

HIDDEN RIVER CIRCUIT DEVOTIONAL ARTICLES

Edition 21: MAY 2026

Welcome to this May edition of Circuit reflections, to celebrate the Good News that is the Risen Jesus, involved in our lives.

Take your Bible and ponder on the passages. Take your hymn book and sing to the God who made us and can do amazing things. Take your time and wait for God to speak to you and bless you.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this edition, we particularly thank Peter Box for his Ascension Day thoughts, Rev Dr Gary Hall for his Aldersgate reflection, , and Jean Dyde for telling us the story of her call to local preaching, and encouraging us to listen to God's call to us.

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WEEK 1: May 3rd 2026 A Reflection on Vexillology by Karen Drayton

Scripture: Psalm 133 "How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God's people to live together in harmony"

Does anyone know the meaning of the word vexillology? It could be a good quiz question! Well, it is the scientific study of the history, symbolism and usage of flags. Recently my sister (from Ipswich) came to stay with me in Brownhills. She was amazed to see all the flags on the roundabout at the Tin Man Island. "How come all these flags are allowed be displayed?" they wondered?

So, this is a tricky subject. I think the flags look quite pretty, but I also understand the menace behind the planting of them, the creation of an "us and them," those who have been here a long time, or look like we have, and those who have come to England recently. I recognise that people might be threatened and depressed by them, as being a white person my outlook will necessarily be different from others. I appreciate the arguments that say St George never came to Britain, he was born in what is modern day Turkey and died in what is now Palestine - despite us using his standard. St George's exploits in the 11th and 12th centuries were thought to represent English values— gallantry, honour, bravery. Flags apparently were first used after silk was invented in China – the texture and lightness of the fabric meant that flags could easily be carried into battle – and to identify which side we are on – for underneath all the armour and weapons, we are actually pretty similar human beings!

What does it mean to encapsulate a nation in a flag? It means trying to unite a population behind a homogenous set of ideals, aims, history and beliefs – an almost impossible task. Flags have much to do

with our traditional tribal tendencies and notions of identity – “us and them”. If you can imagine how difficult it has been to create a flag that all its nation inhabitants are happy with, then imagine those who have been trying to create a Planet Earth flag – to plant on the Moon or the next planet to be landed on - with no success or agreement! Northern Ireland has always opposed the placing of the St George’s cross over its St Patrick’s blue saltire, as if England insists on dominating Northern Ireland for ever. But if you look at the percentage of population – 84% of the 65 million people in the UK are English, 8.3 % Scotland, 4.8 % Welsh, 2.9% Ireland - most of us cannot help being influenced by such figures.

Symbols such as flags wield a great deal of power, communicate ideas quickly and draw strongly on emotions. As German flags were replaced by Nazi swastikas, people had less choice in what they could display or felt represented by. Most countries have huge numbers of rules about their flags, which change over time. Not long ago, only official buildings could raise a flag - now when there is a national event such as a football match – anyone and everyone can raise a flag, to show support and allegiance.

The newest flag to be created is the Pride flag, a rainbow flag celebrating and welcoming people of all genders and sexes, LGBTQ+. It is a symbol which enables people of the LGBTQ+ community to know they will find a welcome and not hostility. Recently in Matlock there was some controversy as a complaint from the Christian bookshop under which the new flag was hung, resulted in it being removed, as they didn’t want to be too closely associated with what the Pride flag stands for. (The Guardian, June 19 2025)

The truth is, we need immigrants, to bolster our national workforce, to fill gaps in our caring and national health service, to enjoy their cuisine and values of hospitality and extended family. We love the multicultural nature of our country that is the UK now. Incomers are promised a right way to immigrate, that there will be a pathway to citizenship, but these promises keep changing and become harder to reach. People traffickers take advantage of people’s desperation to move to another land, and rob people.

As Christians, following an Old Testament of many migrations by senior Biblical figures (Abraham, Moses, Jacob, Ruth, Naomi), welcoming the stranger isn’t a side theme – it runs through the heart of the Bible. In the Book of Leviticus (19.33-34) there is directive to care for “the foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native born. Love them as yourself”. Time and time again Israel is told to remember its own history: “Do not oppress the foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners” (Exodus 23.9). In my own life I have come to have many asylum seeker and refugee friends, because I too felt a stranger when my husband and I went to work in the Caribbean: I had discovered how it felt to be a foreigner and a stranger, how lonely and depressing it can be, to be far from your loved ones.

