

A white dove is shown in profile, facing right, against a light blue background. An orange brushstroke is visible in the top left corner. The title "Church In Transition" is overlaid in a large, bold, dark blue font.

# Church In Transition

**Power In The Spirit**  
**23rd May 2021**







# Welcome

Welcome to **Church In Transition**.

We are now back worshipping at Church in our In - Person services. We have decided that for the foreseeable future we will be continuing with our flexible worship patterns which will still blends on - line services, home deliveries and e - mailed copies of Church in Transition.

Today's service will be looking at: **Acts 2 v. 1 - 41**

The theme for today's service is: **Power In the Spirit**.



Today's service that is set out in this edition of **Church In Transition** is looking at **Power In The Spirit**.

We hope that you will be able to engage with what has been produced for our **Sunday Service** and that you would indeed **Know The Power of The Holy Spirit in your own life today**.

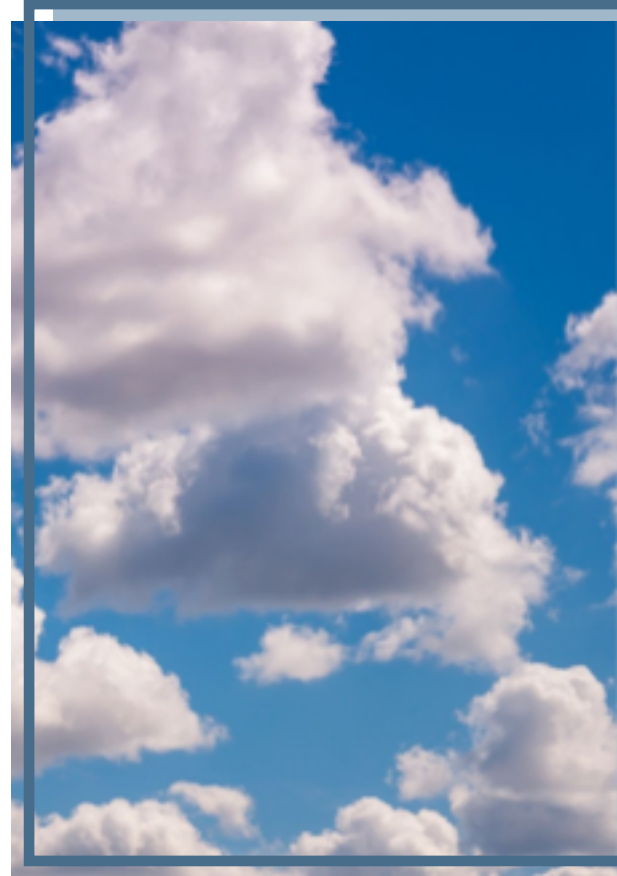
# Call To Worship

## **Psalms 93 v. 1 – 5 NLT**

The Lord is King! He is robed in majesty.  
Indeed, the Lord is robed in majesty and  
armed with strength.  
The world is firmly established;  
It cannot be shaken.

