

Abbey International Baptist Church, Reading
Worship Service with communion 10:30AM 2nd November 2025
Jill Bird leading and Rev Zoltan Biro preaching
www.abbeybaptistchurch.org.uk
Find us on Facebook @Abbey Baptist Church, Reading

**We welcome you
today Holy Spirit**



Dear brothers and sisters, a moment of quiet and stillness before our Holy God – our Lord God Almighty

CALL TO WORSHIP

We come before you, our faithful ever present loving Father

We love and worship you

We come before you as the altogether pure and holy LORD God Almighty

We stand in awe of you

We come before you as the LORD who has saved us and called us into his service.

We thank you again for this great privilege of being both your child and your servant

We respond with such grateful thanks

You remind us again to fan into flame the gift for service you have given us.

You did not give us a spirit of fear but of power of love and of self-control

We are ready and waiting today. We come with hands open to receive all you have for us

Hymn MP 506 BPW 62

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed;

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
and hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze;

And when I think that God his Son not sparing,
sent him to die — I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin:

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home-what joy shall fill my heart!
then shall I bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim, my God, how great thou art!

Translated from the Russian by STUART K. HINE (1899-1989)

I love You, Lord for Your mercy never failed me All my days, I've been held in Your hands
From the moment that I wake up until I lay my head Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God

And all my life You have been faithful And all my life You have been so, so good
With every breath that I am able Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God

I love Your voice You have led me through the fire And in darkest night You are close like no other
I've known You as a Father I've known You as a Friend And I have lived in the goodness of God.

Your goodness is running after, it's running after me x2

With my life laid down, I'm surrendered now I give You everything

Your goodness is running after, it's running after me,

Bethel Music and Jenn Johnson · 2019

FAMILY TIME: Have you opened all your presents?

*(*An offering will be taken during the song, after which our young people will leave for their groups)*

God is good, we sing and shout it, God is good, we celebrate

God is good, no more we doubt it, God is good, we know it's true

And when I think of His love for me My heart fills with praise And I feel like dancing

For in His heart there is room for me And I run with arms open wide

Graham Kendrick Copyright © 1985 Thankyou Music

BIBLE READING 1: 1 Corinthians 12:7–11

BIBLE READING 2: Ephesians 4:11–16

Hymn BP&W 522

Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life anew;

that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, breath of God, until my heart is pure;

until with thee I will one will, to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God, till I am wholly thine;

until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God, so shall I never die,

but live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity.

EDWIN HATCH (1835-89)

Holy Spirit hover over us. May your breath revive what's dead within us.

May your waters quench our thirst for you. May your fire ignite our spirits and refine our hearts

And may your wind blow us wherever you are leading us. Come Holy Spirit. Amen

SERMON

From the Miraculous to the Mundane: The Gifts of the Spirit

When we talk about the gifts of the Spirit, our minds often jump to the *miraculous* - healing, prophecy, tongues, miracles. Those are the gifts that are exciting, that grab our attention and makes us say, "Surely, God is here!"

But Paul reminds us that the Holy Spirit's gifts aren't given to *impress* us - they're given to develop is us. Although they show God's power, they're not only about the *power*; most importantly they're about God's *purpose*.

Today we will be looking at some examples of the Gifts of the Spirit and hopefully we will recognise that the same Spirit who empowers the miraculous is also present in the ordinary - in teaching, serving, giving, encouraging, and quietly loving.

From the spectacular to the modest, every gift is a supernatural expression of the same Spirit working for one goal - the building up of God's Kingdom and the Body of Christ that is the Church.

1. The Miraculous Gifts: God's Power on Display

In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul says: "To one is given the message of wisdom, to another knowledge, to another faith, to another gifts of healing, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues."

These are the gifts that make us be amazed. When God heals the sick, speaks prophetically, or moves through tongues and interpretation – it feels like heaven touches the earth. These miraculous gifts remind us that God is still with us, God is still active and real. It also tells us that the Spirit hasn't retired. He still heals, still speaks, still intervenes.

However, these acts are signs that should always point us to Jesus - not to the gifted person, but to the Giver Himself.

Let me give you an example. In Acts 3, Peter and John was going to the temple to worship God. At the entrance they met a paralysed men who was asking for money. Instead of giving him money they lifted the man in Jesus' name... And the man walked - a miracle! We often stop at this point.

You know how that story continues? "While the man was still holding on to Peter... he spoke to them..." Peter started preaching and explaining that it is Jesus who healed this man, and they were only instruments in the hand of the Holy Spirit...