To care for the stranger is to reflect God’s own priorities. God makes sure orphans and widows are treated fairly, he loves the foreigners who live with our people, and gives them food and clothes (Deuteronomy 10.18). And if the Old Testament feels too long ago, and not part of our culture, Jesus himself identifies with the stranger. In Matthew (25.35-40) Jesus says “I was a stranger and you invited me in”, and more challengingly: “whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.” Welcoming the outsider becomes, in a real sense, welcoming Christ himself. Hebrews 13.2 states “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Imagine if we missed Jesus or an angel by being too afraid to open our doors and our homes to give hospitality!

Christ himself was a refugee with his family, fleeing violence (Matthew 2). The early church spread across borders, cultures and languages, otherwise we would not have received Christianity in the UK. The Church is meant to be a different kind of community, where all are welcome, despite their differences. But - Governments also have a responsibility to maintain order, borders, and fairness. Some asylum seekers are fleeing horrible war and inhumanity, others are looking for a better life, as we all would (?). We need to create a fair playing field, with clear rules and fast decisions, and I feel we have to look at the big picture of why people are drawn here as well – the pull of our well-ordered society, and the push of climate change,

economic poverty and a lack of opportunities in their own countries. Why don't our Governments think globally and work together to improve conditions in people's own countries? With all the wealth at our disposal (the US are apparently spending " 2 BILLION dollars a day on the current war) we could work towards building up every country, creating education and jobs and well being, rather than destruction and oppression.

So the flags in Brownhills have caused me to think a lot. I believe, as Christians we need to think through the issues raised by such a public demonstration of disaffection with the current direction of society. We can feel proud of our country and all that we have achieved and are. But - many people are disturbed, frightened and feel oppressed by the number of flags. They feel unwelcome and scared by the community around them. As Christians we need to find other ways to make people feel welcome, to appreciate their contributions to our community. We need to listen carefully to the concerns on both sides, to make friendships across divides, increase our hospitality, display more flags of unity and harmony, and stick up for what we believe – that God created all people, that God wants the best for all people, that God loves us all and wants us to live in community and love. Psalm 133.1 reminds us of God's thoughts: "How good and pleasant it is when people dwell in unity!"

The Bible doesn't speak about flags in the modern national sense, but it does contain several rich and meaningful references to things very much like them: banners and standards.

In the Book of Numbers (2.2) each tribe had its own standard. They expressed identity, belonging and order within the community of God.

In Exodus (17.15) Moses built an altar and called it "The Lord is my Banner". In Hebrew this is Yahweh Nissi – the idea that God himself is the rallying point, the one under whom people gather. The " banner" here is not cloth, but presence, protection, and victory.

In the poetic book of the Song of Songs (2.4) we read "His banner over me is Love". Here the banner becomes a tender covering, a declaration, where we are claimed by love and not war.

In the Psalms (20.5) we read "We will shout for joy when you are victorious, and will lift up our banners in the name of our God" . Here the banner symbolizes celebration, allegiance, and trust in God's deliverance, rather than in human power alone.

As Christians our calling is to gather everyone under the banner that is love. We need to refuse to turn identity into exclusion. We need to remember that any banner we raise sits beneath a greater one of God's love and sovereignty.

Do you remember this Chorus?

1. The Lord is mine and I am his, and his Banner over me is Love.
2. He brought me to his banqueting table and his Banner over me is Love.
3. He lifted me up into heavenly places and his Banner over me is Love.
4. He is the Vine and we are the branches, and his Banner over me is Love
5. Jesus is the Rock of my Salvation and his Banner over me is Love.
6. There's one way to peace through the power of the cross and his Banner over me is Love.

Prayer:

Lord help us to remember that we are all made in your wonderful image

We are all your children, and you care about us all.

Help us to remember that community building is better than conflict and destruction,

that when we help others we are helping you.

