

asbury at HOME

GETTING TO KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit was there in the beginning

Dear Friends,

Last week, we began with something remarkably simple: **The Holy Spirit is not an experience to be explained, He is a person to be known.** If we are going to get to know Him, we should go back to the first place in scripture that introduces Him. And that doesn't take very long, two verses in actually!

“Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” **Genesis 1:2**

Before scripture tells us about Abraham, Moses, Israel, Jesus, the Church – or even humanity itself – the Spirit of God is already there. Hovering! This is so fascinating to me. The Hebrew verb translated “hovering” is *rachaph*. It is rare in the Old Testament. One of the other places it appears is **Deuteronomy 32:11**, where it describes an eagle hovering over its young. The Bible doesn't open with the Spirit frantically trying to fix chaos. The Spirit hovers over it. Then God speaks and creation takes form, Light from darkness, waters separated, dry ground appears and life emerges! Order comes out of what is formless. And the Spirit was there before any of it looked like anything! That is something worth remembering because God does not require something to look promising before He can be present in it.

Breath, Wind and Spirit! Last week we talked about *ruach*, the Hebrew word for breath, wind or spirit. Although there are three biblically different things, they are connected. And nowhere is that connection more dramatic than in one of the strangest visions in Scripture. God take the prophet Ezekiel to a valley full of dry bones. Not bodies, bones. And Scripture makes a point of telling us they are very dry! This isn't a recent death, whatever life was there had been long gone! God asks Ezekiel,

“Son of man, can these bones live?” **Ezekiel 37:3** and I love how he responds. He says, *“Sovereign Lord, you alone know.”* That may just be one of the wisest answers in the Bible. God tells Ezekiel to prophesy to the bones, and then things begin to happen. There is a noise, and a rattling and the bones come together. Tendons appear; flesh forms and skin begin



to cover them. Imagine standing there and watching that!! Again, what was scattered now has order, what was broken has been reassembled, and what looked impossible is now remarkably complete. And yet Scripture gives us one haunting sentence, *“But there was no breath in them.”* **Ezekiel 37:8** Everything was in place, but nothing was alive. This sentence has stayed with me; there is a difference between structure and life.

We can organize something beautifully, build a program, prepare a room, write a sermon, create a schedule, know theology, say prayers, and all these things can be good. Ezekiel's bodies weren't assembled incorrectly; they simply needed something structure could never produce for itself. Breath!

Then God tells Ezekiel: *“Prophesy to the breath ... ‘Come breath from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’”* **Ezekiel 37:9**

Here the Hebrew becomes almost impossible to reproduce in English, the word translated breath is ruach, the word behind winds is ruach, and throughout the vision, ruach also carries the meaning of spirit. Breathe, wind, spirit, the writer is deliberately all three meanings to move through the same passage.

And then: *“Breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet - a vast army.”* **Ezekiel 37:10**

The bones had structure, but the breath gave life!

Move forward hundreds of years. Jesus has been crucified. The tomb had been found empty. The disciples are behind locked doors, and the resurrected Jesus appears among them. He shows them His hands and his side and speaks peace over them. And then John records something that can be easy to read past:

“He breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” **John 20:22**

He breathed on them. Why would John include this detail? The Greek word John uses for “breathed on” is usually rare in the New Testament. It naturally repeats the biblical language of God breathing life into humanity. If we go all the way back to Genesis *“Then the Lord God formed a man from dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.”* **Genesis 2:7**

Dust is formed, God breathes and humanity lives!

In Ezekiel: Bones are formed, then breath enters, they live!

And in John, the resurrected Jesus stands before His disciples, and He breathes. John doesn't stop to explain the symbolism and maybe he doesn't need to. Creation. Re-creation. Breath. Spirit. Life. The Bible has been teaching us this language from the very beginning.

Let's talk about Pentecost. Acts 2 opens with the disciples gathered together and notice what happens first. Before anyone speaks in another language, even before Peter preaches and before thousands of people respond – they hear something.

“Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house.” **Acts 2:2**

Wind again—not necessarily literal wind, but a sound like a violent wind. Then fire appears, they are filled with the Holy Spirit, and they speak. The sequence is beautiful: sound, wind, fire, filling, and speech. Pentecost does not introduce a new Holy Spirit. This is the same Spirit who hovered over the waters before creation took shape, whose breath-and-wind imagery fills

Ezekiel's valley, and whom Jesus speaks of as He breathes on His disciples. Now that Spirit is poured out on the Church. The story has been unfolding from the beginning. Perhaps breath is a better teacher than I realized. Most of us will breathe about 20,000 times today and notice almost none of them. This may be what fascinates me most, something can be absolutely essential to life and still be so familiar that we stop paying attention to it, this is also possible with the presence of God. We can become so accustomed to the language of the Holy Spirit that we stop being astonished by what Jesus actually promises; God with us, God within us (mind blowing) The breath imagery running through Scripture isn't telling us that our physical breath is the Holy Spirit, it is giving us language. Invisible, but real. Unseen, but life giving. Not manufactured by us but received.

There is one more thing worth carrying into this week. Some places in our lives can look a little like Ezekiel's valley. Something has become dry or scattered, or perhaps everything has been put back together and looks perfectly fine from the outside – but there is no breath in it. Ezekiel's vision reminds us that God is not intimidated by either condition. He knows how to bring order to dry bones. And he knows how to breathe life into what order alone cannot revive. Let our prayer this week be a simple one:

Holy Spirit, show me where I have settled for structure when what I truly need is Your Life.

Breathe again.