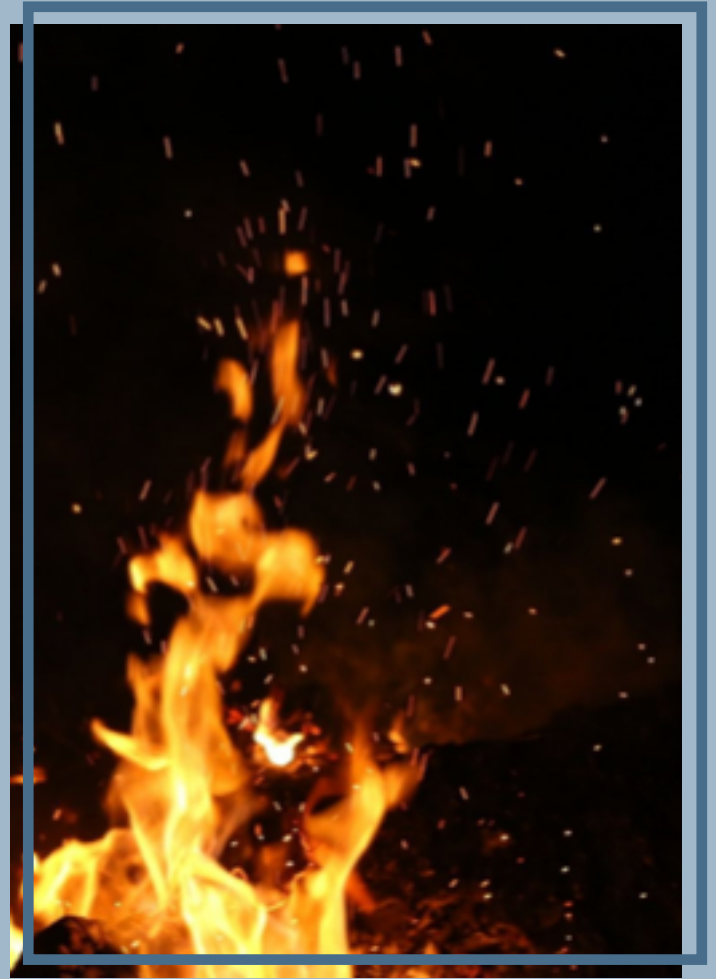
Your throne, O Lord, has been  
established from time immemorial.  
You yourself are from the everlasting  
past.  
The mighty oceans have roared, O Lord.  
The mighty oceans roar like thunder;  
The mighty oceans roar as they pound  
the shore.

But mightier than the violent raging of  
the seas,  
Mightier than the breakers on the shore –  
The Lord above is mightier than these!  
Your royal decrees cannot be changed.  
The nature of your reign, O Lord, is  
holiness forever.

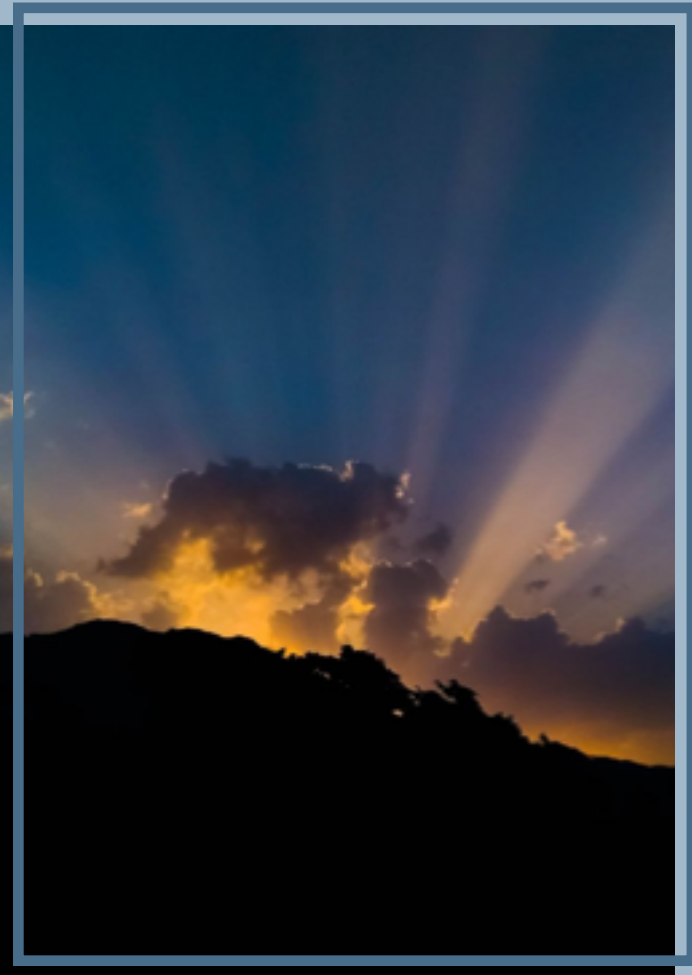


# Song Suggestion

Holy Spirit We Welcome You



Spirit Of the Living God, Fall  
Afresh On Me



# What is Pentecost?

Pentecost is from the Greek word '**Pentekostos**', which means '**fifty**'. It's the 50th day after the Sabbath of Passover week and in Judaism is called the Feast of Weeks (**Leviticus 23 v. 16**).

