



May 2021

The Harvest

Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

In a few weeks we will celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, when we commemorate the coming of the Holy Spirit 40 days after Easter. Originally, Pentecost was a Jewish holiday held 50 days after the Passover, hence the word *pentekoste* which means 50th or 50th day. It is celebrated by some denominations as the birthday of the church, because that is when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles and bestowed upon them the courage and joy to preach the Resurrection openly.

But who is the Holy Spirit, really? It seems to me that we profess a lot of 'facts' about the Holy Spirit, but what do we really **know** regarding this third person in the Trinity? I dare say maybe not as much as we think.

The book of Genesis says that 'In the beginning as God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth was formless...and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.' (Gen. 1:2) The Holy Spirit was active in creation. In the Old Testament a person's state of existing is expressed in his 'breath', '**spirit**' or 'soul' because in creation God 'breathed the breath or spirit of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.' (Gen 2:7) The rudiments of life are found in the **Spirit of God**, which is why the Creed identifies the **Spirit** as the 'Lord and Giver of life'. The Spirit is the real powerhouse of the Trinity representing the power, energy, strength, and essence of God.

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To Connect to Christ Church Online

<https://christlockport.info/>

Compline – Thursday 7:00 pm
Sunday Service Live Stream
Donate with PayPal

2nd Sat. Food Drive

The next Food Drive will be Saturday, May 8th from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. We need to continue to focus on protein-rich foods. In addition, with the warm weather approaching, we need drinks (water, juice, etc.). At the moment we are short on spaghetti sauce. For an occasional treat it would be nice to have a few mixes for baked goods.

We are making a difference for a lot of people in Lockport who depend on the blessing boxes for food. Thank you to all who donate and especially to our Outreach Committee who regularly fill the boxes.

Altar Flowers

Have you ever wondered who puts the flowers on the altar? Members of the church give the flowers each Sunday, often in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving. When you provide the flowers, you take them home after church or give them to someone. There are a few Sundays available: May 30th (Pentecost – all red flowers), 6/13th and July 11th. If you would like to learn more or claim a Sunday to do the flowers, please call Betsey Erasing. Call the church at 433-9229 if you need Betsey's phone number.

Thanks to All Who Cleaned

A year's worth of dust and construction debris (from the roof leaks and rehangng the lanterns) had accumulated while we were closed. Thanks to all those who helped clean the church to make it ready to welcome us back, and a special thanks to Debbie Bronschidle for organizing the clean-up.

Consider the following: When Jesus appeared to the disciples after his Resurrection he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven..." (Jn 20:23).

And again, in Luke's gospel Jesus tells his disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit: "Stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven." (Lk 24:49).

The Spirit of God reveals the real essence of God, which for me is MYSTERY. Recall the meeting between Nicodemus and Jesus where Nicodemus states that surely a grown-up person cannot enter the mother's womb a second time! No, indeed, says Jesus, for only "the Spirit can give birth to Spirit".

Comparing the Spirit to the wind – the Hebrew word "ruah" is the same for both – Jesus presses the metaphor. Just as one cannot see the wind, but only notice its effects, so too the Spirit. It cannot be 'seen' or 'touched' or indeed 'controlled'. "It blows where it wills...you do not know where it comes from, or where it is going. So is it with all who are born of the Spirit."

That passage from John gives us a good understanding of the Spirit. It cannot be controlled, manipulated, confined, or neutralized, but only **experienced!** We can only be open to let God breath his Spirit into us. And this breath of God remains with us: 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. And the Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you.'

Therefore, this Pentecost we should celebrate and make a joyous noise unto the Lord in thanksgiving of his continued presence among us. It should inspire us to 'get all fired up' about the Lord, our God! We should go forth and speak to all of the wonderful works that the Lord has done using whatever language conveys the message. Pray that our hearts may be on fire with the Spirit! Amen! Amen!

And remember the difference between Pentecost and Christmas, Easter, and the Ascension: Pentecost has NEVER ENDED!! God continues to pour out his Spirit on the world even to this day!

May the Spirit and the Mystery of the Living God be with you always.

Fr. Thomas+

**Pentecost is Sunday, May 23rd
Remember to wear red.**

“Change is inevitable; growth is optional”

As we experience the Resurrection of Christ in this glorious season of renewal and rebirth, as hopes are lifted for a “post-pandemic new normal”, and even as we admit our uncertainty: Are we anticipating a fresh start? An adventure or journey? Lots of hard work? All of these?

I came across this phrase recently on the Living Compass website: “Change is inevitable; growth is optional.” It seems appropriate for this “in between” time in which we are living. We are almost, *and* not yet. We dare to dream and hope, *and* yet are in uncharted waters. We have some idea of how much has changed in the past year, *and* we don’t yet have the full picture. Change is a reality; what about growth? Did any of us experience personal growth in the past year? How about growth as a faith community? The changes in how we worship are obvious, as in-person worship takes its first careful steps. But how has our *faith community* changed? Have we as a faith community experienced growth in our ministry both within and beyond our church family? Where do we go from here, and how do we walk on this “balance beam” of life?

Our hope and prayer is that at some point this year we will be able to resume our unrestricted communal life within the church building, sharing conversation and coffee, not to mention singing in church! But we aren’t there yet, *and* it is one of those “unknowns” that makes it difficult for us to talk about what the future looks like for our faith community. And yet, we are invited to step out in faith and look to the future. A good place to begin is to make some quiet time for ourselves to let our imaginations run free, to envision in what ways we as individuals and as a community may identify our growth within the changes we’ve experienced. What have we learned about ourselves? New interests, skills, ministries? And how may we share “ourselves” with our faith community so that the community may grow in its mission? And how will the changes and growth define that mission?

While we ponder all of these questions, we find assurance in our Scriptures:

“But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:21-23)

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

As we look forward to the celebration of Pentecost on May 23rd, may we be open to the Presence of the Holy Spirit within us and among us. In this season of new life and growth, let us experience that Presence and be open to the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

Peace be with you,

Robin Kozlowski

Aspirant for Ordination to the Diaconate



Birthdays

- 2 Joe Fly
- 4 Rachel Winter
- 6 Leona Muscato
- 7 Lin Faust
- 11 Mikayla Bronschidle
- 12 Karen DeYoung
Gail Hoffman
- 14 George Tomkinson
- 15 Meg Wager
- 22 The Rev. Canon Abuid
Sam
- 26 Pat Goetz

Anniversaries

- 2 Clair & Joan Watkins
- 7 Dan & Martha
Buchanan
- 12 Joe & Fay
Mrowczynski
- 23 Roger & Beth Cook



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From the Finance Committee...

New members are being added to the Finance Committee and it is taking more of a leadership role. It will meet quarterly and prepare a brief article for the Harvest after each meeting. The Finance Committee will be looking at upcoming expenses and anything that needs attention around the church in order to advise the Vestry, will lead stewardship, and will prepare the budget.

Contributions for the first quarter of 2021 are about what they were in 2020, but this year it includes \$3,000 given for the electrical work on the church lighting. Expenses were controlled this year by not using much electricity and keeping the heat at 55° except the parish hall was heated to 70° Sunday mornings. Even so our expenses were about the same as last year because of inflation. Our investments increased \$18,000 in the first quarter, which is good news.

Christ Church has Reopened!

On April 18th we gathered for the first in-person worship since March 8, 2020. It was wonderful to worship with our church family again. Even though we had to maintain social distancing (alas, no hugs at the peace), we could see each other and chat with friends outside. And COVID accomplished a miracle at Christ Church – notice all those Episcopalians sitting in the front of the church!