Be part of the conversation, if this message met you in a meaningful way, or if you have been reflecting, praying or simply sitting with these words, we invite you to reach out.

You can call the church office # (316) 942-1491 or send me an email anytime – kate.green@asburychurch.org. Your thoughts and experiences are a gift to us.

With Love,

Kate Green, the Asbury Staff, and your Asbury Church Family

ASBURY PRAYER PAGE

WEEK OF 9/20/2026

JOYS

Cheryl O'Brian had cancer removed from her head. Surgery went well. She is home recovering.

Sid Rowe and Mary Jo Fraipont have new baby Great Granddaughters. Both are healthy and beautiful.

Remi, Don and Joyce Britain's great grandson has gone home from the hospital which is a joy. There is no cure for Whooping Cough, so he has at least 100 days of this cough. Prayers for Remi and his mom and dad until he is well again.

HOSPITAL/SURGERIES

Judy Beebe's mother, Esther Shank, will have surgery on 9/25

Sheila Hitz is in St Francis CICU. She has been diagnosed with sepsis

Sid Rowe is having cataract surgery 9/24

Liz Bradshaw is having back surgery 9/24

Chris McLain is having shoulder surgery 9/24 at Orthopedic Hospital

HOSPICE

Del Rinehart

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS

Betty Just is home. She still needs prayers for strength.

Bill & Carolyn Scarritt

Carol Schroer – Carol needs prayer for strength in getting around.

Cheryl O'Brian had cancer removed from her head 9/21

Darold and Patti Garnett

Daril Rice

Debbie Hall's daughter, Amber, has skin cancer. Treatment is not working like the doctors want. They will keep her on the same treatment plan for a while longer. She needs continued prayer

Del & Debbie Rinehart – Del is in Hospice Facility in Derby

Dick & Julie Thompson

Don & Joyce Brittain

Marilyn Fields and family

Gloria Rising

Kay Guitz

Pat Ashton

Terry Giles had a cardiac ablation on 8/17 at Wesley. Her ablation did not go well. More surgery is expected. She is home now, waiting for the next step in her treatment.

PRAYING FOR OUR FRIENDS & THEIR FAMILIES

Cindy and Terry Shields' friend Lorianna (15) was walking her dog when she was hit by a hit-and-run driver. She is in critical condition with brain bleeds, a fractured skull, and road rash. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.

Dan & Janine Hammond, family of Beth and Dave Perkins.

Felix & Cassandra, friends of Ron & Linda Stephen, Felix has lymphoma and is a lot of pain.

Frank Campbell, Linda Stephen brother-in-law in TN., is fighting bile duct cancer.

Gail McCurry, friend of Linda Stephen, is battling metastatic breast cancer.

George Delaney, brother-in-law of Debbie Rinehart.

Hillary Shields, Terry Shields Nephew's wife is in a nursing home (although very young) in OKC.

Jon Nelson is having stomach cancer surgery in Oklahoma. He is a family member of Mary Jo Fraipont.

Kathryn Dunham, (Marcia Reese sister), cancer has returned.

Leigh, Syd Rowe's friend, has been diagnosed with stage 3 cancer. Waiting for treatment plan.

Terri Perry, (Marcia Reese's friend), diagnosed with CML Leukemia.

Anonymous – Messaged the church for prayer

Prayers asked for a brother that has had a stroke.

CANCER FIGHTERS

Amber, Debbie Hall's daughter, Angie Dexter de Fuentes, Ben Moore, Carol Williams, Don Brittain, Gene Fields, Jim Beebe, Joyce Goerzen, Kathryn Dunham, Linda Groves, Sheila Hitz, Suzanne Jones

HOMEBOUND CHURCH FAMILY MEMBERS

(If you would like to send cards or gifts for blessing baskets, please drop items off with Kate Green in the church office. Donations for gifts are greatly appreciated)

Barbara Whitsitt, Bernie Walser, Betty Guhr, Carolyn Davis, Carol Williams, Charles Broadie, Del Rinehart, Jerri Ford, Joyce Goerzen, Lynn Scott, Lucille Childers, Margaret Grundmeyer, Maria Robinson, Marvin Kraft, Merle Furry, Mike Kizzire, Nancy Walker, Roberta Nielsen, Sandy Gault, Suzanne Dunagan

CLOSE TO OUR HEART IN PRAYER

Remembering to lift up ISRAEL in our prayers. Scripture tells us to "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; may those who love you be secure." Deuteronomy 11:2, As we pray let us ask the Lord to cover Israel with His peace, protection, and healing, trusting His promises and His faithful watch over His people and His land.

Please be in prayer for any unborn children and their families. We ask that God surround them with His love, wisdom, and protection. May His grace bring hope, peace, and guidance to families facing difficult decisions, and may every unborn child be cherished as a gift from Him.

SERVING OUR COUNTRY – THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

Braden McBroom – US Coast Guard, Pastor Clint's son

Jaxon Dame USAF, Jim & Judy Beebe's grandson

Ryan Mountford USAF, Tracy Montford's son

MINISTRIES

Brewery Church & Community Garden (Nathan Snyder, Founder)

Embrace

New Covenant Church (Pastor Cathy Holly)

TRAVEL MERCIES

Pastor Clint and family traveling to Ireland

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, "Here I am, send me!" **Isaiah 6:8**

CONDOLENCES

Family and friends of Gene Fields. Gene went into the arms of Jesus on 9/22/26. Services at Asbury 9/28/26 10am.

Family and friends of Jordan. Jordan is the grandson of Bobby's friend Esther. Jordan passed away on 9/19/26. Services TBD

