



First Presbyterian Church of New Philadelphia

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Rev. Joseph Svancara, Pastor

***Sunday Worship Service
June 8, 2025***

*All who are able, please stand.

Announcements & Prayer Concerns

Tonight is our monthly Friends of the Homeless dinner at 6pm. A sign-up sheet for volunteers is available in the church office. While meal funds are good, please consider donating toward our other Friends of the Homeless efforts (FOTH Operations/Jack's House of Hope).

Bible Study will be this Wednesday (June 11) at 10am.

AA will meet this Wednesday (June 11) at 8pm.

Our Sunday Morning Study Group will meet on Sunday (June 15) at 9:15am. We will be covering Chapter 14 "Foxe's Book of Martyrs". See Rev. Joe if you wish to attend!

Session will have its monthly meeting rescheduled to June 16 at 7pm.

Opening Prayer

LORD, our Father, you have given your one Son to be our source of inspiration and confidence. You have also given your one Spirit to unite and bring your creation together. Help us to see those divine effects on our lives, and what it indicates you are steering us toward. **Amen.**

Prelude *O Spirit of Life* arr. Cherwien

***Call to Worship** (Psalm 104:24-35)
How manifold are your works, O LORD!

In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too many to number, living things both small and great.

There go the ships to and fro, and Leviathan, which you made for the sport of it.

All of them look to you to give them their food in due season.

You give it to them; they gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.

When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; and so you renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the LORD endure forever; O LORD, rejoice in all your works.

You look at the earth and it trembles; you touch the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being.

May these words of mine please God.

I will rejoice in the LORD.

Let sinners be consumed from the earth and the wicked be no more.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

Hallelujah!

Hymn #130 *Let Every Christian Pray

Let every Christian pray,
This day and every day,
Come, Holy Spirit, come!
Was not the church we love
commissioned from above?
Come Holy Spirit, come!

The Spirit brought to birth
The church of Christ on earth
To seek and save the lost:
God never has withdrawn,
Since that tremendous dawn,
The gifts at Pentecost.

Only the Spirit's power
Can fit us for this hour:

Come, Holy Spirit, come!
Instruct, inspire, unite,
And help us see Your light:
Come, Holy Spirit, come!

***Prayer of Confession**

Though we see the promise of our Father's house and world, we still cling to the old order of our former lives and trust in the discredited promises of others due to habit or fear:

LORD, our Father, we admit that we act like you are distant and far away. And we need to perform actions and live lives to grab your attention, forgetting how close you truly are. By the promise of your Spirit, open our eyes to see where you are and how your Spirit unites in ways beyond human explanation. Amen.

***Silent Confessions and Prayers**

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

By the promise of the Spirit there is no longer any condemnation, no need for fear or uncertainty, or need to trust in the flesh. By the promise articulated by Jesus Christ we are freed.

He is our way, truth, and life. How we can be guaranteed the reality the LORD lives.

Hymn #579 *Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

Reading of the Scriptures

All Scripture lessons come from the Revised Common Lectionary. Prescribed lessons are underlined, with pastoral inserts to preserve the integrity of the passage.

Hear the Word of the Lord:

Genesis 11:1-9

11 ¹ Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ² And as they migrated from the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³ And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” ⁵ The Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. ⁶ And the Lord said, “Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.” ⁸ So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹ Therefore it was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Romans 8:1-17

⁸ ¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law—indeed it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you. ¹² So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— ¹³ for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs, heirs of God

and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

John 14:1-14

14 ¹ “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ² In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” ⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon *Pentecost Sunday*

The day of Pentecost is often referred to as the ‘birthday of the Church’, when the LORD established the believers in Christ with power to proclaim and act in his name. It is an event which reminds Christians what we can, and cannot, do because of the Holy Spirit. What needs to happen in our lives to allow the divine wind to come and carry us where we need to be. It is also the inauguration of a new season in the Church, with the season of Pentecost reminding the Church what it needs to be because of the Holy Spirit acting. We are given divine power, but not for reasons why others are given power. How we are empowered, what we are promised, and what we set out to do demonstrates how we have allowed the teachings of Jesus Christ to capture our hearts. Especially since there is so much already vying to have that place for themselves.

