

Here is the chorus we learnt at Holy week club and on Easter Day;

Sing out an Easter song,
tell ev'ryone that the Lord has risen
Sing out a joyful song,
tell ev'rybody that he's a live.

Easter is more than a day, its a season, and continues until the last day of this month when the church celebrates the feast of Pentecost, or Whitsunday as it used to be called when I was a girl! Whitsunday may have its name from the custom of confirmations being held on that day, and with all those white veils on girls' heads the churches were decked with white, hence whit(e) Sunday, Whitsun.

Things change. Now, when young or older people come forward for confirmation its rare that they wear white, and we now have confirmations on any day throughout the year.

This year I have had the privilege of presenting five candidates for confirmation, four at the Abbey in St Albans and one in Christchurch Radlett, 2 services 2 different bishops but one purpose. The services were an opportunity for the candidates to confirm their baptismal promises with their own voices and a time when the bishop could confirm on them the strengthening of the Holy Spirit.

On that first day of Pentecost when the disciples received the power of the Holy Spirit, they were strengthened and 'fired up' with such enthusiasm about the gospel that they changed from being people who shut themselves away for fear of what might happen, to being people who went out into their communities and beyond, telling everyone that the Lord had risen.

The rest as they say is history. For over the next two millennia the Holy Spirit has been strengthening people to spread the gospel and build up churches throughout the world.

During our Holy Week Club this year one of the children asked me why was the church called the church. A very good question, and I remembered my primary school teacher helping me to spell the word church, by asking who's in ch—ch? Answer -U R.

Once again we are reminded that the church is not just the building but us, we ourselves make up the church, and for that very reason the church continues to change. May the church continue to change, blossom and flourish, just as the gardens do in this wonderful month of May.

See U in Ch—ch sometime?

Reverend Ann