What we see here is that through the miraculous hearts were opened to hear the gospel. The most important thing to remember is that *the healing power prepared the way for a declaration of faith in Christ.*

2. The Ministry Gifts: God's Wisdom in Structure

Besides the miraculous gifts there are lots of other gifts that are important, but may look ordinary.

Ephesians 4:11–12 says: "So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service..."

The gifts of pastor and teacher may not amaze us, but their work is a last longer lasting one.

Illustration: Flash fire vs amber.

These ministry gifts shape us, they guide and direct us, they equip us and they send us.

Think of a football club. The star striker may score the goals, but without others he could do very little. On the pitch you need defenders, and a goalkeeper... But before you start playing the match you need coaches, fitness trainers, and club managers. What about cleaners and web designers, people who sell the tickets, wardens to help you park and get to your place. Without the support of all these people team would fall apart. It's the behind-the-scenes work that turns talent into goals.

In the same way, the church needs these ministry gifts to sustain its mission and growth. They build order where there were chaos and maturity where there was immaturity. These ministry gifts turn *spiritual excitement* into *spiritual growth*. They remind us that it's not enough for a church to be amazing - it must also be healthy. In other words the Gifts of the Spirit equips the church to grow both in numbers and in maturity.

3. The Mundane Gifts: God's Grace in the Everyday

Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 mention gifts like service, giving, mercy, helps, and administration - gifts we might overlook but cannot live without. The truth is: the Holy Spirit doesn't just anoint prophets, evangelists and teachers. He anoints planners, caretakers, encouragers, and givers.

When someone organises and coordinates the kitchen, or when someone else comforts a grieving family, or again when a believer quietly fixes changes the light bulbs or operates the AV system so we can all hear and see God's message - the Spirit is at work just as powerfully as in a public miracle.

In Acts 6, we read that as the First Church grew, more and more of the administration has fallen on the Apostles. In practice the Apostles were overseeing the food ministry for the poor, but that meant that they could not use their gift of evangelism. So, the Holy Spirit led them to appoint deacons to serve at the tables. These people were appointed not only because they were good at administration, but because the

Holy Spirit anointed them to serve others. Just because a gift is ordinary, it should be less under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

From the perspective of God's Kingdom the appointment of the first deacons solved a pastoral crisis in the church and kept the gospel advancing. This wasn't glamorous, but it was led by the Spirit, brought glory to God and saved the church from humiliation. The miracle isn't only in the moments that *shocks us*, they are often in the *faithfulness that sustains us*.

Illustration: Debora Phelps raising Michael and two other siblings on her own. Being there every day to support others is a miracle.

4. One Spirit, One Purpose: Maturity in Christ I would like to finish by highlighting one important truth in all of this. ***The purpose of every gift - miraculous, ministry, or mundane - is to build up the body of Christ until we all reflect His fullness.***

"From Him the whole body... builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." (Eph 4:16)

The Spirit's gifts are different in form but united in purpose. The miraculous gifts show His *power*. The ministry gifts show His *wisdom*. The mundane gifts show His *love*. When they all work together, the church becomes balanced, strong, and alive.

Illustration: Jigsaw with a piece missing

5. Discovering and Using Our Gifts

So, what do we do with this message? What does it mean for Us? How do we live out this truth?

a. Seek the Giver, before the gift.

Spend time in prayer and Scripture. Ask the Holy Spirit, "What have You placed in me for the good of others?" The Bible clearly says that the Holy Spirit delivers the gifts as He wishes... Trust in God that He gives you a gift that will satisfy you and make you happy not burdened.

b. Start serving where you are.

Gifts are discovered in *use*, not in *idleness*. You'll often find your spiritual gift when you step into need - when you serve, pray, teach, give, or help. If you are not a generous giver when you have little money, you won't be a generous giver when you have more. If you are not praying when you have a busy life, you won't become a prayer warrior upon retirement. The spiritual gifts given to us grow with us.

c. Value every gift equally.

Stop comparing your gift with someone else's. As Paul says, the hand cannot say to the foot, "I don't need you." (1 Cor 12:21) Whether you heal bodies or sweep floors, heaven values both.

d. Use your gift to build others, not your ego.

The Spirit doesn't give gifts to make stars, He gives gifts to make servants. There should not be a Christian celebrity culture, because every gift should point people to Jesus, not ourselves.

May we embrace both the miraculous and the mundane with gratitude, recognising that all come from the same Spirit, for the same glorious purpose: to build up the body of Christ in love. Amen.