One of the effects of Pentecost was the ability for the disciples to speak, and understand, each other and other languages. Since Jews would have been in Jerusalem from all over the known world to commemorate another holy day: Shavuot, the celebration of when the LORD established the covenant with the nation of Israel; there was a large gathering of people with different backgrounds and understandings.

In giving the Laws of Moses, Israel was established as a people and nation to serve the LORD. In giving the Holy Spirit, the LORD was establishing the Church as a people to serve and give knowledge of the LORD in the same manner. The power given was the power of relation, the ability to connect with other people for the purpose of passing divine knowledge. It echoes the events which took place in primeval history in Genesis 11:1-9, when the LORD confused the languages of humans and scattered them over the face of the earth.

In reading that story, it might be easy to think the LORD went a little overboard with his judgement. For the crime of working together the LORD confused people and scattered them abroad? To understand the story, we must see this even as a judgement and not a punishment. It is meant as an attention-grabbing event addressing human ego, arrogance, and confusion. Within the story the dominant culture would have been the Sumerians, one of the first people groups in that era to establish a formal, organized, and complex civilization. Their belief taught that the realm of the gods were so separated from humans, and the gods would not become involved unless provoked- hence building a tower to the heavens. But the fact the LORD came down to see what was happening showed this belief to be inaccurate, and that way of thinking faulty. Harmony and cooperation between humans would not happen because of a dominate culture or force of belief. The scattering of the nations demonstrated the LORD's power to control the world and everything in it. To show that human efforts alone would not get the job done, and do not need to be done to have the LORD's attention. It is already had but has been ignored.

That is the confidence Jesus wants his disciples to have and to hold, with his promises in John 14:1-14. The guarantee that the way to the LORD is not based on how powerful, capable, or crafty we are. We are not dependent on another human to know and experience what the LORD desires of us. It is a clear sign that Jesus is the way, truth, and life and whenever we see him we will know what is right. And whenever we see the example lived out we will know that person is there to teach what the LORD desires. Again, a sign that the LORD is already present and fills this world and our lives- but are we truly searching for and accepting the way he chooses to appear? Do we desire signs and assurances for what we want, or for what will allow us to be the Church needed?

St. Paul speaks in Romans 8:1-17 what the Holy Spirit does for the believer, and for the Church. The Holy Spirit is there as a demonstrator what the LORD makes possible, helps us to recognize what the LORD does, and gives us the ability to reciprocate what we are shown. He is also there as the great unifier of peoples, the being and force that will connect us together and allow harmony and cooperation. It is that "spirit of adoption" which unites us, because we are all shown what we equally need to be a child of God. In Greco-Roman culture, to be adopted meant to enter into a formal agreement with the whole of the family. To accept what this family was about, who was in charge, what was expected, and what was valued above all else. And in the same

way the family accepted that individual as a full and equal member deserving of the same protections as themselves, no exception. It was a recognition that each party needed to give toward being whole and complete. When believers are adopted into the Church we each recognize and accept we each have needs which the LORD meets, and each one needs that divine touch in order to be here. When we look at others we should see ourselves, one whose place is not guaranteed by ability or privilege but by need. On our own we cannot be here, but the LORD gives that Spirit so we can recognize the needs of our lives and where they truly come from.

