



You may have been coming to Forefront for years. Or maybe you just popped in for one Sunday. Either way, if you want to discuss things mentioned in the talks, we would be pleased to do so. Ask someone in the service to point you in the right direction, or call in during the week at Forefront Centre (next to Chard Post Office sorting centre).

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

A caring community with every member equipped to demonstrate Christ, working with others to advance God's Kingdom in Chard and the world

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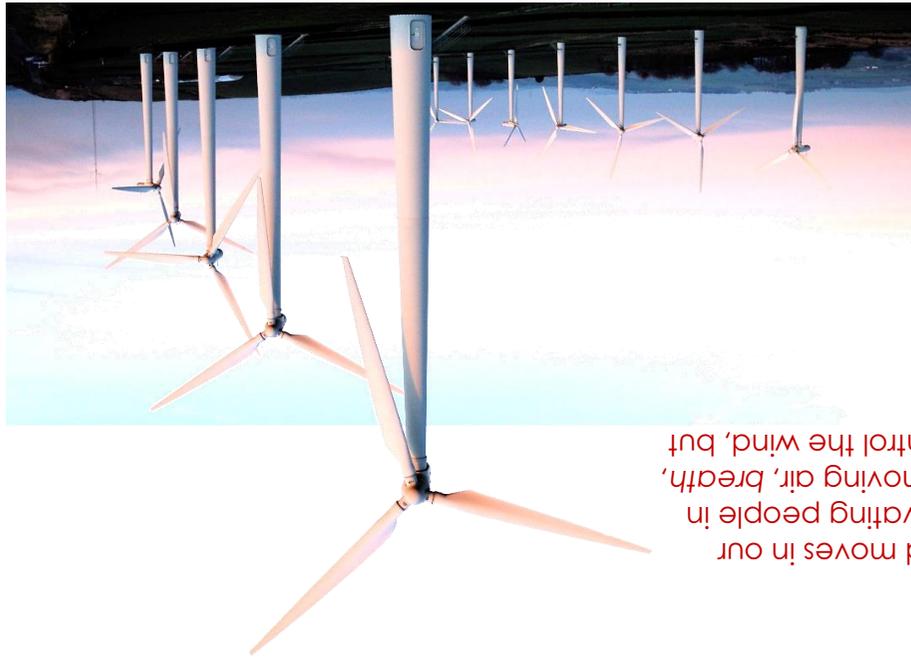
# The Holy Spirit

Starting on Pentecost Sunday, we explore what difference the Holy Spirit makes in the life of the believer.

The Spirit, whose coming upon believers was promised by Jesus, makes God a living reality to us. He changes and transforms our lives, and equips us for service.

**But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.**

**John 16:13**



The Holy Spirit is the breath, the breeze, the wind of God. Jesus expands on this concept in John 3:5-8. We are often puzzled by how God moves in our lives. He sometimes seems to come from nowhere, moving obstacles and motivating people in unexpected ways. The Bible languages, Hebrew and Greek, use the word for moving air, *breath*, *breeze*, *wind* and *gale*, to describe him in action. As Jesus said, we cannot control the wind, but we can see its power!

In the Old Testament we read of the Spirit, or Wind of God hovering over creation (Genesis 1:1); carrying people away (2 Kings 2:16); and coming to give breath to God's people in the Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37). Jesus takes up these pictures to teach about the third person of the Godhead: not a force but someone who comes alongside us to help, working in our lives to bring new life (John 3). Later he speaks of the one who is the Spirit (or breeze) of truth who brings Jesus's presence and teaches us (John 14 - 16). The Spirit reaches out to us, brings us close to God, changes our lives and gives us gifts, but let us not forget that he is a person. He works with us and for us but he - like the wind - cannot be controlled and can move in mighty power. God the Holy Spirit: God in action!

Sunday May 15

Tom Smith

John 14:15-21

## The Go-Between

John chapters 14-16 record some of Jesus' final teaching before His death and resurrection. The disciples were sad when Jesus said He would soon be leaving them, but Jesus said they would not be deserted!

Jesus promised that they would receive a wonderful gift - a counsellor who would come alongside them, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the One who makes Jesus and the Father real for all who believe.

The promised Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost (see Acts 2). Still today, all who believe in Jesus are promised the presence of the Spirit of God living in their lives!

So, today we rejoice - God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us (Romans 5:5).

Sunday May 29

Galatians 5:13-26

Keith Barnard

## The Life-Changer

For many Christians in the last fifty years, ideas about the Holy Spirit have centred on personal experience: being filled or baptised with the Spirit, receiving gifts of tongues, prophecy or healing. Yet in the New Testament he does far more than that: he turns our lives and our world upside down! He is the one who gives us the ability to be different from what we were – teaching us, reminding us of what Jesus says to us, convicting us, guiding us into truth, inspiring us, uniting us.

In Galatians 5, Paul also makes striking statements about how the Holy Spirit changes us: our characters and our actions. When the Spirit of holiness is active, Paul tells us he will set us free from what binds us, stop our sinful nature from dominating us, and help us keep in step with him. We have the freedom to choose to indulge ourselves or to serve one another in love, but the power of the Spirit is always there to help us bear his fruit if we want to.

If we allow the Holy Spirit of God to empower us, changing our lives for the good, nothing can stop us!

Sunday May 22

Nigel Marsh

Romans 8:12-17

## The Divine Presence-Bringer

Coming to a saving faith in Jesus Christ is just the start of a lifelong adventure of discovery. God works in us and through us by his Holy Spirit, who desires to spread the image of Jesus Christ – in each of us, and through us to the world.

As we recognise that our 'old' self has died with Christ, we joyfully surrender our lives to him, and the Holy Spirit transforms us into the nature of Christ.

The Spirit's fruit is the character of Jesus. His gift is Jesus's toolbox to equip the whole church to mature in the faith, so that together (and only together) we become more like him. His presence puts us daily in touch with the eternal God, making clear to our hearts what our minds cannot comprehend.

"He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life."  
Titus 3:5



Sunday June 5

1Cor 12:1-11

David Burfield

## The Gift-Giver

We sometimes think of the Holy Spirit as the 'Gift Giver' but primarily he is the gift promised by Jesus and provided by the Father (John 14:16; Acts 1:4). The presence of the Spirit in our lives is the gateway to yet further gifts that not only enable us to know God in greater depth but also equip us to serve others.

There are essentially three passages that describe the Gifts of the Spirit in detail (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:7-16. Interestingly, all three texts refer to gifts within the context of the Body of Christ, emphasising that the gifts are principally for building up the fellowship of believers.

The gifts are amazingly diverse, ranging from supernatural gifts such as tongues, healing and prophecy (1 Cor 12:9,10); through the more mundane gifts of encouragement and generosity and leadership (Rom 12:8); to ministry functions such as evangelists, pastors and teachers (Eph 4:11). All are vital for a healthy growing fellowship.