SONG 1963 Birdwing Music (ASCAP)

Spirit of the living God, Fall afresh on me. Spirit of the living God, Fall afresh on me.

Break me, melt me, Mould me, fill me. Spirit of the living God, Fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, Take control of me. Spirit of the living God, Take control of me.

Break me, melt me, Mould me, fill me. Spirit of the living God, Take control of me.

EDWIN HATCH (1835-89)

Invitation Come to this table where bread and cup are transformed by the Spirit of God Into a meal of love and grace, a table where all are welcome. **LORD Jesus we come**

Loving LORD your lungs breathed the Spirit over your disciples.

We welcome you, Holy Spirit breath into us afresh as you continue to transform us and our world

Fill us up afresh. We feel empty and our spirits are weary

So today, we ask you Holy Spirit to come upon the bread and cup, make it alive with the love and power of God to awaken our souls to love and serve our heavenly Father.

Lord, we come knowing that we depend on You for life and truth and love.

We come knowing that You welcome us with open and accepting arms.

We come ready to meet with You, and be changed. Amen.

Communion The Lord Jesus, on the night before His crucifixion, gathered His friends for a meal.

During supper, He took a loaf of bread, and gave thanks for it.

Then He broke it and passed it among them with these words:

This is my body which is broken for you. Take, eat and remember Me.

After the meal, Jesus took a cup of wine and gave thanks for it.

Then He passed it among them with these words:

This is my blood which is shed for you. Take, drink and remember Me.

So, we eat, and we drink and we remember Jesus and His great love for us.

And we will continue to do this until He returns. Amen.

Prayers Ernest and Benna

Heavenly Father, We come before You in gratitude, for You are the giver of all good gifts. Through Your Spirit, You have blessed each of us with unique talents and callings – gifts to teach, to heal, to comfort, to build, and to serve. You have made us one body in Christ, that we may work together for the healing of the world and the growth of Your Church.

Lord, we lift up to You the nations of the world torn by conflict and division. We thank You for every effort toward peace – especially the recent steps toward reconciliation between Israel and Gaza. May your Spirit guide their leaders and people, that true peace, justice, and forgiveness may take root where pain and fear have long prevailed.

We also remember before You the people of Ukraine and Russia, whose lives have been shattered by war. Touch hearts hardened by hatred; bring comfort to the grieving, and courage to those who work for peace amidst the ruins.

We pray, Lord, for our brothers and sisters who are away from home and now living in the U.K. Be with them in their journey, and grant them strength, peace and joy as they serve and live far from their loved ones. We also ask Your blessing upon their families at home, who they miss dearly. May Your love bridge the distance between them, bringing comfort, protection, and unity of heart until they are reunited once more.

Gracious Lord, pour out Your blessings upon Your Church across the world. Strengthen us in faith, unity, and love. Teach us to use our spiritual gifts not for our own glory, but to serve our neighbours, uplift the poor, and heal the wounded hearts of our communities. May our ministries reflect Your light in dark places, and may the diversity of our gifts reveal the fullness of Your grace.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

BPW 570

Go forth and tell! O church of God, awake!

God's saving news to all the nations take;
proclaim Christ Jesus, saviour, Lord, and king,
that all the world his worthy praise may sing.

Go forth and tell! God's love embraces all;
he will in grace respond to all who call:
how shall they call if they have never heard
the gracious invitation of his word?

Go forth and tell where still the darkness lies;
in wealth or want, the sinner surely dies:
give us, O Lord, concern of heart and mind,
a love like yours which cares for all mankind.

Go forth and tell! The doors are open wide:
share God's good gifts let no one be denied;
live out your life as Christ your Lord shall choose,
your ransomed powers for his sole glory use.

Go forth and tell! O church of God, arise!
go in the strength which Christ your Lord supplies;
go till all nations his great name adore
and serve him, Lord and king for evermore
James Seddon (1915 - 1983) Jubilate group

BLESSING

Go out into Reading this coming week filled with the Holy Spirit to bring God's power and love to all you meet. Exercise and grow the gifts he has put within you. Go and change the world with the authority and calling of God upon you. Amen

THE GRACE

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore, Amen.



Events to highlight

- Sunday 2nd November** Connect group coffee times after morning service
- Friday 7th November** 10.30 Prayer meeting at Abbey
- Sunday 9th November** Remembrance Sunday
- Sunday 16th November** Church meeting after the service
- Sunday 30th November** Baptism service

**Don't forget to book in for Saturday Nov 8th – 9.30 – 1.00 Prayer ministry training –
Click on this QR code**

QR Code for Financial Offering:

