

From the Superintendent

In-between Days

By Rev Steve Day

Dear friends,

Jesus said to his disciples, ‘You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:8). The disciples of Jesus then saw him ascend into heaven before their eyes. When Jesus could no longer be seen, two men dressed in white appeared and asked them, ‘Men of Galilee...why do you stand here looking into the sky?’ (Acts 1:11).

We can imagine the disciples looking back as they gazed into the sky. Jesus, their Lord and companion, had left them. Jesus had been the one to give them vision, direction and focus. Now, the disciples faced the prospect of seeking vision, direction and focus without him physically with them. Gazing into the sky, the disciples may have looked back with fondness on what they had experienced with Jesus, how they had seen God at work in his ministry, death and resurrection.

The question asked of the disciples changed their focus. Why were they looking into the sky? Why were they looking back? It’s as if the question forced the disciples to break from their reverie and begin to focus on what was to come rather than just what had been. They returned to the upstairs room where they were staying and “they all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers” (Acts 1:14).

We are not told about the content of these prayers, but we can use our imagination:

- Looking back, they may have given thanks and praise for all they had seen God doing in the life of Jesus and its impact on them and many others.
- Looking at their present circumstances, they may have sought God’s wisdom, comfort and peace as they faced the reality that Jesus was no longer physically with them.
- Looking forward, they may have prayed for the coming of the Holy Spirit to remind them of what Jesus had said and done, and to grant them faithfulness and courage to be his witnesses.

I wonder whether we sense the parallel between our circumstances and those of Jesus' disciples during the period between his ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

We are in the midst of our "Building a Vision for the Future Together" process. Next month will bring a particular focus on worshipping together as we hold our worship series. In June, all our churches will share a common focus in worship:

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| 1. Sunday 7 June | Evangelism |
| 2. Sunday 14 June | Growing |
| 3. Sunday 21 June | Including |
| 4. Sunday 28 June | Justice |

We plan to share feedback from services with other churches in the circuit so we can be enriched by each other. You will receive a bookmark which encourages you to engage in a reflective activity during the week and pray for the work of the Holy Spirit through our engagement.

The Sunday worship in June seeks to prepare us spiritually for the Circuit Away Day on Saturday 20th June at Ealing Green Church from 10 am – 4.00 pm. During the Away Day, we will reflect on what has emerged from our listening as we seek, with God's guidance, to discern realistic, deep-rooted transformation and to shape a coherent vision and mission strategy for our shared future.

While we are in these "in-between days," which may feel challenging and unsettling, we pray we may encounter the transformative presence of God's Holy Spirit to lead us into the future.

Blessèd are you, creator God,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
As your Spirit moved over the face of the waters
bringing light and life to your creation,
pour out your Spirit on us today,
that we may walk as children of light
and by your grace reveal your presence,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit:
Blessèd be God for ever. **Amen.**

God bless,