The word Pentecost has become more common in the UK, but traditionally the Church celebrated it as **Whitsun** – '**White Sunday**'. It's believed that this is because it was a day for baptisms and those being baptised would wear white. Another explanation is that it derives from the Anglo – Saxon word '**wit**', which we still use for verbal cleverness but which meant '**understanding**' – Pentecost was when God poured out the wisdom of the Spirit.

Pentecost is the fulfilment of two promises. One promise is in the Old Testament – **Joel 2 v. 28**, which says 'I will pour out my Spirit on all people', and one in the New, where Jesus says he will send another Counsellor, the Spirit of truth (**John 16 v. 5 – 15**).

It is said to mark the beginning of Christianity as a purposeful movement and a new community. When Peter preached immediately afterwards, around 3,000 people believed and were baptised.

# A Prayer for Pentecost

Spirit of God, you are the breath of creation, the wind of change that blows through our lives, opening us up to new dreams, and new hopes, a new life in Jesus Christ.

Forgives us our closed minds which barricade themselves against new ideas, preferring the past to what you might want to do through us tomorrow.

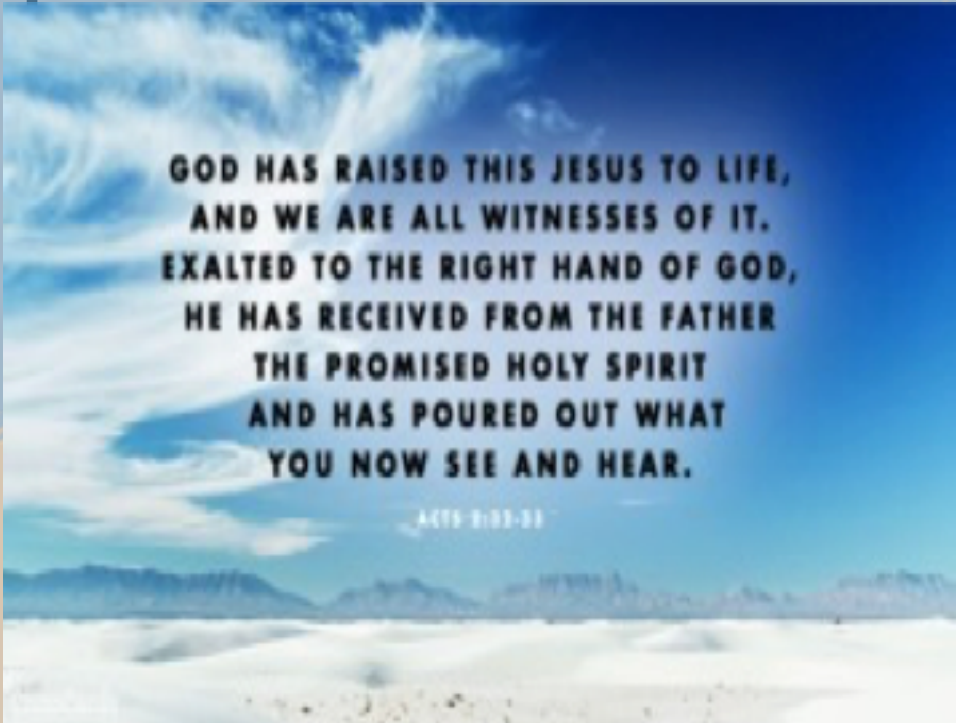
Forgive us our closed eyes which fail to see the needs of your world, blind to opportunities of service and love.

Forgive us our closed hands which clutch our gifts and our wealth for our own use alone.

Forgive us our closed hearts which limit our affections to ourselves and our own.

Spirit of new life, forgive us and break down the prison walls of our selfishness, that we might be open to your love and open for the service of the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray.

**Amen**



**GOD HAS RAISED THIS JESUS TO LIFE,  
AND WE ARE ALL WITNESSES OF IT.  
EXALTED TO THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,  
HE HAS RECEIVED FROM THE FATHER  
THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT  
AND HAS POURED OUT WHAT  
YOU NOW SEE AND HEAR.**

ACTS 2:14-21



# Bible

# Reading

**Acts 2 v. 1 – 41**

**New International Version**

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near

Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

### **Peter Addresses the Crowd**

14 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. 15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 ‘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.

