

CIRCUIT WORSHIP 26/09/2021

This worship is prepared by Dr Stephen Appiah – local preacher in the Basingstoke section of the circuit.

Call to worship (Numbers 11: 25, 28-30). The Lord puts the Holy Spirit on 70 elders

The LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to Moses; and He took away some of the Spirit who was upon him and placed *Him* upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied.

Joshua protested to Moses and asked him to stop the men from prophesying.

Moses replied “Are you jealous for my sake? **I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!**”

Comment: Moses was right; Today the Lord has put his Spirit on all of us and each one of us could be a prophet for God. May the Lord still our minds today as we focus on Him in our worship, Amen.

We shall sing Holy Spirit we welcome

Please note hymn words are on the final page of this document*

[HYMN: stf385 Holy spirit we welcome you](#)

Prayer of adoration

Lord we adore you and love you and we are in your presence to worship you Lord.

We recall your faithfulness throughout these difficult times and we know that your goodness and love never fail.

We worship and adore your holiness and proclaim the greatness of your name. Father, we proclaim that you are the Holy One, the Lord God Almighty. At the appointed time, you sent your Son Jesus, the Word, to become flesh and live among us. Through Him you sent your Spirit of truth and love to guide us. Increase in us the gifts of your grace to worship you.

We invite Your Holy Spirit to move freely amongst us, to come dwell in our hearts, to equip us, challenge us, comfort us, teach us and inspire us as we learn more about your ways.

Father, you created us in flesh and we have the weakness in it. For our sins have made us slow to learn from Jesus and has caused poverty in our worship. We fall short in many ways and we ask for your forgiveness and we accept your gracious word that our sins have been forgiven.

Father, as we meet now let us encounter your grace. Rise above this worship and make it acceptable in your sight through the powerful name of our Lord Jesus. Amen

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, which 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 them that 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.

Bible Readings: John 7:37-52

[HYMN: stf 406 have you heard the good news](#)

or

[stf 563 O Jesus, I have promised to serve you](#)

Sermon

The scriptures from John 7 have both drama and serious spiritual message but let's get the drama out of the way first.

The Jewish people celebrate a number of festivals to commemorate how God provided for them from Egypt through the wilderness to the Promised land. Very often our Lord Jesus would give the spiritual significance of these festivals.

Significance of Passover

For instance at the Passover when everybody looked to the events in Egypt, Jesus used the last supper to establish a covenant in his body and blood as the Passover lamb.

Bread from heaven (spiritual hunger)

After feeding the 5000, and the people came back for more food the following day, he told them Moses gave them manna and they were hungry again. But to satisfy the spiritual hunger they needed the bread from heaven.

The festival of the Tabernacle

The festival of the Tabernacle was celebrated to commemorate the provision of manna and water in the wilderness. On the last day of the festival, the women would bring out golden pots and vessels to fetch water from a well to fill the ceremonial pots in the Temple. They would form a single file and with songs and dance and the men would wave branches in celebration.

Jesus recognises spiritual dryness and spiritual hunger in humanity.

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, if anyone one is thirsty, let him come and as the scriptures have said I would give you living water that will spring up within you. This was the message he gave to the Samaritan woman that I can give you living water. And of course the Samaritan woman went to inform her people and they received Jesus.

Spiritual Dryness

When you mention spiritual deficiency to a Jew, it always reminds them of their relationship with God and they would stop and listen. Prophet after prophet have drawn their attention to their relationship with God. Religion does not satisfy or quench spiritual hunger, spiritual thirst or spiritual emptiness. The message of thirst within us reflects spiritual dryness and the message seemed to have cut through the heart of the people and many said, Jesus must be the Messiah, others said he is prophet but others said but how can a prophet be a Galilean?

The arrest warrant issued by the high priest

But among the audience were temple soldiers who were holding arrest warrant issued by the High Priest and the Pharisees to arrest Jesus. They might have been shocked by the call to all who were thirsty and feeling spiritually dry and they left without using the arrest warrant. They returned to the High Priest who was in session with the Pharisees. Where is the prisoner? They asked. The officers replied, "no one speaks like this man, he must be a prophet". That made the Pharisees furious and showed their arrogance and rage against the public who lack knowledge about the law and taken in by Jesus.

Nicodemus saves the day

They say crisis produces heroes. Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, had had enough and raised a point of order, and asked, if that was how far they have come to be able to condemn somebody without cross-examination, or giving the person a chance to defend themselves? He challenged the legality of their plot and he saved the day and the arrest of Jesus was aborted but the storm clouds were gathering.

Now the message of spiritual dryness

Having gone through the drama, now let's look at the significance of the statement – **living water welling up as spring from within**. Our Lord was referring to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit when he is glorified. This statement was first made by Moses when God took some of the Spiritual power from Moses and put on 70 elders in Israel. When 2 of the elders started to prophesy Joshua became angry and told Moses to stop the men from exercising the power of the Holy Spirit. Moses replied, I pray that God will put this Spirit on everybody in this camp. Moses' statement was repeated by the prophet Joel: in the last days, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Coronation after ascension of Jesus

Now Jesus is affirming that that after his ascension, when he enters into his coronation and made lord over all and receives his investiture as King of Kings and seated on the right hand side of God. When he is crowned in glory and majesty, he and his Father will send the Holy Spirit to apply the work of the Son, the work on the cross, the atonement, the power of his resurrection, the sermons, the parables, the healing and everything that the Holy Spirit needs to apply to anyone who comes to Christ.

