

## **St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall**

[www.stmagnus.org](http://www.stmagnus.org)

Scottish Charity SCO 05322/CCL No 119086

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Welcome to St Magnus Cathedral this morning. It was founded in 1137 by St Rognvald, in honour of Magnus, his uncle. The Cathedral belongs to the people of Orkney and its doors are open to all. If you are a visitor, we hope this order of service will help you feel part of our worship together.

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**SUNDAY 31st May**

You can find our Sunday worship here.

<https://www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation/>

or on YouTube here.

<https://youtu.be/n9TqayqDEMc>

PENTECOST Sunday

Tongues of flame meditation

Babel reversed,  
language uniting rather than dividing,  
each one enabled to comprehend the other along with the nature  
of such a marvellous gift.

Babel reversed  
when those involved  
recognised their weakness  
and accepted the power from on high.

Babel reversed  
when races found a common bond, a common cause  
to spread through all the world the colourful, enriching,  
enlivening Holy Spirit of God.

Babel reversed, Pentecost born.

Let the air and the fire of the Spirit renew the water of our  
souls, and let the presence of each of us create the community  
in all of us.

Reading read by Rosie Wallace

ACTS 2; 1-11

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they all met in one room. Suddenly they heard what sounded like a violent, rushing wind from heaven; the noise filled the entire house in which they were sitting. Something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each one. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as she enabled them. Now there were devout people living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled. But they were bewildered to hear their native languages being spoken. They were amazed and astonished: "Surely all of these people speaking are Galileans! How does it happen that each of us hears these words in our native tongue? We are Parthians, Medes and Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, as well as visitors from Rome—all Jews, or converts to Judaism—Cretans and Arabs, too; we hear them preaching, each in our own language, about the marvels of God!"

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church  
Amen. So be it.

## Reflection

This is the day the disciples had LONG awaited - the day they received the Holy Spirit, promised to them by Jesus. Indeed their lives and their ministries were changed dramatically. We, too, are disciples of Jesus, and we, too, have been filled with the Holy Spirit. In Baptism we were given the Holy Spirit of God - the same Holy Spirit as the FIRST disciples were given - the third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Advocate, the Helper, and endless other names.

Today is the day the church sets apart for us to realise this truth - to wake up to it and live like we know we are temples of the Spirit of God—that we recognize the indwelling of the Spirit as an active dynamic - not something that happened to us "once," or "a long time ago."

In order for this to be a dynamic in our lives, we have to stay "tuned in" to the Holy Spirit - awake and alert to the actions, the stirrings, the promptings, the directions that the Holy Spirit is constantly speaking within us.

We are called to be spirit-filled people - we have been given the gift of God's own Spirit, alive and active with us. What a privilege! And with every privilege there is responsibility. It is our responsibility to be listening for the Holy Spirit - recognising and responding to that voice.

Consider this little story:

Once upon a time, at a military base, a job opening was posted on the noticeboard.

It was for a telegraph specialist—someone specialized in Morse Code.

Those interested in applying for the job were to report to the Captain's office the next morning at 0900.

At 9 the next day, soldiers had already filled the Captain's waiting room.

They were male and female. Fat and thin. Short and tall. University graduates and those who had left school at sixteen. Black, white, brown. Rich and poor. They filled the room and spilled out into the hall.

This job they were seeking was a very desirable one. They all wanted it!

So, there they sat.

Some of them read magazines.

Some of them listened to music in their own little-headset world. Some carried on conversations among themselves. There was a cough here, a laugh there, the turning of pages, the deep sighs of boredom, a chomp into an apple, the low steady hum of voices. Just the quiet buzzzz of cooped-up humanity -----

Except for the sound of dots and dashes coming from a telegraph machine somewhere.

Suddenly one soldier stood up - walked quickly across the room—opened the door to the Captain's office, and disappeared behind the door as it closed.

Inside - the Captain had been expecting him. He stood, saluted the soldier, shook his hand and without an interview or even a question asked, the Captain said - "Sit down, soldier, I want to talk with you. What made you come in here?"

The soldier replied, "Sir, I heard a Morse Coded message that said 'This is your Captain. If you're reading this message, come into my office immediately.'"

"That's exactly right," said the Captain. You were listening, you heard, you knew the message was for you and you responded. Very good, soldier. The job is yours."

This is a good message for us today. If we aren't careful, we can get caught up in the surface noise -- the noise of the world all around us -- like the soldiers waiting to enter the Captain's office. If that happens we will completely miss the fact that the "Captain" is speaking to us - right now. Only one soldier - of all the soldiers who had come seeking a job that specialized in Morse Code - only one - heard the Morse Code. He was listening.

That is not so different from us.

The Spirit is speaking to us all the time - all of the time - and how many of us are listening?

Today calls us to a new beginning - today is Pentecost - the day that the first disciples were given the spectacular gift of the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

It is no less spectacular for us - we have been given the same gift and we are called to listen, to hear, to know the message is for us and to respond in obedience to what we hear.

Let's just be still for a few minutes and be grateful for the gift of the Holy Spirit -- and listen for the still small voice of God within us -- ready to hear, and to respond to what we hear.....

#### Prayer

Although we are all different we are united in Christ. We rejoice in what makes us unique as well as what links us together.

May this joy one day be found by all.

May we do all we can to seek unity and peace.

May we celebrate all that unites us rather than that which divides us.

Today we call to mind those who are postal and delivery workers;

May they be assured to their core that, no matter what shallow messages they may receive from government, their lives, their employment, and the daily risks they are taking to keep our

country connected, matter deeply to us.

Those who are facing unemployment;  
May they feel surrounded by empathy, knowing that so many of us have been and are in the place where they are now, frightened, angry, seeking new paths, and may they find support who will both root for their bright future and simply hold them through this terrible present moment.

Those who are feeling stagnant;  
May they remember that their body and life are not mere tools for productivity, but rather dynamic, breathing realities that need rest, quiet, time, and space, and will organically tell them when they are ready to do and not just be again.

May the Holy Spirit, who came as wind and flames of fire, fan into life the gifts and abilities of people everywhere; unite us in a creative love that includes others, celebrates differences, and brings glory to Christ.

#### Blessing

May we go in peace and discover the gifts of the spirit, in our gathered community of faith and in the world around us.  
And may the winds of renewal continue to blow creating more justice, more fairness, more love.  
May you stay safe in the Way of Christ, and may you be blessed by his Spirit this day and always.