


# REVIVE!



**But you will receive  
power when the Holy  
Spirit comes on you  
Acts 1:8**

I wonder what you think we need most in these turbulent times. The followers of Jesus in first century Middle East certainly lived in the most challenging of times. Just to survive would have been so tough, with crippling taxes imposed by the ruling Roman Empire and little or no access to medical care. This invading Empire could do what they wanted to whom they wanted with impunity, which included unjustly crucifying their leader. Hostility and persecution could flare up in an instant from the political and religious authorities.

So what did this seemingly inconsequential, and undoubtedly fearful, band of Jesus followers need above all? What did God, in His infinite wisdom, give them?

He gave them His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, poured out in abundance, to change them and give them a new power (literally 'dynamite' Acts 1:8) in order to

proclaim and live out the forgiveness and new life that is found in Jesus Christ.

Don't we need more of the Holy Spirit in our turbulent and perplexing times?

In this edition of Revive! we will be reflecting on the Holy Spirit through the lens of seven biblical images or symbols taken from our human experience but which help us understand, and most importantly, experience and receive more of Him in our lives. They include the **DOVE, WATER, FIRE, WIND, CLOUD, the FINGER OF GOD and OIL.**

Images, pictures and stories encourage us to reflect more deeply behind the reality we see, to listen to what the artist behind them might be saying, and ultimately to better know Him. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through these images about Himself. Do you want to know and experience Him more?

With love from us all at CCHC, *David*

## Come gentle dove



**T**he DOVE is an exquisite symbol of the Holy Spirit. *At Jesus' baptism, 'the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove'* (Luke 3:22). A dove evokes images of peace, purity, gentleness and sensitivity, being easily shooed away. In the Bible right at the beginning in Genesis (1:2), we see the Holy Spirit described in birdlike terms hovering over chaotic waters, which were formless, empty and dark, in order to create life. A dove is released as the floodwaters of judgement in Noah's time recede and comes back with an olive twig, indicating now is the time for mercy, peace with God and a new start. The 'dove' that later came upon Jesus, also brings to those who come to Him and put their trust in Him, grace, forgiveness and a new life with God. This caring Holy Spirit also *'hovers over its young, spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions'* (Deuteronomy 32:10-14).

Ask the Holy Spirit, the gentle life-changing power from above, to come upon you afresh today.

Is there anything that would stop Him coming, that would shoo Him away? He invites you not to resist Him, for He is the gentle presence of God Himself, who wants to care for you and lead you.

Is there something new He wants to create in you in these times? Can you hear the gentle fluttering of wings?

## Fire!

**F**ire fascinates us. It is mysterious and incorporeal. It purifies. At times it is awesome and uncontainable; at other times comforting and heart-warming.

At Pentecost, as 'tongues of fire' rested on the early disciples, they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues (Acts 2:3,4). They were transformed from a cowardly, fearful, self-centred bunch into bold, passionate lovers and followers of Jesus. God transforms and purifies! He is indeed a 'consuming fire' worthy of worship, reverence and awe (Hebrews 12:28,29). Moses took off his shoes before the manifestation of God in the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-5). He is indeed holy and desires to produce good fruits of repentance in us (see Luke 3:9-17).

But God's FIRE is redemptive. Isaiah, with his unclean lips cleansed by a coal taken from the altar in his incredible vision of God, responded to God's call saying, *'Here I am send me'* and became God's prophetic mouthpiece (Isaiah 6:1-8). Jesus by a lakeside fire set Peter free from his guilt of cowardice and betrayal and launched him into a new ministry to *'feed my lambs'* (John 21). The fire of the Holy Spirit can also transform our lukewarm hearts into a renewed and passionate first love for Jesus (Revelation 3:16; 2:4).

Is there a purifying work God wants to do in you? Can you hear the gentle coals of the lakeside fire, bringing you forgiveness and a renewed passion for Jesus and His mission? What mission is He calling you to?





**Y**ou can take a horse to water but can't make it drink! **WATER** is another symbol of the Holy Spirit. Rivers of living water will flow from us as we are filled with Him (John 7:38-39). Water is necessary for life, and is life-giving. Jesus wants to baptise us (immerse and saturate us) with His Spirit (Acts 1:5), and indeed to continually fill us (Ephesians 5:18). Why do we need to keep asking Him to fill us? Because, in the words of DL Moody, 'we leak!' Our bodies are made up of 60% water. Imagine the explosive impact if we just had 1% of Holy Spirit in us! It is so easy to think we don't really need Him, to even resist (Acts 7:51), grieve (Ephesians 4:30) or quench Him (1 Thessalonians 5:19). Our greatest need as followers of Jesus is to daily drink this water, so that we will never thirst (John 4:13,14).

## Wind Power

**W**e are familiar with the invisible wind, seeing its effects and feeling its power. From the Hebrew, *Ruach*, the Holy Spirit is known as **WIND** or breath – *'the Ruach of God was hovering over the water'* (Genesis 1:2). In Genesis 2:7 God breathed life into the man of dust and He still breathes into us, renewing, restoring and giving life.

