

COMMUNITIES RESOURCES

Life in the Spirit

Autumn 2026

Welcome

These resources serve as a practical guide to sit alongside our preaching series *Life in the Spirit*, at Christ Church West Green. Our prayer is that this resource provides ways for us to go deeper into our shared faith, making life-giving connections between what we believe in our heads and the postures of our hearts: particularly in Communities.

Why *Life in the Spirit?*

As we've prayed as a leadership team, we've sensed a call to begin a journey of teaching and practicing the Gifts of the Spirit together. This series lays some practical and theological groundwork which will help us to begin to practice and engage with the Holy Spirit together, whatever our church background or previous experience.

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Theology of the Spirit

John 14:15–27; Acts 1:1–8

Summary

The Holy Spirit is not a force to access but a person to receive — God himself dwelling with and within us. Jesus promises the Spirit to his disciples not simply to give them spiritual experiences, but to help them know God, become like Jesus, and continue his ministry. The Spirit is given, not earned, and his power is always shaped by love and holiness. We are invited to become people who learn to notice, welcome and respond to the Spirit's presence.

Discussion Questions

- What has shaped your understanding or experience of the Holy Spirit — positively or negatively?
- What is the difference between trying to access the Spirit and learning to receive the Spirit?
- Where might God be inviting you to surrender control and become more attentive to his presence?
- What would it look like for the Spirit to form Christ in you before working through you?

Tongues: Prayer Beyond Words

Romans 8:26–27; 1 Corinthians 14:1–5, 13–15

Summary

Sometimes we simply don't know how to pray. Paul describes the Spirit as helping us in our weakness and praying within us beyond the limitations of our own words. Tongues can be understood as a gift that enables deeper communion with God — not a badge of spiritual maturity or something to perform. Whether or not we practise praying in tongues, the invitation is the same: we don't have to manufacture our prayer life. We can come to God openly and allow the Spirit to lead us.

Discussion Questions

- What do you find difficult about prayer when you don't know what to say?
- How do you respond to the idea of praying in tongues? What questions or experiences does it raise for you?
- What might it mean to approach prayer with the posture, "I don't have to manufacture — I only have to receive"?
- What could you try this week to create more space for the Spirit to lead your prayers?

Prophecy: Hearing and Speaking God's Voice

1 Corinthians 14:1–3; John 10:27

Summary

The New Testament presents prophecy as a gift through which God strengthens, encourages and comforts his people. It is not about having absolute certainty or controlling someone else's life, but about humbly sharing what we sense God might be saying and allowing it to be tested within Scripture and community. Prophecy therefore requires both openness and discernment. The goal is never to impress or direct, but to build others up in love.

Discussion Questions

- What thoughts or feelings arise when you hear the word "prophecy"?
- Why do you think humility and discernment are important when we believe we may have heard from God?
- How might the language "I sense..." be healthier than "God told me..."?
- Who might God be inviting you to encourage this week?

Healing: The Compassion of God in Action

Luke 9:1–6; James 5:14–16

Summary

Healing is one of the ways Jesus demonstrates the arrival of God's kingdom. His followers are invited to pray with expectation, asking God to bring healing and restoration. Yet Christian faith also leaves room for mystery: sometimes healing comes immediately, sometimes gradually, and sometimes we are left waiting and lamenting. We therefore hold together faith and humility, expectation and disappointment. Healing prayer is ultimately an expression of God's compassion, not a test of someone's faith or a measure of spiritual success.

Discussion Questions

- What experiences have you had of praying for healing — whether positive, disappointing or somewhere in between?
- How can we hold together bold faith and honest lament?
- What dangers do we need to avoid when praying for someone's healing?
- What might make our church a safe place where people can take risks in prayer without feeling pressured or judged?

Witness & the Way of Love

Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:22–25; 2 Corinthians 12:9–10

Summary

The Spirit empowers us to witness to Jesus, but the clearest evidence of his presence is not impressive spiritual gifts — it is a life increasingly shaped by love. The Spirit produces fruit before platform, character before influence, and Christlikeness before spiritual reputation. The Spirit gives power for mission while also teaching us to embrace weakness, sacrifice and dependence on God. Christian witness is therefore both what we say about Jesus and the way we embody his love.

Discussion Questions

- Why might we be tempted to value spiritual gifts or visible ministry more than spiritual fruit?
- Which fruit of the Spirit do you most want God to grow in you at the moment?
- Where might God be inviting you to embrace weakness rather than trying to appear strong?
- Who is one person you could intentionally love and pray for this week?

Thank You

Thank you for engaging with this Communities Resource for the *Life in the Spirit* series. If you have any feedback or questions then please do get in touch with Chris at chris.brees@ccwg.church.