18 Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.

19 I will show wonders in the heavens above

and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

20 The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

21 And everyone who calls

on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

22 “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25 David said about him:

‘I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;  
my body also will rest in hope,

27 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,  
you will not let your holy one see decay.

28 You have made known to me the paths of life;  
you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

29 “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

31 Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

‘The Lord said to my Lord:

Sit at my right hand

35 until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet.'

36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus,  
whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to  
Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the  
name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will  
receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your  
children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will  
call."

40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with  
them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41 Those who  
accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were  
added to their number that day.

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

- Ephesians 1:17 NIV -



# Offering

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Now that we find ourselves once again holding in-person services in church, we are able to give of our finances to the work of the Lord when we are in church.

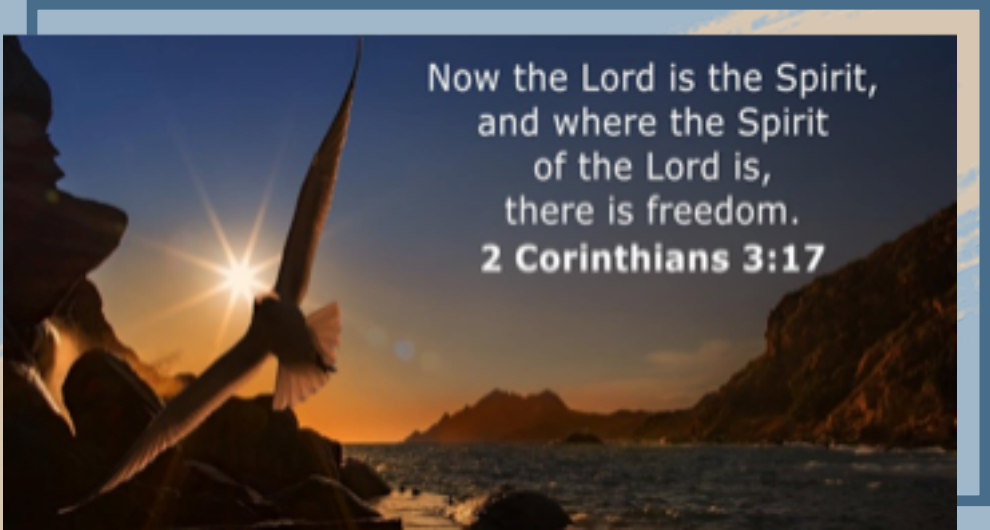
However, if you feel that you are not ready to return to in-person services yet, please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you until the time arises when you feel that you can physically meet with us again and share in the finances of the church.

# Song Suggestion

Refiner's Fire







Now the Lord is the Spirit,  
and where the Spirit  
of the Lord is,  
there is freedom.

**2 Corinthians 3:17**



# Church In Transition Thought

We can see in **Acts 2 v. 1 – 41**, that Luke, writing a sequel to his Gospel probably in the late 60's A.D. conveys the message about The Holy Spirit being given to the early church.

In **John 14 v. 15 – 31; 16 v. 5 – 15** we see Jesus promising that the Holy Spirit would come and give the disciples power, and that in this power they would tell others about him. Now in this passage we see that promise delivered. Luke's account of the coming of the Holy Spirit is a remarkable story. It is full of sound and action, all of which testifies to the Holy Spirit's power.

It is a timely reminder to us that though the Spirit is with us and is our helper, he remains part of the Godhead and should be honoured as such.

The fact that the disciples immediately

began to talk of what God had done in languages that the members of the crowd could understand reminds us that the Spirit's power is given to us for a purpose – that of continuing the work that Jesus has entrusted to us.

## **POWER FROM ON HIGH**

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples waited in Jerusalem just as Jesus had told them to. Suddenly the Holy Spirit manifested his presence by sound (wind), sight (fire), and speech (new languages). The believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, and God's renewing power began its work of transforming them from the inside out.

This marked a new era in history as God's powerful presence entered the lives of all believers. The Holy Spirit still works in the lives of believers today, transforming them, healing their wounds, empowering them to be witnesses of Jesus, and equipping them to do God's work in the world.

Our familiarity with the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost can blind us to the awesome power that was on display that day.

I wonder how we would have felt if one of our congregational gatherings was suddenly blown apart by the sound of a mighty wind, and what looked like tongues of fire were moving around in all directions?

Maybe panic and confusion would be our most likely responses — would we instinctively recognise that we were in the presence of something much more powerful than us.

To a degree that might be an appropriate response, because on the day of Pentecost it was someone rather than something that burst in on the disciples – the Holy Spirit. He comes to equip us to live as God's people. This is power with a purpose.

## POWER WITH A PURPOSE

When the Holy Spirit came in power, the results were immediately apparent in the apostles, especially Peter. It was Peter who had previously denied that he even knew Jesus (**Luke 22 v. 54 – 62**), who was now confidently preaching and helping others to discover this new power for living.

After asserting his sobriety, Peter told the crowd about the power behind his transformation.

Luke makes it abundantly clear that the languages the Spirit enabled the disciples to speak on the day of Pentecost were the established languages of other parts of the ancient world. Those visitors to Jerusalem from those different places recognised what the disciples were saying. And what they were saying is crucial!

The amazing power of the Holy Spirit had been promised by the prophet Joel, many centuries earlier. It was by quoting **Joel 2 v. 28 – 32**, that Peter was able to stress the universal impact of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would be given to all God's people – young and old, men and women, masters and servants. God's power for living is for everyone – regardless of race, gender, or social class – who recognize his or her helpless state and who are prepared to ask for God's mercy and help. (**Acts 2 v. 21**).

No one with a humble heart is beyond the reach of God's powerful

help. When we experience God's power in our lives, we will never be the same again, nor will we be able to keep the Good News to ourselves. The Spirit is given to us that we might be empowered to fulfil God's purposes for our lives and for his world.

## **POWER TO GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY**

Peter's preaching led the people to examine their lives for themselves, and to ask the apostles what it was that they had to do. They readily recognized their need for salvation in Christ and went on to receive God's powerful help. Peter assured them that by turning from their sins and surrendering their lives to God, that they would be forgiven, and that they would receive the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit.

We too can expect the same blessings if we bring our own failings before a holy God. His forgiveness of our sins will set us free. For the presence of the Holy Spirit will give us the perseverance to carry on as we follow Jesus. Then we can fully experience the transformation and blessing he longs to bring into our lives.

As we are living in the post – Pentecost era, we can be assured that the same Holy Spirit is working in and through us, and it is the responsibility of each of us to open ourselves up to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

He may or may not come to us with the sound of wind and tongues of fire, but he will undoubtedly change us and enable us to proclaim Jesus afresh to our generation if we are willing to let him have his way amongst us.

# Song Suggestion

The Splendour Of The King



# Prayers of Intercession

Lord God, today we celebrate the birthday of the Church. The followers of Jesus waited behind closed and locked doors, yet your Spirit came to them in power and authority, changing them from bewildered individuals into a proclaiming people.

We pray today for ourselves and for your whole Church, that we might be open to the empowering presence of your Spirit, open to the gracious gifting of your Spirit, and open to the adventurous leading of your Spirit.

Holy Spirit, as you filled those first Christians with an enthusiasm for the gospel of Christ, so enthuse us we pray, that we would go to the places that we so often visit, and enable us to share and preach the Good News to others.

Holy Spirit, all who heard the apostles' preaching understood their own language. Fill us we pray, with a vision of the whole earth filled with your glory. Send us out to all people, of every race and colour, rich and poor, powerful and oppressed, that we might



