**PENTECOST FOCUS FROM *PRAYER MATTERS***

**Written by Lyndall Bywater, Prayer Network**

**THURSDAY 18 MAY – THE SPIRIT OF JOY (ACTS 2:1-13)**

The word ‘evangelism’ so often conjures visions of awkward conversations and embarrassed efforts to persuade people to be interested in Jesus. But there was nothing awkward or embarrassed about Pentecost – there was just an exuberant sharing of joy. Lord, fill us again with the joy of your Spirit, that we might find the good news bursting out of us wherever we go. Amen.

**FRIDAY 19 MAY – THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY (ACTS 2:18)**

One of the first things Peter told the crowds about the coming of the Holy Spirit was that they should expect to hear prophecies. All sorts of people, from the least to the greatest, would speak powerful, lifechanging words, given to them by God. Lord, give us your words today – words with supernatural power, words that carry hope and healing. Amen.

**SATURDAY 20 MAY - THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT (ACTS 2:38)**

Peter told the crowds in Jerusalem that they could repent and turn to Jesus, and that they would then be able to ‘receive’ the Holy Spirit. Lord, forgive us when we make do without your Spirit. Forgive us when we forget to make space for your Spirit to work in us. Today we choose to receive the gift of your Spirit again – always with us but ever new. Amen.

**SUNDAY 21 MAY – THE EVERYDAY SPIRIT (ACTS 2:46)**

After the initial thrill of receiving the Spirit and telling the world about Jesus, we find the believers going about their daily lives, sharing meals, visiting each other’s homes and enjoying each other’s company. Lord, help us not to ‘over-spiritualise’ the gift of your Spirit. May we find you bubbling up in all the ordinary things we do this week. Amen.

**MONDAY 22 MAY – THE FORTIFYING SPIRIT (ACTS 4:31)**

When the going got tough, somehow the early Church got more determined. That resilience is a gift of the Spirit and it poured in on them with such power that the room shook. Lord, we pray today for those who don’t think they can go another step. By your Spirit, fill them with courage and strength. Amen.

**TUESDAY 23 MAY - SPIRIT OF SERVICE (ACTS 6:3)**

The gift of the Holy Spirit definitely wasn’t just for those who did the preaching and praying; it was for everyone, and it was considered as essential for practical jobs as for so-called ‘spiritual’ ones. Lord, teach us to welcome your presence and power in everything we do. Show us what it means to do even the most mundane, practical tasks in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**WEDNESDAY 24 MAY – THE DISRUPTING SPIRIT (ACTS 10:9-20,34)**

Jesus’ followers had to get used to the Holy Spirit disrupting their agendas, their timetables and even their theology. The Spirit led Peter to ideas and experiences which would previously have been unthinkable to him. As he opened his mind and heart, the Kingdom advanced. Holy Spirit, help us to trust you when you ask us to think the unthinkable and to embrace new ways of seeing your world. Amen.

**THURSDAY 25 MAY - THE PIONEERING SPIRIT (ACTS 13:2)**

The Spirit didn’t just introduce new ideas, he led the disciples out to new lands. The leadership of the Antioch church heard a clear command to send Saul and Barnabas to take the gospel to communities they had never set foot in. Lord, we pray today for pioneers, those who have been called to go and plant an expression of Church in a new place. Give them creativity, wisdom

and courage. Amen.

**FRIDAY 26 MAY – THE DISCERNING SPIRIT (ACTS 13:6-12)**

With no handbooks and ‘How to …’ guides, life in the early Church must have been part frightening, part exhilarating. The disciples learnt to listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit within them, to know if a situation was safe or unsafe, right or wrong. Lord, hone in us the ability to recognise the prompting of your Spirit and to discern the truth about the situations we find ourselves in. Amen.

**SATURDAY 27 MAY - THE SPIRIT OF JESUS (ACTS 10:38)**

For Peter, meeting the Holy Spirit must have been like meeting an old friend. The Spirit he was encountering did all the things his beloved Jesus had done: healing, blessing and setting people free. Lord, help us to remember that, when we’re filled with your Holy Spirit, we can do the very things Jesus did. Show us those moments today when you want to do miracles through us. Amen.

**SUNDAY 28 MAY - THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD (ACTS 10:44)**

The early Church discovered that the Spirit loves to harmonise with the word. As they told the stories of Jesus and recounted his teachings, the Spirit would bring the words alive by filling their rooms and their hearts with the tangible presence of God. Holy Spirit, would you fill our meeting places as we gather for worship today, confirming the preaching of the word with your signs and wonders. Amen.