Help us to raise the Banner of Love, to be courageous in building up your Kingdom,

in all our words and deeds. Amen

WEEK 2: MAY 10th: A Reflection on Gardens by Karen Drayton

Scripture: Genesis 2. 8-15; Song of Songs 4. 12-15; Revelation 22.1-3

I have never met anyone who doesn't love a garden. We like to stroll and wander amongst the gardens of the rich heritage of the National Trust. We wonder at those who designed them, who make the most of the roll of the landscape and the dip of the earth. We love those that follow streams, rivers and lakes, the water giving a sense of ease and pause and rest. We also love tiny patches of garden, balconies or even just a dandelion popping up from a pavement slab. Gardening is consistently ranked among the top leisure activities, in the UK, with over 85% of homes having a private or shared garden. Let us pause and think of the gardens you have seen and delighted in, people you were with, how you felt. Close your eyes and remember. Or open your eyes and look at your garden, if you are lucky enough to have one.

Gardens, or even just flowers, can bring joy to our souls. The birth of the National Trust in 1895 is an inspiring story, which I have just been appreciating as I have just signed up to be a volunteer at the Shugborough Estate. The Trust was founded by three ordinary people: Octavia Hill – a housing reformer who believed access to green space was essential for ordinary people; Robert Hunter, who understood how to protect land legally and Hardwicke Rawnsley who campaigned to preserve the countryside. They began the National Trust as a reaction to the time of rapid industrialisation. Cities were expanding, railways were spreading, and many historic buildings and landscapes were under threat. Their vision was simple but powerful: “to preserve places of historic interest and natural beauty for everyone, forever”. Their vision has given so many people so many hours of pleasure. They now own and manage over 500 houses and over 900 miles of coastline, as well as many acres of countryside, archaeological sites, nature reserves, In the Bible we remember the Garden of Eden, where everything was perfect, where it all began, where people strolled with God in the evening warmth, chatting and feeling comfortable with their Maker. It is a place where heaven and earth were close. Eden represents harmony – between humanity and God, between people themselves, and between humans and creation. It is a place of abundance, where nothing is lacking, where all needs are met. The National Trust have surely been part of the vision to recreate the Garden of Eden in our world.

Later in Scripture, gardens appear as places of love and growth and hidden encounter. The imagery of the Song of Songs uses gardens to describe intimacy and delight – an enclosed garden symbolising both beauty and belonging. Here the garden becomes a metaphor for relationship : tended, cherished, and alive. It reminds us that God's intention has not changed – that we are still made for relationship, for delight, for care that is both given and received.

In the New Testament we come to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus goes there on the night before his death, wrestling in prayer. Here there is no ease, No gentle walking in the cool of the evening. Here there is anguish, Jesus kneeling in the soil, wrestling with what lies ahead. Jesus prayed – “Let this cup pass from me – yet, not my will but yours be done.” Eden became a place where humanity turned away from God, whereas Gethsemane is where Christ turns towards God, in his great suffering and sense of loss.

Then after the crucifixion, there is another garden. The Gospel of John tells us that Jesus is buried in a garden tomb, and it is there that Mary mistakes the risen Jesus as the gardener, unable to see properly due to her tears. Here is another echo of Eden – the Gardener Jesus is restoring what is lost. Death, exile and alienation from God did not have the final word.

The Bible ends with a return to Eden – the renewed creation in the Book of Revelation. The imagery includes a river of life and the tree of life bearing fruit for healing (Revelation 22). It is as if the garden has grown into the whole restored world.

Gardens give us rest and pleasure. Gardens give us a taste of how the world could be. Gardens help us stop and reflect on life that is growing, of places that God wants to meet us. Gardens remind us of how our world could be, of the vision of delight and harmony that was, and is, God's intention.

Thank God for gardens. Thank God for the Gardens of the Bible – the Garden of Eden, the Garden of the Song of Songs, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Garden of the New City of Jerusalem. Thank God for people with vision. Thank God for people with green fingers. Thank God for the Council. Thank God for committed staff and volunteers in all roles that make our hearts glad. Thank God.

Thank God that we are never outside the reach of the Gardener. God still walks among us. God gives us beauty and hope. God still tends what is wounded. God still brings life and abundance where we can only see destruction and barrenness. God is still at work. Amen!

Methodist Hymn Book 857 by Mary Matilda Penstone

1. God has given us a book full of stories,
Which was made for his people of old.

It begins with a tale of a garden,
And ends with a city of gold.

