



St Margaret's Church

Together we aim to:

Worship God, Proclaim Jesus, Grow in the Spirit
And Serve the World

In Contact

The Promise of the Spirit

John 14: 15-31

17th May 2020



What will life be like next week, next month, next year we wonder?

A similar question would be in the mind of the disciples after the resurrection, what would happen if Jesus was no longer physically with them? Could they keep going without Jesus?

This Thursday is Ascension Day when the risen Lord Jesus appeared to his disciples for the last time and returned to his Father to reign in glory. Today we look at the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit. That promise is given by Jesus in his final words to his disciples before he ascended, recorded in Acts 1 v 8, and earlier in John chapter 14 verses 15-31.

In John 14 Jesus tells his disciples he will not leave them orphaned. They will still be loved by the Father. Those who love God will still be loved by God. But Jesus doesn't stop there. He promises that the Father will send the advocate, the Holy Spirit, to be with you, for ever.

But what does advocate mean? The Greek word 'paraclete' used here is difficult to put into English and different versions of the Bible use 'advocate', 'counsellor', 'helper' or 'comforter'. The idea of the advocate is the person who stands with us, for example in a courtroom, the barrister who puts our case, who is on our side when others seem against us. The one who does not let us down. The one who is always there when we need them. God never forsakes us or abandons us or leaves us on our own because the Holy Spirit is in us and with us for ever. This is what Jesus promised to his disciples and this is what he promises to us. We have his presence every day as we look to him and trust in him. We have that new life from God in our own lives, that daily renewing and refreshing and experience of God's presence with us by His Spirit.

Even when we cannot meet people face to face we take modern communications completely for granted. Our grandchildren are 150 miles away and we haven't been with them since Christmas but we keep in contact with them and talk to them by phone or the internet.

By the Holy Spirit within us God is with us and Jesus is real to us and shares in our life with all its highs and lows, ups and downs, and joys and sadness.

Jesus's promise was fulfilled. The Spirit did come on the disciples at Pentecost and he comes on us today. The Holy Spirit is with us and in us. Through him Jesus is with us today and every day. He makes Jesus real to us. He sustains us in our Christian journey, in good times and in hard times. He keeps us going as Christians. We thank God that through him we know the love of God in Christ Jesus today and every day.



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Bible Verse for 2020:

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. Ephesians 1: 17



Daily Hope is a free phone line which offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

Deanery Day of Prayer: Ascension Day Thursday 21st May

We would like to encourage you to join in with the Deanery Day of Prayer starting with a Zoom service at 8am on Thursday 21st May. More details to follow.

St Margaret's 'Buddy' System

Next week we start our telephone buddy system to ensure that all of our church members have someone on the end of a phone that they can chat with. Our aim is to promote care by contact to prevent loneliness in this time of enforced isolation. More details to follow.

Praying for the Persecuted Church: Martyrs in northern Nigeria

The idea of our martyrdom for Christ is such a distant, remote possibility that it has no bearing as to how we live our day to day lives. In December 2019 Islamist extremists shot dead bride-to be Martha Bulus and a group of her friends as they travelled to her wedding in northern Nigeria. On 26th December 2019 Islamic State in West Africa posted video footage of its militants beheading ten Christian men and shooting dead an eleventh in northern Nigeria.

In January 2020 Pastor Lawan Andimi was kidnapped and murdered in northern Nigeria by Boko Haram. Thank God for the assurance of eternal life for all who believe in Jesus. Praise Him for the perseverance of believers who did not cling to life in the face of death (Revelation 12:11). Ask that their sacrifice will embolden others to endure and demonstrate the power of the Gospel of truth to their killers. Pray, too, that in their grief, the Lord will comfort those left behind and give them His peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4: 7).

Lord, help us to live lives that honour those who have been martyred for being your followers.

May 17th to 23rd Please Pray for:

- ◆ People living in Green End Road, Broadlea Road & Oasis Close.
- ◆ Safety for Karen taking vulnerable adults on the bus.
- ◆ HMP Chaplains to give effective support to prisoners and staff.
- ◆ Families separated by distance, self-isolation or shielding.
- ◆ End to war in Syria and peace so people can return to their homes.
- ◆ Government to devise effective plans for phased lifting of the restrictions.

Television & Radio this week:

BBC 1: Sunday Worship from St. David's Cathedral at 10.45am

1.15pm Songs of Praise looks at modern day hymn writers

BBC Radio 4: 8.10am Sunday Worship: Discovering the gifts of the Holy Spirit with the Rev Dr Alison Jack of New College, Edinburgh, and Fr Dermot Preston SJ of St Aloysius' RC Church, Glasgow.

Sunday Evening 8 o'clock: Light a candle and break bread.



Help is available if you need it: **Call 0800 234 6123**



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