

8 June 2011: Susanne Irving, Life Church Petersfield

Pentecost reflections

Over the years, various explanations have been given to explain what happened at Pentecost: Maybe Jesus' followers were drunk or suffered from mass hysteria or hallucinations?

However, counterfeits will be exposed eventually. This was brought home to me when I did arts installation of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly for one of our church office windows.

I wanted the butterfly to fly above the picture of a caterpillar and a burst cocoon. Rummaging through my husband's toolbox I came across a role of silver wire that seemed perfect for the job. It was both flexible and unobtrusive.

Soon my butterfly was "soaring" above my picture - but not for long. When I walked past the window the next day, the butterfly was nose-diving.

I couldn't understand why the wire had been unable to carry the weight of a paper butterfly - until someone pointed out that I had used soldering wire...

It may have looked like proper wire, but its true nature was revealed under the heat of the sun.

Like my wire, you would have expected Jesus' followers to bend under pressure if their experience at Pentecost had been an illusion. Instead, the church grew, despite heavy persecution and countless obstacles - a phenomenon you can still observe today wherever God's spirit is at work.