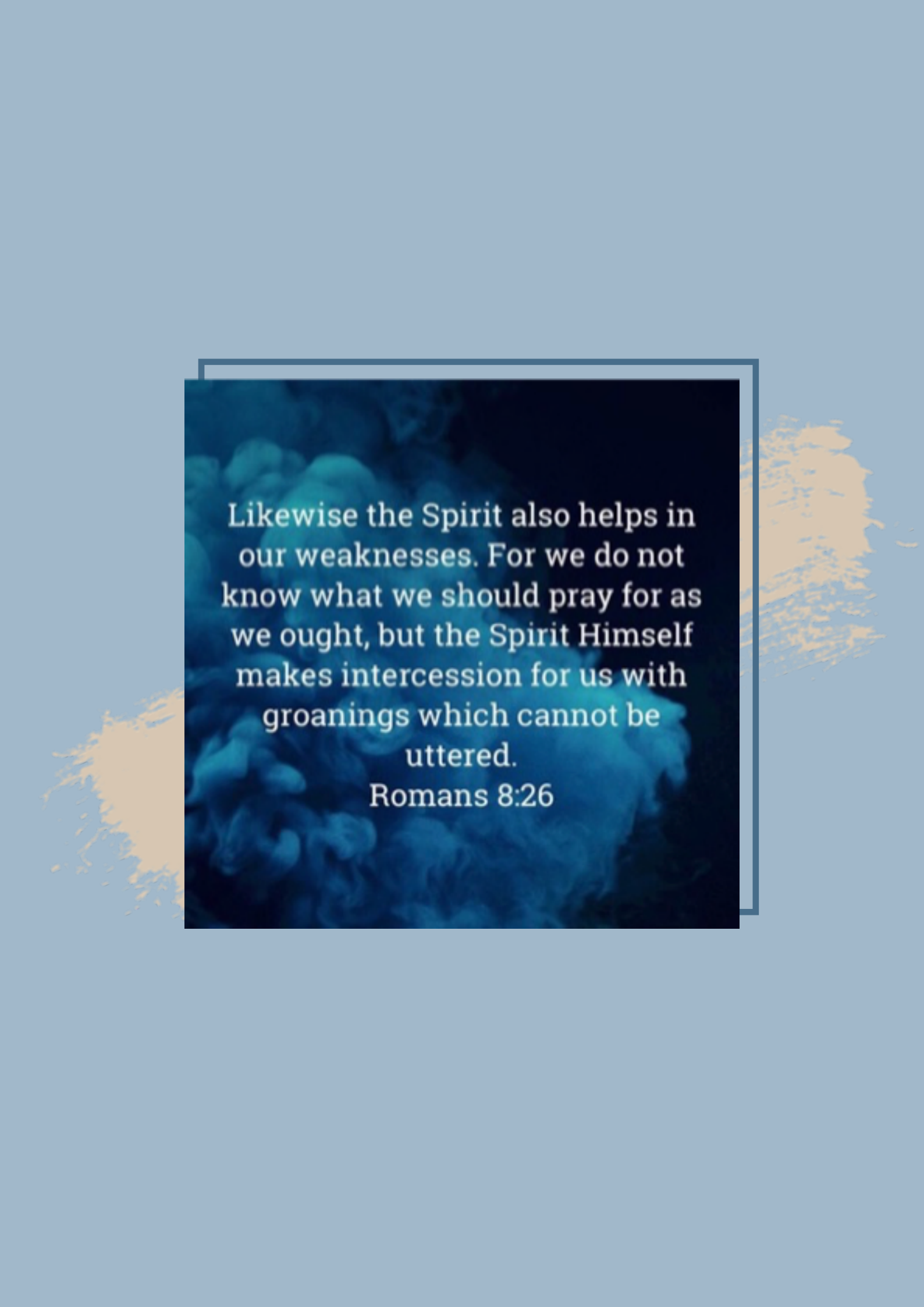
be messengers of the gospel and servants of your kingdom.

Holy Spirit, that first Christian community began a life of sharing in worship and in living. Fill us with a generous spirit we pray, ready to share what we have and who we are with others. Break down we pray, our pride that we might have the grace to receive from the riches of others.

Holy Spirit, God with us, fill your people with power and love, vision and purpose that we might be agents of your gospel for the whole world. We ask these prayers through the mighty name of Jesus.

**Amen**





Likewise the Spirit also helps in  
our weaknesses. For we do not  
know what we should pray for as  
we ought, but the Spirit Himself  
makes intercession for us with  
groanings which cannot be  
uttered.

Romans 8:26



# Song Suggestion

Lord, I Lift Your Name On High



I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love.

**Ephesians 3:16-17**



# Blessing

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Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray; and in your mercy defend us from all perils and dangers that surround us. For we ask this in the name of Jesus.

**Amen**