The power of the Holy Spirit gives ability to know and relate, to see others as the LORD sees them so we might act in the truest divine sense. We know the Gospel of Jesus Christ can meet the needs of the most hurting soul, and how we bring it to them will show what our motives for doing so are. Are we doing so because we recognize the hurt in their lives, the needs they are deprived of, and the assurance of the LORD's closeness? Or just to fill some quota, accomplish some project, or just to get people to fill our pews? To live by the Spirit, in the truest sense of the word, is to demonstrate the true order and reality of this world emphasized by the teachings of Jesus. And then help others to recognize that truth where they are and with what they know. It is about building others up in this promise and assurance and making them better because they can see the world in a different way than before. The Church is there to set others free from domineering beliefs so they might see and live the way they were meant to since the very beginning. All in this world serves the LORD no matter what, and the Spirit guarantees all will serve him again eventually.

Prayers of the People

Let us remember in prayer:

Dominic Aquino, Tom & Amy Aquino, Mary Ellen Beans, Terry Carpenter, Fritz Chambers, Michelle Chamberlain, Mary Jane Dougherty, Don Eberheart Jr., Allison Folly, Kay France, Jamie Frank, Bill & Cheryl Graham, Judy Hass, Alice & Errol Jacobs, Barry Jacobs, Victoria Kasten, Amber Loftis, David Mackey, Breanne Mathias, Peg McIntire, Will Long, Tom Netting, Ruth Patrick, Bob Pierre, Carol Phillips, Mark Preusser, Stefani Seth, Josh Shaeffer, Marlene Singhaus, Cindy Smith, Derrick & Mandy Smith, Janis Stover, Dean & Heidi Unzicker, Simone Villarruel, Jay Watt, The Friends of the Homeless of Tuscarawas County & The Homeless of Tuscarawas County.

LORD, our Father, we give honor and praise to your Holy Spirit who fills your Church, and our lives, with divine power and promise. Not a power to control or manipulate, but to heal, guide, and unite as never before. In the past, humanity tried to have unity on its own terms, and you scattered the nations over the face of the earth. But not as punishment for wrong doing, but a sign that we do not own our lives or this world. Everything belongs to you, is created for a purpose, and orients all living things toward that goal. The gift of your Spirit is the gift of seeing and relating to others in your way, to see ourselves in our fellow humans, and make homes where we might dwell

together in unity and harmony. We give up the ways we have tried to bring about cooperation on our own and ask that you guide all our relationships toward your goal.

Even in the areas where we have no idea, with people we cannot cooperate with, and those who struggle beyond our reasoning...*Reading of the Prayer List*...May your Spirit guide and inform, live in the spaces between us, and grant peace.

Moment of Silence

We thank you, Holy Spirit, for all the work you do and have done in all areas of our lives. Without our knowing it you brought us to this time and place. Help us in our trust that you will properly guide again in our future, to bring out the promises of the prayer gifted to us:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Offering our Gifts

In celebration of this act which unites the Church, let us give to honor the unity which exists among us!

Offertory *Holy Spirit Truth Divine* arr. Walters

Hymn #592 *Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

LORD, our Father, we live lives that are so different and spread out over the face of your earth. But you have united us to live a single purpose and support each other by our willing cooperation. May what we give witness to your great Spirit at work, and the hope for the ills which surround us. **Amen.**

Hymn #127 *Come, O Spirit

Come, O Spirit, with your sound
Like a wind, quick rushing;
Come from heaven and stir our hearts,
Each disciple touching!

Mold our actions to Your will,
You our service giving;
Move within our fellowship,
Transform now our living!

Come, O Spirit, with Your flame,
Leaping tongues of fire;
Come, and with Your glorious light
All our thoughts inspire!
Rest upon each servant's head
Till each one is speaking
Of our Christ, the Holy One
All the earth is seeking!

Come, O Spirit, fill Your church,
Making strong our mission;
Fill your daughters and Your sons
With a mighty vision,
Till the great and glorious day
When the whole creation
Sings Your praise as Lord and King,
Giver of salvation!

***Benediction**

Hear now, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; you will love your neighbor as yourself.

With the gospel of Jesus Christ guiding you, go into the world to live this sole purpose.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

***Postlude A Joyous Acclamation arr. Smith**

Be blessed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ wherever you may go!

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