2:2-3) 'Wind' called to mind God's Spirit moving over the waters, creating the world and bringing order out of chaos. (Genesis 1-3) 'Fire' immediately conjured up pictures of God's presence. God had appeared to Moses in the burning bush. He had led the people with a pillar of fire each night after their liberation from Egypt.

The Holy Spirit had often appeared in the Old Testament, but usually it was to empower their heroes for remarkable feats. For example, it was the Spirit who

enabled Joshua to lead the Israelites. (Numbers 27:16) Likewise Samson had his great strength when the Spirit came upon him (Judges 14:6) and the prophet Micah (1:7) says the Spirit had filled him to deliver a message against those who act unjustly. What is different on the day of Pentecost is that the Holy Spirit comes upon all of them. The crowd who witnessed it were quick to point out that the disciples were Galileans – in other words ‘country bumpkins’, ordinary men and women with no formal education or social standing.

More than that, the same Holy Spirit is promised for all of us who believe. (Acts 2:38) ‘Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”’ God’s Holy Spirit is still present, active and available for you and for me. Now that’s worth celebrating!

Peter’s audience that day are described as, ‘God-fearing Jews.’ They were as ardent as any member of The Tartan Army. ‘Have you seen what they’re charging for a berth on the Rome-Joppa ferry? Do you know how they hike the price of hotel rooms in Jerusalem for the festival?’ They knew about God and were devoted to living up to the Old Testament’s standards.

Peter’s sermon gets ‘nul points’ for tact. He says, ‘God-fearing you may be, but what did you do when the promised Messiah arrived? You killed him!’ Surprisingly his words strike home. His hearers are cut to the quick, admit their complicity in what has happened, and ask what they should do. (Verse 37) The answer: ‘Realise your need to be rescued. Recognise Jesus as the only one who can make things right between God and you. Accept his free offer of forgiveness and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ It’s all about Jesus. More than 3,000 in that crowd responded and were baptised.

God’s love was revealed in a spectacular, all embracing way and still comes to us and issues a challenge to all of us, ‘You need to respond to this message. You too can experience this life changing, life enhancing power that will fill you with joy, purpose and hope so that you’ll want to have the biggest celebration ever.’

We thank God for the long reign of Her Majesty the Queen, and for her consistent confession of her straightforward faith and her devoted and humble service to our nation and the Commonwealth. We are glad that communities around the world can come together and join in the celebrations and pray for God’s grace to continue to dwell richly upon her.

**Song:** The Lord Is King! Lift Up Your Voice!

<https://youtu.be/pkLzRQ7Jdao>

The Lord is King! Lift up your voice!  
Let earth and all the heavens rejoice.  
From world to world the joy shall ring:  
'The Lord omnipotent is King!'

The Lord is King! Who then shall dare  
resist his will, distrust his care,  
or murmur at his wise decrees,  
or doubt his royal promises?

The Lord is King! Child of the dust,  
the Judge of all the earth is just.  
Holy and true are all his ways;  
let every creature speak his praise!

Come, make your wants, your burdens known:  
Christ will present them at the throne,  
for he is at the Father's side,  
the Man of Love, the Crucified.

One Lord, one empire, all secures:  
he reigns, and life and death are yours.  
Through earth and heaven one song shall ring:  
'The Lord omnipotent is King!'

**Reading:** Acts 2:1-14; 36-41

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

*Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and, Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."*

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*“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

## **Prayer**

Lord our God, we see your limitless power in the spectacular creation all around us. It's so vast, so wonderful, so beautiful. We could expect that being touched by such power might destroy us, and yet we believe that that power which is as strong as the wind is also as gentle as a dove. Fire of God, touch us again to burn away all that is impure that we may be refined like pure gold. Cleanse us of all impurities and remake us as you intended us to be – gentle, strong, loving, serving, innocent, wise.

Loving Father, we know that the key to salvation is forgiveness. Help us to learn that the key to fellowship is forgiving. May your Church be a shining beacon that reflects your glory and is attractive to a needy world. Help us to celebrate the Spirit's presence with exuberant and contagious joy that everyone may hear about it and want to experience it.

While we celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, we thank you for all that is good and wholesome in our society and world. We ask that you will continue to guide, bless and uphold her.

Lord, we are very conscious of the presence of evil, sadness, pain and suffering all around us. We hold up before you all who are distraught at the loss of loved ones through indiscriminate acts of violence by individuals and states. We pray especially for innocent children whose lives have been snuffed out and all who mourn them.

We pray too for those who have little to celebrate this weekend: those who lack food, housing, employment or adequate health care and all who live in fear. Father, may your Holy Spirit act through your people to bind up wounds, to dry tears, to be a shoulder to lean on and to share your Good News. We ask these things in your name and for your sake. Amen.