

May 23, 2021 Worship – Pentecost Sunday

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.

Thanksgiving For Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,

for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ,

that your Spirit comes to us

in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,

like rains to our thirsting earth,

like streams that revive our souls,

like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church
when we hide in fear.

Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.

Send us companions on our journey
as we share your life.

Make us one, risen Christ.

Cleanse our hearts.

Shower us with life.

To you be given all praise,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God,

now and forever.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

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.**

Lesson – 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.' ”

Children's Message – Presentation of quilts to Seniors: Savannah Small, Luke Small & Tyler L'Heureux

Gospel – John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15

[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.”

Message

Grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. AMEN

Our Gospel text for this week comes right before our Gospel text for last week where we heard Jesus pray for his disciples, and that the world would come to know the love of God in Jesus Christ through their witness. In today's gospel Jesus is telling his disciples that they won't be alone in that mission.

Our New Testament lesson for today is the Pentecost text where tongues of fire sit upon the heads of those gathered, and all in the crowd hear their native tongue, telling of God's power. Jesus is in talking to the disciples in our Gospel text is prophesying what would happen in Acts.

“When the Advocate comes...he will testify on my behalf.” When the Spirit comes all of you, in your native tongue, will give praise to God.

Jesus talks of this Advocate that will come.

What is an Advocate? Dictionary definitions is “someone who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy” or “to publicly recommend or support.”

We have come to understand this idea of advocate somewhat differently. We have come to understand being an advocate as being someone that does something for someone that they are not able to do for themselves. Doing this strips them of their humanity, of their person-ness.

With this understanding we would hear this text as Jesus telling us that the Holy Spirit will be sent to be our advocate, because we can't do life entirely on our own. While we may sometimes feel that is the case, I highly doubt it is entirely true, and while we sometimes feel like we need someone to grab us by the ear and pull us along, I don't think that is why God sends the Holy Spirit.

To be an advocate is to help along, to join with, to accompany. There is a huge difference between that and "do for others what they are unable to do" – because it doesn't assume incapability.

The more I have learned about the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin's partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi, the more I have realized the importance of an accompaniment model of Advocacy. We *could* just throw money towards our Companion Synod and call it good. We *could* be satisfied with that approach. There *wouldn't* be anything wrong with that.

But.

Is that really the approach we want to take? If we do a giving campaign here for our companion synod in Malawi, we know that we are doing it as an invested partner. Members from the Good Shepherd faith community have been there. Relationships have been formed. We know that we aren't just throwing money at our partners hoping that it goes to something good.

Rather, we know (because of the relationships that have been formed) that those dollars will be used to feed people who are trying to survive through drought. We know that dollars given will be used to help educate folks on permaculture and sustainable crops in a difficult climate.

That is accompaniment. That is coming along side and going through life WITH others. That is advocacy.

That is the Holy Spirit.

And it is important to have that Advocate, as the disciples would soon learn. Not long after telling them that the Advocate would be sent to them, he tells them "Nevertheless 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." We know what he means when he tells them that, but they haven't yet grasped what is to come.

Jesus knows that He is about to pray for his disciples that the world would come to know His love through their actions. Jesus knows that he is about to go across the Kidron Valley to the garden where he will be betrayed and arrested. Jesus knows that He is about to die, and won't be with them much longer. Jesus knows they will need an advocate, a helper, someone to accompany them on their journey, their life, ahead.

And he knows we will need it to.

Scripture tells us, in Romans 8: "The Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words to express."

There are those moments where life finds us unable to form the words to pray the prayers we need to pray. There are those moments when we need that sustaining presence of the Spirit to bring our needs to God our Creator.

Through the life-giving breath of the Spirit we are able to share the goodness of God's grace and mercy in the moments that seem impossible with the other that seems unreachable.

Through the life-giving breath of the Spirit and the redeeming power of Christ on the Cross we are given the words to testify to God's grace and mercy in the world, that all would know the love of God who created us, Jesus who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who sustains us.

Thanks be to God. Amen

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

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.

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 Jim Holte, Jim and Sandy Nelson, Joe Christensen, Steve and Marilee Julson, Bill Kuehn, Shirley Stark, Kathy Smith, Bob Kries, Bill and Betty Davey*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of love, fill this congregation 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.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of love,
you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;
for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Words of Institution – We invite you to find bread and wine or juice and partake in this Holy Meal.

(Holding the bread) In the night in which we was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and broke it, gave thanks and gave it for all to eat saying, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

(Holding the cup) Again after supper he took the cup, and after giving thanks he gave it for all to drink saying, "this cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. So often as you do this, remember me."

Once you've taken the elements say, "Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**"

Lord's Prayer

Blessing

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Please sign up to attend in-person worship!

For the remainder of May and throughout the Summer months, there will be worship Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Other worship opportunities will be added starting in June, but worship at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary will remain. Please call DeAnne in the office to get signed up!

Re-Connect Opportunities

We hope you will join us for any, or all, of these Re-Connect Opportunities throughout the week!

Stop in for coffee and conversation at 9 am on Mondays

TUESDAYS be sure to stop by for Bible Study starting at 11, followed by Lunch and Laughter at noon.

Wednesdays will continue to be our Faith Formation Days

Thursdays we will have the sanctuary open for prayer for 8 am to 3 pm.