

Faith Comment published in the Petersfield Post

15 May 2013: Rev'd Thomas James, assistant curate at St Peter's.

Pentecost Celebrations

Another great feast approaches. My first year here in Petersfield has flown by, already I have celebrated with you in the great feasts of Christmas and Easter, and now the feast of Pentecost is almost upon us.



Pentecost is often regarded as the birthday of the church and we are inviting our local communities to share in our celebrations. Here in Petersfield St Peters will be giving away ice-creams around the town on the afternoon of Saturday 18 May so that you can celebrate with us.

Falling fifty days after Easter the feast of Pentecost commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus' followers (you can read about this event in the Bible, in the second chapter of the book of Acts). At the first Pentecost Jesus' followers are gathered in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit comes to them with a sound like a rushing wind and they began to speak in other languages and tongues of fire rested on their head (the pointy hat, or mitre, worn by a bishop represents this).

It must have been a bewildering sight hearing them speak in so many languages; indeed many who witnessed it supposed them to be drunk! The apostle Peter, from whom our town is named, preaches to the city proclaiming that Jesus was raised from the dead and calling on his listeners to repent and be baptised. This was a great moment when the church began to go out into the world beyond Jerusalem; this was in many ways the moment in which the church began in earnest. This is why many regard this as the birthday of the church. We hope you will be able to join in the celebrations with us.