

## **Pentecost Sunday – Iris Whitehurst’s Contribution to our Worship At Home in Lockdown\_Sun 31/05.2020**

When Juliette asked me to write something about Pentecost I was reminded about a time when I was “on fire”! It was not a Pentecost service, it was in response to a bible study group, mostly of young Parents and Friends. We met with Rev. Chester Hodge at the Parsonage, 296 Melbourne Rd.

I had grown up in the North Williamstown Presbyterian Church, (now St. Stephens) had married there and our first child was baptised there. Three years later our second child was baptised when we were a joint Parish. My newfound friend Robyn, also a young mum with three children then asked me to join Parents and Friends, which then became part of a bible study group.

I do not remember much about the group but later I opened my New Testament which Rev. Arthur Absalom had given me on my wedding day. It opened at 1 Corinthians 12 which happens to be one of the readings for this Pentecost Sunday.

I felt brave enough to write my first item (and perhaps my last) for In Touch, our newsletter. This reading was an inspiration to me. I had a four-year-old and a one year old and suddenly realised I was part of the Body of Christ. Now what was I to do? Those of you who have known me for a long time may remember some of my doings and others shared some exciting times on that journey that started in 1974.

Pentecost Sunday and the days preceding were fun, exciting, and sometimes challenging. I made the banner; we made flags and scarves, blew up balloons, hung streamers high in the church, had cellophane flames and beautiful red flower arrangements. Some of you will remember the year the decorations on the communion table set fire! Graeme jumped out of his pew to save the day! We had a procession into church with the organ and rousing hymns.

In recent years we have been more sedate. We have worn something red. I have missed the “drunk” disciples we used to be. But is it now time to be less “on fire” but to be more the peaceful dove and feel the breath of God on us?! Perhaps there is room for both.

What interesting symbols for the Spirit of God – red, hot fire and white peaceful dove. Both are included in the Uniting Church symbol. On this Pentecost Sunday have a quiet moment to think about being part of the Body of Christ, and the fire and dove.

There are some marvellous hymns which can speak to us. One of my favourites is TIS 409 O Breath of life, come sweeping through us, revive your church with life and power. When it is time for all of us to be together again let us bring with us “tongues of fire and hearts of love” (TIS 405).

*(Iris Whitehurst – Pentecost Sunday Year A – Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020)*