

KINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH ONLINE NOTICE BOARD – 18

Please visit our website for the KBC spoken word Thought for the Day

<https://www.kingtonbaptistchurch.org/>

Breathe on me Breath of God...

Whether it's lockdown or 'unlockdown' (!) the message is the same: 'don't *breathe* on me!' So it's face masks and social distancing.

This is in contrast to the season of the Christian year – Whitsuntide, the season of Pentecost, the season of the coming of the Holy Spirit – the Holy Ghost, or, as we may translate the Bible words: the Holy *Breath* of God.

The Holy Spirit is the *breath* of God, he is God *breathing-out*. The word used to refer to the Holy Spirit is 'spiration'. We talk of the 'begetting' of the Son of God and the 'spiration' of the Spirit of God. *Spiration* means breath-exhaled. The word 'spirate' describes God's breathing as a creative, life-giving activity. (Our English word 'spirit' is borrowed from the Latin word '*spirare*'.) As *breath* the Holy Spirit may come as a tranquil breeze, a gentle whisper, or as a rushing mighty wind!

The first thing the Bible says about humankind is 'God *breathed* into Adam and he became a living being' (Genesis 2.7). God's breath is life – not death or disease! Jesus *breathed* the Holy Spirit into disciples (John 20.22) – his Holy Breath. Something of his innermost self is transferred to them. By breathing on the disciples, Jesus communicates to them the mystery of his life: the Holy Spirit. Jesus offers us his body (Mark 14.22) and gives us his Holy Spirit (John 20.22) – the life of the Church would be impossible if both were not equally present.

This breathing is close to human kissing – it's no accident the *Song of Songs* begins with the plea: 'kiss me with the kisses of your mouth'. It's close to 'the kiss of life' – the way life is given to a person otherwise dead: the life of God *breathed* into us by God's Holy Breath – the Lord and Giver of Life!

Some say 'breath control is self-control'. The Christian version of this idea is: 'breath-giving is self-giving'. This is the life and love of God – the one in whom everything is always already given away. God *breathed*, and life was given to Adam; Jesus *breathed* and the Holy Spirit was given to his

disciples; the 'Spirit *breathes* upon the Word' and truth comes to sight. '*The Spirit blows where he wills ... so it is with everyone born from above*'.

God never wears a face mask! His face is open. He breathes out his eternal life into all living things! It's in the open face of Jesus Christ we see the full, undimmed, unshielded glory of God. There is no risk of death or disease as the Holy Spirit breathes on us! Only new life, living hope, living light, power and the vitality of an endless life!

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. (Psalm 33.6)

Then he said to me, Speak to the winds and say: 'The LORD says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so that they may live again.' (Ezekiel 37.9)

Breathe on me breath of God/fill me with life anew!

O Breath of life, come sweeping through us,
Revive thy Church with life and power;
O Breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us,
And fit thy Church to meet this hour.

O Wind of God, come bend us, break us,
Till humbly we confess our need;
Then in thy tenderness remake us,
Revive, restore; for this we plead.

O Breath of love, come breathe within us,
Renewing thought and will and heart:
Come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us,
Revive thy Church in every part.