



Dear Woolf Friends,

Pentecostalism is the world's fastest growing Christian denomination. The Pentecostal movement claims hundreds of millions of followers and enjoys popularity globally, but especially in the majority world. Yet many of the world's biggest, most powerful Pentecostal churches can be found in sub-Saharan Africa, where these churches disseminate teachings heavily influenced by prosperity theology and deliver a wide range of social services in states plagued by weak and corrupt social and economic development institutions.

Africa's Pentecostal churches teach that anyone can enjoy a direct, personal relationship with God because of Christ's atonement and by way of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. To a greater extent than most Christian denominations, the Holy Spirit occupies a central space of honour and respect in African Pentecostalism. For African Pentecostals, the Holy Spirit represents the very presence and personality of God residing within them. African Pentecostals believe that each day ahead of the eschaton and the triumphant ushering in of God's New Creation should be devoted to wilful, continuous, and sweet fellowship with the Holy Spirit. The latter signifies the third person of the trinity who Christ promised would descend to earth after His ascension to heaven in the aftermath of His resurrection.

Pentecostalism is named after Pentecost, an event recorded in the Book of Acts where the Holy Spirit descended into a room filled with Christ's apostles and entered each of them. The Book of Acts

(chapters 1 and 2) argues that the Holy Spirit is a power-giving force that enables believers to be Christ's witnesses and build His kingdom to the ends of the earth. Elsewhere in the Bible, the Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of Truth." Among other roles, the Holy Spirit leads people who submit to His leadership into the true knowledge of God.



## Upcoming Events

5 June

Reading Group:  
Qur'an and Bible



6 June

Woolf Institute  
Garden Party



6 June

Lady Hale Lecture:  
"Freedom of Religion  
and Freedom of  
Speech".



4 July

25 years on:  
Reflections on peace  
in Northern Ireland  
and beyond



10 - 21 July

Woolf Institute  
Summer School



The concept of leading people into the true knowledge of God can have huge implications for individuals, communities, and nations. As the Christian God is love, the Holy Spirit always leads people into an enhanced awareness of God and by extension love in ways that inherently reform, restore, and redeem preexisting brokenness, suffering, and destitution. In postcolonial African contexts with some of the world's highest levels of poverty, war, and disease, African Pentecostals see the Holy Spirit as the divine agent able to put them in positions of influence where they can help remake Africa into all God intends it to be. Moreover, Pentecostal teachings on the Holy Spirit especially flourish in African contexts because they tap into traditional African frameworks that

respect the influence of spirits in everyday life in ways that post-Enlightenment European rationalism has not.

The Pentecost event is significant to Africa's Pentecostal communities for many reasons. From the Holy Spirit's arrival functioning as the fulfilment of Christ's promise to send the "Comforter" after His ascension to Heaven, to Pentecost making it possible for believers to enjoy direct fellowship with God via the Holy Spirit and this fellowship translating into the arming of Believers with world-changing power, African Pentecostals view Pentecost as a seminal event in the historical development of Christ's church worthy of celebration.

Best wishes,

Christopher Wadibia

Junior Research Fellow at Pembroke College, Oxford

Friend and former PhD Scholar at the Woolf Institute

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YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND OUR

# GARDEN PARTY

AT

## the Woolf Institute

JUNE  
TUESDAY 6 14:30 - 16:30  
2023

Celebrate with champagne, cake and  
strawberries & cream on the lawn

WOOLF INSTITUTE  
MADINGLEY ROAD  
CAMBRIDGE CB3 0UB

RSVP: [DEVELOPMENT@WOOLF.CAM.AC.UK](mailto:DEVELOPMENT@WOOLF.CAM.AC.UK)

PLEASE CONTACT FLORA MOFFIE IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND



YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE LADY HALE LECTURE:

## "Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Speech"

6 JUNE 2023 17:00



### LADY HALE LECTURE:

The Woolf institute is delighted to invite our friends and others interested to the Lady Hale Lecture: "Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Speech".

This will take place on Tuesday 6 June 2023 @17:00 at the Woolf Institute.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

## LOVE THE OTHER

*Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute*

IT'S EASIER SAID THAN DONE...



### PODCAST: LOVE THE OTHER

It's easier said than done...

LOVE THE OTHER can mean many things. For a psychologist it can imply two contrasting personalities coming together in a complementary and constructive relationship. It can also be construed as avoiding excessive self-love. But as Sam Victor and Ruby Naji-Naif see it can be about coming to terms with difference and understanding the other in such a profound way that it can become love and even bring about peace.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

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