

Pentecost 2020

I will ask the father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever- the Spirit of truth.

John 14.16

As Jesus prepared to face His death, He promised the disciples that he would send the Spirit to them, to live with and within them. The final sentence of Matthew's gospel holds the same promise; as Jesus returned to heaven, He says that He will be with them always, to the very end of the age.

When we think of God, we perhaps can grasp the idea of a heavenly father, and Jesus as saviour. However when it comes to thinking about the Spirit we are sometimes less sure how to describe the presence and the experience of this dimension of God. At the very beginning of his gospel Matthew quotes a prophecy from Isaiah "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel-which means God with us"

The story seems to begin and end with the promise that God will be with us. His presence with us comes in the person of the Holy Spirit. If we feel that is a bit "scary" or out of our "comfort zone"! we can find reassurance in Jesus' words that His Father gives good gifts to His children, and "how much more will he give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him." Luke 11.13.

We are celebrating Pentecost in a very different way this year, with only technology to help us connect. Pentecost is a celebration of the coming of the Spirit as we read in Acts ch 2., and marks the birth of the early church. A church that began in the power of the Spirit, changing and transforming lives in dramatic ways.

As we celebrate Pentecost in such a different way this year, let's rejoice in the Father's gift of the Spirit, being reassured that this is a good gift from a good Father. Let's be amazed that the creator of our world has promised to be with us always and let's resolve to experience more of this "God with us" presence every day.

Lord Jesus..... we are amazed that you have promised to always be with us by your Spirit..may we be aware of your loving presence at this time of Pentecost and beyond.

Mad Berry May 2020

