

May 23, 2021 – Pentecost

Prelude

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PEACE BE WITH YOU

Introduction to the day

Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Crossing all boundaries that would separate us, the Spirit brings the wideness of God's mercy to places we least expect it—to a crowd of strangers of different lands and tongues, to dry bones, to our weak hearts. Jesus promises his disciples that they will be accompanied by the Holy Spirit, and that this Spirit reveals the truth. We celebrate that we too have been visited with this same Spirit. Guided by the truth, we join together in worship, and then disperse to share the fullness of Christ's love with the world.

Call to Worship

Wind of God, present since before creation, fall on us now. Whisper to Us. Shout to Us. Comfort and guide us. Alight on us anew and revive our own spirits to love and serve.

Come let us worship

Prayer of Confession (Romans 8, John 15)

Gracious God, we do not often listen for your Holy Spirit, we turn from your guidance and your inspiration. The whispers and the shouts do not penetrate the noise of our daily lives. We silence the wisdom available to us. Through your Spirit of Truth, open our lives to your holy whispers and shouts, that our very lives may testify to unseen hope. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

In the name of Jesus Christ, who sent us the Spirit of Truth, you are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. †

GATHERING HYMN - ELW #526 – “God Is Here!”

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE - *Page 147*

CANTICLE OF PRAISE, THIS IS THE FEAST – *Page 148*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Mighty God, you breathe life into our bones, and your Spirit brings truth to the world. Send us this Spirit, transform us by your truth, and give us language to proclaim your gospel, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Acts 2:1-21

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, [the apostles] were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new

wine.” ¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. ²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. ²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:22-27

A reading from Romans.

²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. ²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said,] ²⁶“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my

behalf. ²⁷You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. ^{16:4b}“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; ¹¹about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. ¹²“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.



SUMMER

SERMON SERIES - 2021

Bishop Greg Mohr, British Columbia Synod



The Acts of the Apostles...no...of the Spirit!

VIDEO

<https://elcic.box.com/s/q5dp5knotf9vd81crx1x29frzw2uuoil>

Sermon (*That corresponds with the above video*)

Today is a major celebration in the church year. It is Pentecost Sunday – that day when we celebrate how God lives and moves and has being among us.

Now, first of all, I must say this: whoever put this Bible together and named each of the books has it wrong! The title of this book of Acts is very misleading. The book we call “The Acts of the Apostles” has the wrong title. It should be called “The Acts of the Holy Spirit!”

That’s what this book is about. That is who this book is about.

Oh, sure, the apostles do plenty of action in this book, but most of their action is reaction. The real action in the story, the real direction in the story, is from the Holy Spirit.

Open up “the Acts of the Apostles” and check it out. All throughout the seven weeks of the Easter season, whether in years A, B or C, we read from the book of Acts. What we see when we read these texts is that every major move that the church or the leaders of the church make in the book of Acts is initiated and prodded by the Holy Spirit.

Here in today’s reading, we find the disciples gathered in an upper room, waiting, waiting . . . for what, they do not know, but they are practically as good as dead.

The great, glorious, heady days following Jesus’ resurrection now seem so distant. Jesus had left them once again and they are all alone.

Oh, sure, Jesus promised that he would send them something; something the Scriptures call the Counsellor or the Advocate, but really, what did that mean?

And so they stayed there in Jerusalem, all huddled up together.

How could that small group of lifeless and dispirited disciples do anything? How could they achieve anything? Their motley crew had little hope – and even less confidence.

But like that Valley of the Dry bones that we read about in the book of Ezekiel, we witness how the wind/breath/spirit of God began to blow. In and through them, God’s spirit moved.

They say it looked like flames, and that image evokes all the other Biblical images of how the presence of God is described in the language of flame and fire.

We think of the time Moses encountered God in the burning bush.

We’re reminded of the story of the Exodus, where God led the people in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Perhaps we recall the story of the Transfiguration, where Jesus’ appearance is changed and his face shone.

The image of flames is NOT the most important thing here, however. It might be cool from a cinematic point of view, but what makes this account even more dramatic, even more unbelievable, is that here the Holy Spirit is given to them all.

Previously, the Spirit was a special possession for a special purpose. We think of the Judges or the prophets throughout Scripture: God calls, the spirit is given, an individual accomplishes the task.

But here at Pentecost, God changes the way God operates. A new thing is being done among us. God's spirit shall be with and abide with us all the time.

