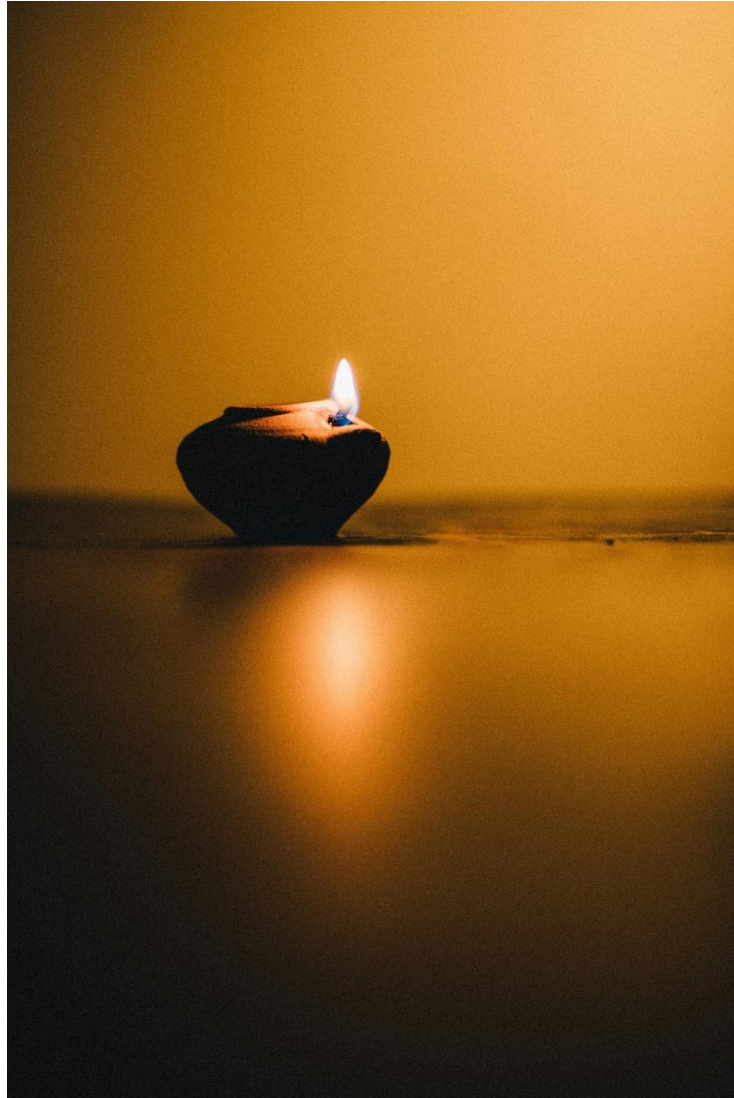


Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

Sunday 24 May 2026

Pentecost

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. We have come to the glorious and dramatic day of Pentecost. After ten long days of praying, the Holy Spirit bursts into the apostles' lives. They are ready to go in Jesus' name and proclaim his Good News message. Simon the Fisherman who denied knowing Jesus is transformed into Peter the Rock on which Jesus is building his worldwide Church. It is all the Spirit's doing.

Enjoy reflecting on the difference God is making to your life.

God bless,

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As you prepare to enter into the events of Pentecost, take a moment to invite God's Spirit to come and fill your time of prayer and reflection.



Holy Spirit, come, confirm us
in the truth that Christ makes known;
we have faith and understanding
through your helping gifts alone.

Brian Foley (1919-2000)

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Prayers and Reflections
for use at home on Pentecost
Empowering

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence, and feel his love. You may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in this room. You may also wish to have a bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.

Holy Spirit, living Breath of God,
come and breathe new life
into my willing soul as
I rest in your loving presence
and listen for your words to me. **Amen.**

LETTING GO

If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, or times when you wish you had turned to God for his guidance, offer them to him in the silence of your heart. And, when you are ready, reflect on the second verse of our Pentecost hymn.

Holy Spirit, come, console us,
come as Advocate to plead,
loving Spirit from the Father,
grant in Christ the help we need.

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If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.