The Hebrew name of God *YHWH* (Yahweh) is literally unspeakable, containing no vowels, but instead is breathed. So, our breath forms the name of God; breathing in '*Yah*' and breathing out '*weh*'. We breathe His name all our lives and He wants to breathe into us His Spirit. Take a moment today to receive a fresh touch, and a fresh infilling from Him.

**T**here are at least three other images for the Holy Spirit in the Bible: **CLOUD**, the **FINGER OF GOD** and **OIL**. The angel who said to Mary, *'the Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Most High will overshadow you'* (Luke 1:35) was speaking in cloud imagery. Later on the Mount of Transfiguration, as Jesus' glory was revealed, a 'bright cloud' enveloped Him (Matthew 17:5). **CLOUD** signifies that there is mystery, a hiddenness to God, yet He longs to reveal Himself and guide us. A pillar of cloud enveloped the Tent of Meeting where Moses was able to speak to God face to face as a man speaks to his friend (Exodus 33:7). We also see God guiding the people of Israel with a pillar of cloud (Exodus 13:21,22).

The Holy Spirit, as the **FINGER OF GOD**, reveals His authority over the powers of darkness (Luke 11:20; Matthew 12:28) as well as His tender creative power when He knit us together in our mother's womb (Psalm 139:14).

The final image of the Holy Spirit is **OIL**, perfumed anointing oil. Jesus was anointed to bring good news to the poor and release for the captives (Luke 4:18,19). Oil in the Bible signifies God's actual presence, a portal between heaven and earth. Incredibly, if you belong to Christ, you have been anointed with His Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:21,22). Christian literally means 'anointed one'.

Offer this precious inner treasure to Jesus, and He will indeed spread the fragrance of the aroma of Christ wherever He calls you to (2 Corinthians 2:15; see also John 12:1-8).

- ◆ *What links do you see between these seven symbols and the Holy Spirit?*
- ◆ *Are there others not mentioned here?*
- ◆ *Is there a revelation and deeper experience that the Holy Spirit wants to give you of Himself?'*

**T**he Lord has been breathing His life into the Centre, and into the lives of those who come here, both residents as well as those who come for a weekday morning service and to Howard's Well. This is what some of them have said this last month.

- ◆ *This is a thin place where the presence of God is tangible. He has spoken into my life so much over the past four days. It's felt like open heart surgery, painful but necessary, and healing.*
- ◆ *I came mentally traumatised at the age of 90. I felt there was no hope but I now feel I can face the future with a renewed sense of God's strength.*
- ◆ *I am grateful to have been led to CCHC at this time. I have been fed physically and spiritually, nourished and reassured of the Lord who sees me. I leave feeling loved and valued, ready to take another shot at life.*

## We give thanks for:

- ◆ church groups, including the St Mellitus ordinands, coming for weekend retreats;
- ◆ God's tangible presence during our Healing Space days, as well as more structured times such as the Healing Weekends, and a Quiet Day on 'Hearing God in our Sickness';
- ◆ powerful God encounters in our Painting Retreat which explored Christ's Kingship, and during the Holy Spirit weekend at Pentecost.

## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- ◆ our local village and young people;
- ◆ The Quiet Day on 28<sup>th</sup> June: 'Hearing God in our Captivity';
- ◆ Thanksgiving Day (8<sup>th</sup> July);
- ◆ Healing Space weeks, including welcome ministry from Denis Smith and Steve Clark;
- ◆ Teaching Day 9<sup>th</sup> August: 'Call to Holiness'.

## Increased links with the local village

The one positive thing that has come out of the Covid pandemic (maybe the only one!) is that our gates are now open to local folks coming onto the grounds, whether to our morning services or Howard's Well café, during the week. Some come and enjoy the peace of God, and some the good food. Some village groups have their meetings here and some want to help us restore our ponds.

God's presence is here – at times even tangibly – and we have seen folks give their lives to the Lord for the first time.

We have been reaching out to the village too, going to local events, including a recent talk on Dementia at the local Edenvale Care Home. and also helping at the local youth club.

One of the most beautiful comments we heard recently from a local resident was 'You have embraced our village!'

May the Lord embrace this special local village with His love!

## Thanksgiving Day: 'Surprised by God!'

Please join us on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July as we give thanks for this past year

- ◆ 10am: tea & coffee;
- ◆ 11am: Thanksgiving Service (also live on Zoom – please email or call the office for Zoom codes);
- ◆ 1pm: Ploughman's lunch;
- ◆ afternoon free to enjoy the presence of God and each other;
- ◆ 3pm: tea and cake.

## Judith Barnes - Visiting Chaplain

*Many of you will have known Judith and been blessed by her ministry at CCHC. Sadly, she recently died following a long battle with cancer. We give thanks for her amazing faith, joy and Spirit-filled life. She has run the race of faith, with constant faithfulness to the very end, and is now at rest with her Saviour. She was deeply loved and will be missed by us all. Please pray for her husband, David, and her family.*

## PERSONAL DETAILS

Please contact us if your details have changed, or if you no longer wish to receive these publications.