2. But the best is the story of Jesus,
Of the Babe with the ox in the stall,

Of the song that was sung by the Angels
The most beautiful story of all.

3. There are stories for parents and children,
For the old who are ready to rest,

But for all who are ready to listen,
The story of Jesus is best.

4. For it tells how he came from the Father,
His far away children to call,

To bring the lost sheep to their shepherd,
The most beautiful story of all.

WEEK 3: May 17th 2026 An Ascension Reflection by Peter Box

Scripture: Luke 24. 44-53, The Acts of The Apostles 1. 6-11.

For many, many people this extraordinary, miraculous, other worldly event is a puzzle! How could such a thing happen, it is so outside ordinary human experience? What are we to make of it? But there again, there are other such events recorded in scripture that, in some sense, prepare us for this, the manner of the end of our Saviour's time amongst us as a man. I am thinking here of that very dramatic and vivid account of Elijah's "translation" in 2 Kings 2.11 -18. And even further back in time we read in Genesis 5 of Enoch, a man said to be dedicated to God and of deep spiritual presence. Both Enoch and Elijah were taken into heaven without tasting death. There is something of the otherworldliness for us to savour when we read about Jesus conversing with Moses and Elijah at the time of the Transfiguration on a lonely mountainside, the mixing of past and present, as if time means nothing. The gospel of John in particular shows us how very close both Jesus and The Heavenly Father are, John 10.15-18.

However to gain some idea and fix some sort of image of Jesus' ascension we should turn to the writings of St. Luke. On the face of it we are looking at a timeline of 40 days but there is some contradiction within the various texts. Mark's Gospel is quite unhelpful here. Matthew's account seems to be pushed into a really tight time frame following the resurrection. Coming back to Luke, a skimming over of the passage in Acts could well lead you to think that Jesus, amongst His other powers was simply defying gravity!

It must be said that the accounts that we have in the NT of Jesus being Translated (taken up to heaven) are the attempts of human writers struggling to describe an otherworldly scene. A word here that might help us to come to some understanding is “exaltation”.

We have the wonder and marvel of Jesus coming to us as a vulnerable baby. At His baptism we have the dove of peace which represents the Spirit. The public ministry, teaching and demonstration of true service. A very full and immensely meaningful life. And even all of that and its full meaning is not revealed to us until we go beyond the resurrection. Even now we have unanswered questions but surely we know enough to be enthralled and savour the mystery. St. Paul talks about being taken up (spiritually) to be shown unspeakable truths.

In focusing on the qualities that we see in our Saviour we must surely feel something of that glow experienced by the two that walked with Him to Emmaus. Imagine how those first disciples, the whole circle in and around Jerusalem revered, extolled and exalted Jesus. Luke 24v 45 reads “then He opened their minds.....” Jesus was translated into heaven, in a great rush of Heavenly exaltation we see Him no more in this life.

Prayer: Merciful and loving God

We pray that Jesus may come to fill not only our minds but our hearts also.

May we be satisfied in the things that you have revealed to us

And content in the knowledge that when,

In a closer presence with you, mysteries will be no more.

Amen.

And the hymn; **“Lo He comes with clouds descending.” STF 177 by Charles Wesley**

Draws our thoughts to those final utterings, “I will come again.....”

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|---|--|
| <p>1. Lo he comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain;
Thousand, thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.</p> | <p>3. Those dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazzling body bears;
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshippers;
With what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars.</p> |
| <p>2. Every eye shall now behold him
Robed in glorious majesty;
We who set at nought and sold him, pierced and
nailed him to the tree,
Deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.</p> | <p>4. Sing amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
Claim the kingdom for thine own;
Come Lord Jesus!
Everlasting God come down!</p> |

WEEK 4: May 24th Warmed hearts and cool heads: A Reflection by Rev Dr Gary Hall

Scripture: Romans 1.17, Luke 24.13-32

John Wesley's journal records an experience of 24th May 1738 in which he tells of a 'heart strangely warmed,' of being assured of God's gracious and unconditional love-as-forgiveness. The sense of assurance was profound, despite the fact that the episode was disappointingly flat emotionally.