Our prayerful verse invites God's Spirit to come and be the inner strength we need to live by faith. When life is calm, we can – almost – live life without noticing our need of the Spirit's help. We can get on with life on our own (or we feel that we can!). When life throws up challenges and we feel like we are in danger of drowning, this verse offers us a prayer to God's Spirit. We might ask for the Spirit to come and comfort us. Perhaps, we might ask for the Spirit to come and plead our cause with God the Father as we are lost for words. Maybe, we simply need to know, to feel, that our Lord is with us. He will never let us go.

Think about how you are feeling today. What or who is on your heart? In stillness, tune yourself into the Spirit's presence. Invite God's Spirit to come. Come and be who you are seeking.

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER (The Collect)

Today, this prayer is being said across the villages and the worldwide Church. Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to and through God's Spirit.

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father,
ignite in us your holy fire;
strengthen your children with the gift of faith,
revive your Church with the breath of love,
and renew the face of the earth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer for Pentecost flows beautifully on from our first reflection. It is a collective prayer for God's empowering Spirit to come and stir up Christ's Church. It contains four bold requests: Ignite us – Strengthen us – Revive us – Renew us. The first two requests are all about stirring the church into action. The last two requests are all about stirring the church to be kingdom workers. We have two tasks.

Firstly, the prayer is a call to expand our love to embrace and unite everyone across the globe. So that, secondly, we play our part in enabling the light of Christ's love to shine in the world's darkest places.

It is a prayer to continue the work of transformation that began one dramatic day in Jerusalem. It is a transformation that the church has continued to enact down through the centuries. We too have picked up the baton from the apostles and will pass it on to those who will come after us.

The Holy Spirit has been at work all of this time! Empowering, encouraging, equipping and emboldening. He is tireless.

Do pray for us as a benefice of three church families serving four villages, Overstone Lakes and all the new Overstone communities. We are truly a Spirit-led welcoming church. We feel called to live out our faith by blessing others with our Christ-like love and compassion and care. We are trying to make Christ known by the way we live. Our key opportunity to do more in Christ's name is our ministry to families with young children. Do pray that God's Spirit will show us how we create a group or service which will inspire families to come and play and pray with us. May we trust that God's Spirit will embolden, equip and encourage us.



Holy Spirit, come, renew us,
come yourself to make us live,
holy through your loving presence,
holy through the gifts you give.

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LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

The Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost

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.'

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

“In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.

Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Acts 2:1-21

Empower us!

Fifty days ago, Peter was a broken man. He had failed to stand by Jesus, failed to witness to his faith in Jesus as the Messiah. He was a failure! Jesus put him back together in their conversation on the beach. Jesus recalled and restored him by asking him three times, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Each of his declarations of love wiped away a denial – eased his shame – and empowered him to lead our Lord’s team, Christ’s to be Church. Now, we see how God’s Spirit empowered, equipped, encouraged and emboldened this fallible – loveable – man to be the Rock on which Christ builds the foundations of his Church. It is a glorious transformation! One which points to the power of God’s Spirit to embolden us in the living out of our faith in our daily lives and as Christ’s Church of today. Invite God’s Spirit to empower you.



Holy Spirit, come, possess us,
you the love of Three in One,
Holy Spirit of the Father,
Holy Spirit of the Son.

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OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to use one or more of these prayers and to add your own.

Holy Spirit, empowering God, come and embolden me in my faith, in my love. Encourage me to believe in your power within me.

You enable me to be a blessing in my daily life. Equip me, I pray...

Holy Spirit, hear my prayer.

Holy Spirit, encouraging God, come and enfold with your love those who are struggling to believe in themselves. Open their eyes to their self-worth: they are God's beloved children. Encourage, I pray...

Holy Spirit, hear my prayer.

Holy Spirit, equipping God, come and enable those who are living with pain and ill-health, with the frailties and the frustrations of old age, to live life as fully as possible. Be their hope. Enable, I pray...

Holy Spirit, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A closing prayer of blessing for this week.

Spirit of God, you search me and you know me,
all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,
you light the paths I will take. Inspire all that I say and do.
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**