The Holy Spirit applying the work on the cross is the only way to feel spiritually full.

Spiritual dryness and hunger are still a big issue today as it was in Jesus' day. It is a situation of people going about their busy day to day work without feeling the presence of God. But there is an answer. Our Lord Jesus calls anybody who is spiritually dry and hungry to come. Our Lord offers this anointing to all who believe in him. The Holy Spirit wells from within and applies the work of Christ to us. He also seals us for the day of redemption. What a blessed assurance – to be filled with the Holy Spirit. May God bless you. Amen

HYMN: STF 397 The Spirit lives to set us Free or STF 391/H&P 777 O Breath of Life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CumpuwbWv4> or

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3bsgoPjcg4>

Prayer of Confession

Lord we pray for Christian Churches all over the world and people who are in the forefront of your mission around the world. We pray for those who put their lives in danger for Christ. Lord guard them with your Holy Spirit. We pray that more people around the globe will come to know Christ.

We pray for our leaders and for heads of state around the world, that they will be given the wisdom to bring peace into the World.

We pray for deprived people and people suffering in different parts of the world especially in Afghanistan. Lord send your spirit to work with agencies that work to support the poor, the suffering and those living in fear of their lives.

We pray for our families and the church families. Lord we seek your continual protection for our young ones and the elderly among us. We pray for the sick that Lord your spiritual healing will outpour into the lives of the sick among us and anoint them with the power of your Spirit. We pray for people who have lost loved ones that you may comfort them and give them hope and strength. We pray for our communities around us, the economy of our towns and cities, for people who have lost their livelihood, that you will sustain them. Lord, we pray for our churches, our mission and our worship that your blessings and love will continue to enrich our lives in Christ Jesus. Amen

Blessing

**Loving God, we thank you for hearing our prayers,
feeding us with your word,
and encouraging us in our meeting together.**

**Take us and use us
to love and serve you, and all people,
in the power of your Spirit
and in the name of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn Words *

HYMN: stf385 Holy spirit we welcome you

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| <p>1 Holy Spirit, we welcome you, Holy Spirit, we welcome you ! Move among us with holy fire as we lay aside all earthly desire, hands reach out and our hearts aspire. Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, we welcome you !</p> <p>2 Holy Spirit, we welcome you, Holy Spirit, we welcome you ! Let the breeze of your presence blow that your children here might truly know how to move in the Spirit's flow. Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, we welcome you !</p> | <p>3 Holy Spirit, we welcome you, Holy Spirit, we welcome you ! Please accomplish in us today some new work of loving grace, we pray — unreservedly — have your way. Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, we welcome you !</p> <p>Christopher Alan Bowater (<i>b.</i> 1947)</p> |
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HYMN: stf 406 Have you heard the good news

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| <p><i>Have you heard the good news ? Have you heard the good news ? We can live in hope because of what the Lord has done. Have you heard the good news ? Have you heard the good news ? We can live in hope because of what the Lord has done.</i></p> <p>1 There is a way when there seems to be no way, there is a light in the darkness : there is a hope, an everlasting hope, there is a God who can help us.</p> <p><i>Refrain</i></p> | <p>2 A hope for justice and a hope for peace, a hope for those in desperation : we have a future, if only we believe he works in every situation.</p> <p><i>Refrain</i></p> <p>Stuart Garrard</p> |
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stf 563 O Jesus, I have promised to serve you

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| <p>1 O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end ; Lord, be for ever near me, my master and my friend ; I shall not fear the battle if you are by my side, nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.</p> | <p>3 O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still, above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will ; O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control ; Lord, speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.</p> |
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| <p>2 O let me feel you near me ; the world is ever near ; I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear ; my foes are ever near me, around me, and within ; but, Jesus, now draw nearer, and shield my soul from sin.</p> | <p>4 O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you, that where you are in glory your servant shall be too ; and, Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end ; O give me grace to follow my master and my friend.</p> <p>John Ernest Bode (1816–1874)</p> |
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HYMN: STF 397 The Spirit lives to set us Free

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| <p>1 The Spirit lives to set us free, walk, walk in the light ; he binds us all in unity, walk, walk in the light. <i>Walk in the light, walk in the light, walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.</i></p> <p>2 Jesus promised life to all, walk, walk in the light ; the dead were wakened by his call, walk, walk in the light.</p> <p>3 He died in pain on Calvary, walk, walk in the light ; to save the lost like you and me, walk, walk in the light.</p> | <p>4 We know his death was not the end, walk, walk in the light ; he gave his Spirit to be our friend, walk, walk in the light.</p> <p>5 By Jesus' love our wounds are healed, walk, walk in the light ; the Father's kindness is revealed, walk, walk in the light.</p> <p>6 The Spirit lives in you and me, walk, walk in the light ; his light will shine for all to see, walk, walk in the light.</p> <p>Damian Lundy (1944–1996)</p> |
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STF 391/H&P 777 O Breath of Life

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| <p>1 O breath of life, come sweeping through us, revive your Church with life and power ; O breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us, and fit your Church to meet this hour.</p> <p>2 O wind of God, come, bend us, break us, till humbly we confess our need ; then in your tenderness remake us, revive, restore ; for this we plead.</p> | <p>3 O breath of love, come, breathe within us, renewing thought and will and heart ; come, love of Christ, afresh to win us, revive your Church in every part.</p> <p>Elizabeth Ann Head, (Bessie Porter Head) (1850–1936)</p> |
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