Across global Methodism, 24th May (or the nearest Sunday) is Aldersgate Day and, in the calendar of the Anglican *Common Worship*, a Feast Day for John and Charles Wesley. The tradition can be traced back a century, to the establishment of 'Wesley Day' by the London Mission Committee in 1924, when 24th May was identified as a time to focus on evangelism and conversion in light of an event in the life of John Wesley. In 1951, the World Methodist Council redefined the anniversary as 'Aldersgate Sunday.'

Before then, May 24th seems to have been of no particular consequence for Methodist people, whilst other Wesleyan anniversaries were marked. In John Wesley's own time, it gets next to no mention apart from his original journal entry and life-review which puts the events of May 1738 into perspective. If we want to call this episode or moment a 'conversion experience' it is worth noting that, unlike his brother Charles, John seems not to have marked a special day as anniversary of his 'conversion.' Perhaps Charles was helped to remember his own by the fact that for him the day was Pentecost. John in later life qualified his early, dramatic evaluation of the 'conversion' moment and his spiritual state before it.

Whether we want to see this as a dramatic 'conversion' or one aspect of a more continuous process, we can nevertheless all recognize in the account a coming together of emotion and reason, experience and understanding. Things click when the mind and heart resonate with fresh knowledge of how life is. We may want to call this being born again, or we may prefer to call it perspectival breakthrough or gestalt shift. However described, such moments can be vital and potentially life-changing - and they come as a gift.

They come as gift and are to be received as such. Gifts are not something we chase after, unless there is something not quite right with us. So these kinds of experiences which shift our sense of the world are not things to be chased after - because they are gifts. We might be able to prepare for them and adapt to the change they bring; we might become better attuned to notice when they are happening; but we can't just make them happen. They are given.

One of the risks of focusing on the so-called Aldersgate Experience (and not much else in the life of the Wesleys) is that we might start chasing after a similar experience for ourselves, or might be telling one another that we should be. Another risk is that the episode grows out of proportion, and we lose a sense of the context in which it happened. For instance, we may miss the fact that the events of that evening in Aldersgate Street were the outcome of a long, painstaking quest by this intense, obsessively workaholic

Oxford academic priest. Or we may miss the fact that he had recently returned from the colony of Georgia, having failed to achieve what he thought he was going out to do, and having made a real mess of some encounters with women who probably wished they had never met him. No wonder that the bedraggled John Wesley was, on his return, ripe for receiving assurance of the unconditional, forgiving love of God. He had perhaps been wondering what his vocation was all about, and wondering whether he was lovable at all. Let's call it a mini crisis.

But let's also keep it in perspective. Because there is a risk, when we separate out a brief episode from all the other moments which make up life, that we miss something vital about the ways in which God works with us in the details. Which parts of the tapestry have we left aside? The grappling with doctrine and scripture? The doubts about our purpose, or about being lovable? Our regrets about recent or buried failures?

With John Wesley and Aldersgate, what may matter most is the outcome. For a start, he immediately began to pray for enemies, for the people he might be least inclined to care about. Somehow he was released from his tedious self-preoccupation, and he discovered fresh capacity to turn his attention and care towards other people. By the fruits of our lives are we known, and by those same fruits is the activity of the God of Jesus Christ known.

This little Methodist festival is a reminder of many things, not least that all theology is biographical. God makes Godself known through the details of our experience and, if we engage seriously enough with our scriptures and traditions, God is the chemistry whereby scripture, tradition, reason and experience blend and interact towards a fresh way of being in God's world. In the end, May 24th is not for celebrating the Wesleys (especially as it will again be the festival of Pentecost this year) but for celebrating the joy of properly humble conviction, reassurance, Christian religious experience.

Rowan Williams said that Wesley invites us to trust that 'our identity before God will come from God, insofar as we simply *go on* with him, patiently opening ourselves to his patience with us, and patiently staying with each other in our risky and muddled lives. This is not a Christianity without struggle, without discipline, and without judgment. It is hard to keep that openness, that habit of trust – we need disciplines for that, silent listening for God, standing before the Christ of the gospels, joining in the church's act of praise. We need to learn real repentance and honesty, to accept our mistakes as real and never to be so paralyzed by or ashamed of them that we are afraid of ourselves and our own perceptions and choices' (Rowan Williams, *A Ray of Darkness*, p.178). He also said that John Wesley 'knew he was a fool, that his life was a mess; he set that to one side, because the imperative was to preach what he could only have learned *in his folly* – that God is to be trusted' (Williams, 176-77).