My goodness – do you understand what is being said and done? God's spirit resting on each of us, to bear God's creative and redeeming word to all the world;

God's spirit resting on each of us, to be God's agents in this world, to be a vehicle of love and compassion, to be a prophetic voice in the midst of our communities; no longer the purview of one person here and there; no longer the task given simply to one here and one there – but to us all.

My goodness – what is this Spirit up to? Is there no end to the breadth and depth of the spirit's workings?

It starts here in this story in the book of Acts and continues on.

Time and time again, we read of how the spirit propels the church onward into new ventures, into new ways of experiencing the love of Christ, into new and sometimes difficult understandings of what it means to be the people of God.

All throughout this book of Acts, we see the spirit at work.

Gathered in Jerusalem that day were Jewish people from “every nation on earth” for a big celebration. That long listing of the nations in our reading from Acts is meant to convey that every nation on earth had somebody there at Pentecost.

There were strange nations with strange-sounding, difficult to pronounce names like Cappadocians, Medes, Elamites and Mesopotamians.

But as one scholar has pointed out, this Pentecost gathering is not only a diverse ethnic gathering, it is also a historically impossible one as well.

Those Medes who were there that Pentecost would have had a tough time getting to Jerusalem from Mesopotamia, not only because they had to travel a few hundred kilometers but because they had to travel a couple of

hundred years as well. The Medes had been long gone from the face of the earth for at least two centuries.

And those Elamites? They were mentioned back in the book of Ezra but not again. Those Elamites were also lost in the past.

We have here not only a gathering of people from the north and south, east and west, but also from the living and the dead. Fascinating!

As I travel throughout the churches of our ELCIC and of other denominations, I notice a particular architectural feature in some of our very oldest congregations.

Perhaps you also are familiar with this: The front of the church is very typical of a lot of older churches, where there is a communion rail in the shape of a half-circle that wraps around the altar.

An architect friend once told me that the shape and design was very intentional theologically and symbolically. The design arose from the time when most churches had a cemetery as part of the church property.

As you gathered for communion you came and knelt around the altar, in this half-circle arrangement. The symbolism was that the rest of the circle extended out into the rest of the church property, where the church cemetery was.

In other words, when you came to the altar for Holy Communion, you were being reminded that you gathered not just with the people who were sitting in the pew next to you, but you also gathered with all the saints, with the communion of saints, of every time and every place.

You gathered not only with Grandma and Grandpa and Great Uncle Frederick and Aunt Martha, but you also gathered with those mentioned here in Acts, chapter 2: Elamites, Cappadocians and Mesopotamians.

This strange, playful story is Acts way of saying that when God's spirit was poured out at Pentecost it was poured out not just for a few, but for all. The Holy Spirit is God's way of being portable; of not being restricted to time and place.

It is often said that the word "God" is not a noun but a verb. It is a word of action. The same is true of that aspect of God — the Holy Spirit —it is a verb, an action, alive, engaged.

This is an active God: seeking, searching, leading, guiding, comforting, renewing, saving, loving, calling.

The Spirit is given to call us forward, to call us into action, to be agents of change and seekers of justice, engaged in neighbour-love, grounded in service.

One of the terms used in Scripture for the Holy Spirit is that of Counsellor. This name of Counsellor isn't so much about making us feel better, as it is a Counsellor who helps you work through things, and make changes in your life, your attitudes and your actions.

Another translation of the biblical term for Holy Spirit is that of Advocate. We think of someone who walks beside us and advocates on our behalf. But this is done not so you can be a passive participant. Rather — an advocate helps you to achieve change, transformation and justice.

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Abide in us. Restore us. Transform us. Re-orient us. Propel us forward into love, service, justice-seeking and justice-making, love for the world of God's holy creation, love for each other, love for the neighbour.

Maybe that half-circle of a communion railing isn't just about being reminded of the saints who have gone before us. Maybe that half-circle extends out beyond the cemetery, into the world beyond, into God's beloved creation, among all people, neighbours and strangers, beloved.

Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY – ELW #398 – “Holy Spirit, Truth Divine”

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you give the Holy Spirit to your church, filling it with many and varied gifts. In the church throughout the world, strengthen us in our visioning and dreaming, that it may discover anew the Spirit's creative work. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of life, your mighty works are too numerous to count. The earth is full of your creatures, living things both great and small. Open your hand and give them the necessities of this life. Send your fresh Spirit over the face of the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of the nations, at the sound of the rushing wind, people speaking different languages proclaimed and heard together your deeds of power. Fill the leaders of nations with your Holy Spirit, so that they exercise your gracious will in the lives of people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of faithfulness, you tend to the needs of your people, even the sighs of our hearts. Hear those who cry out to you in distress. Restore to wholeness all who are in any need this day; especially, Florence, Jason, Richard, Heather, Sheila, Vince, Robert, Dorian, Ryan, Kristen. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of love, fill this congregation Zion Church with gratitude for the gifts we have received from you. Renew our ministries, heal our divisions, and open us to the needs of our neighbors. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of hope, those who have died in you raise their eternal song of praise. We give you thanks for the many gifts of your people and rejoice in the witness of your saints. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Special Music as Table is Prepared

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Offering Prayer

During this time of COVID 19 and Social restrictions and unable to attend the churches we belong to, We thank everyone for their continued offerings we have received through the mail, auto bank giving or special delivery. This provides for the work of the church here in this community and nationwide.

P: Let us pray, God of promise and of promise fulfilled,

C: When we do not know how to pray, your Holy Spirit prays for us in sighs too deep for words. Hear our prayers for goodness in the world. Receive these gifts, that they may help answer the Holy Spirit's hope for all creation. Amen

PRE-COMMUNION MUSIC

COMMUNION DIALOGUE

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 154)

INVITATION TO COMMUNION)

Come and see the Lord is here, let us commune together people of faith.

Distribution of Elements

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 154)

“Lamb of God” may be sung.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Spirit of God, who fed the multitudes, provided the manna in the wilderness, and blessed the elements, we give great thanks for the meal eaten and the company surrounding us. Inspire us as we move forward this day and encourage us to transform our dreams into reality. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. The God of all grace bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN – ELW #400 – “God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind”

DISMISSAL (ELW p. 155)

The assisting minister may send the assembly into mission.

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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News and Announcements:

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Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Richard Hubert, Heather Miller, Sheila Purdy, Vince Rabishaw, Robert Schoof, Dorian Verch, Ryan, Kristen.

SERVICE BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday mornings a week later.

COVID-19 VACCINE REGISTRATION AND BOOKING

In order to assist our seniors, Chair Susan Dupuis asked Ellen Vandersleen and Jan Scheidt for assistance in registering and booking our senior members for the Covid-19 vaccine. We have worked our way down the list (arranged by age) and continue to assist those members who might have difficulty in registering and booking an appointment. At the same time, we are also updating our church records, asking for cell phone numbers and email addresses. It is the goal of Church Council to have an updated list of membership for when Pastor Scott and his wife, Sue arrive at the end of May. Pastor Scott begins his ministry here effective June 1st, 2021.

Effective April 15, those members who received their shot, also received a return date the third week in July. Members who received their vaccine prior to April 15, will be telephoned or emailed a date for their second dose. If you require further assistance and need some help, please phone Ellen Vandersleen at (613) 732 – 7649 or Jan Scheidt at (613) 631 – 0658 and leave your name and phone number. Please note that Jan prefers to use her cell phone number (due to severe hearing loss) and it is (519) 752 –

9826. Many thanks to the many members who have graciously shared with Susan, Ellen and Jan information to update the church records. Jan Scheidt, Social Ministry Committee

PUBLIC BIBLE READING

On Sunday June 6 the public reading of the bible will be taking place at the Pembroke Amphitheatre beginning at 1:00 pm. If you would like to participate please contact Ruth Kirk Davidson at 613-735-1877 or Lois Wilson at 613-687-4906 to book your time. You can also participate by reading your bible out loud at your home, either inside or outside.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Please remember that Pastor Leena is available to all for pastoral care during the next few months. This support may look different than we are accustomed to as she will be following all of the covid restrictions. She can be contacted at 613-631-1082

Today's Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church's Production Crew:

Presider: Pastor Leena Jensen

Musician: Blaine Sack

Worship Assistant/Reader: Lorraine MacKenzie

Projectionist: Ellen Vandersleen

Recorder: Alex Hammel

Sound Board Operator: Krista Hammel

Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

This Week at Zion – May 24 - 30

Tuesday **7p.m.** Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday **10am** Recording of Holy Trinity Worship Service