That's our Aldersgate sermon right there: God is to be trusted. Even when we are fools.

Hymn: STF 610 Best of all is, God is with us, by Andrew Pratt, Based on John Wesley's final words

The tune is Chapel Brae (All for Jesus, All for Jesus)

1. Best of all is, God is with us,
God will hold and never fail.
Keep that truth when storms are raging,
God remains though faith is frail.

2. Best of all is God is with us,
life goes on and needs are met,
God is strongest in our weakness,
Love renews, will not forget.

3. Best of all is, God is with us,
Hearts are challenged, strangely warmed,
Faith is deepened, courage strengthened,
grace received and hope reformed.

4. Best of all is God is with us,
In our joy and through our pain,
Till that final acclamation:
"Life is Christ and death is gain."

5. Best of all is God is with us
As we scale eternal heights,
Love grows stronger, undiminished;
Earth grows dim by heavens lights.

WEEK 5: May 31st A Reflection from Jean Dyde, former Local Preacher

Scripture: Matthew 1.1-17, 1 Corinthians 1. 26-31

"But God chooses the foolish things of the world to shame the wise.

God chooses the weak things of the world to shame the strong."

Living alone I turned more towards God than before, I now wanted to learn more about God and Jesus, and so I began reading my Bible and have once again read it through. Now I read books concerning the characters of that time, those who were close to our Lord.

At the moment I am reading a book about Jesus when he was here on earth. At one point it tells about the forebears of Jesus, and how they differed in the way we may not expect . For instance, Rahab had been a prostitute and Amon an evil King and yet we had people like Noah, and David and for the ladies, Ruth in the genealogy of Jesus.

With the disciples, again Jesus had not chosen wise people but people like Peter, a simple fisherman and of course his brother and two cousins. Others were perhaps wiser but we do know that one was a thief, Judas Iscariot.

Jesus also mixed with tax collectors and not always religious people, yet my favourite was Mary Magdalene who stayed close to him after he had changed her life. She may have been a prostitute when Jesus first

found her and it was she who found the empty tomb and met the risen Christ, not John or Peter. She so loved him that she wanted to be near him even though he was dead.

Even now today Jesus can call people who others feel that they could not be called to work for our Lord. Gladys Aylward was one, she felt she had been called to China, but she was not believed and as no one would assist her to get to China, she worked and saved her money for the journey herself. If anyone has seen the Inn of the Sixth Happiness, you will remember the story of how she brought many people to Christ and God, and how she saved many orphaned children to safety from the Japanese invaders. Such courage and determination is inspiring.

I too have my story, for I am not fully educated as you may already be aware, and there were those who felt that I was wrong to feel called to be a local preacher, that my call was imagination and I have to admit, I thought so too. I never expected to pass the exams, and I expected my minister to have a quiet word with me, suggesting I change direction.

On the night before we expected our results, I was so certain that I would fail, that I did decide to take another route. However, that night I slept more soundly than I had for a long time. The next morning, I knew that whatever happened I would continue as yes, I had been called to serve God. A friend Margaret was on the phone - she had passed and was so pleased, and while she was still talking I received my results – and yes! I too had passed.

For the first time in my life I had passed my exam. Now after this you may feel that my services must have been great - the answer to that is no, but there were times when members of the congregation told me that I had spoken to them. I hope that if you should read this, and you feel that our Lord has called you, and you feel that you cannot do what he asks - well if God wants you, in the end he will get you, and don't worry, he will be with you and help you to succeed.

Prayer: Dearest Lord, Heavenly Father

I hear your call, my heart longs to serve you but I feel inadequate. Speak to me, Father and give me the strength to answer you, the courage to serve you and the wisdom to obey you. Help me to listen to you and always to be guided by you. Amen

Hymn 373 A ninth century hymn, translated by John Cosin

1. Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire
And lighten with celestial fire;
Thou the anointing spirit art,
Who dost the sevenfold gifts impart.

2. Thy blessed unction from above,
Is comfort, life and fire of love;
Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight.

3. Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of thy grace;
Keep far our foes, give peace at home;
Where thou art guide, no ill can come.

4. Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And thee of both, to be but One:
That through the ages all along
This may be our endless song:

*Praise to Thy eternal merit
Father, Son and Holy Spirit*

