

Sermon – May 23, 2021

Pentecost Year B 2021

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, the disciples were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs-- in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But 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. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

 `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.
 Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
 in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
 and they shall prophesy.
 And I will show portents in the heaven above
 and signs on the earth below,
 blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
 The sun shall be turned to darkness
 and the moon to blood,
 before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.
 Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' "

Prayer:

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

Sermon:

Today's Gospel tells us how the Christian Church began:

With a burst of energy and all kinds of people,
gathered in one place,

Filled with the Holy Spirit.

“...I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
... your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.”ⁱ

We're getting ready for our 50th Anniversary *and*

We're planning for the next 50 years!ⁱⁱ

It's been kind of crazy and kind of fun!

We've been very busy, cleaning up this place,

because it's our Church Home.ⁱⁱⁱ

Today we heard about how, on the 1st Pentecost,
God's Holy Spirit rev'd up the whole World.

And today, we call upon the Holy Spirit,
to help rev us up.

To help St. Christopher's, move forward,
to its next 50 years.

The 1st Pentecost was a time of new beginnings.

Pentecost will always be a chance

to kick start our lives.

Pentecost is why we're gathered here today!

We're gathered not only to say hello to old friends,

But to make *new friends*.

Not only to look back, but to look forward!

Pentecost is the time

to sing out Jesus name, with joy,

as one people!^{iv}

It's the time to spread the Good News:

Our God Reigns! *Our God Reigns!*

Even though, on Pentecost Sunday,
we remember how the Church began.

Pentecost is about new beginnings.

*Pentecost is about dreaming, and planning
and looking ahead.*

Let's not be shy. Let's be bold and brave.

Let's take a chance!

Let's breathe in the Spirit of love and empathy

And kindness and generosity!

Let's dream and build and call out to others,

Because in Pentecost we celebrate God's New Creation,
and God's new beginnings.

Today, let's celebrate the bloom of new Spring flowers,

As the winter struck trees green up

and the birds sing.

Today, let's celebrate the rebuilding of this sacred place.

Not even Snowmageddon can stay God's mighty hand.

Today, we've gathered for praise and worship and prayer,
and conversation and old friends and laughter.^v

Today, let's celebrate our soon rebuilt and improved
church and school, our church and school family
and our shared history.

Today, let's celebrate new friends, and new beginnings,
And the good things to come:

- a new community food garden, to blossom on our fallow land;
- maybe Food Truck Friday, and kids shooting hoops on our basketball court.

Today, we celebrate our history!

And we dream of our future, *together*.

Yes, there is much hard work at hand. ^{vi}

But let's work together.

Everyone has something to offer!

Let's envision our next 50 years, together.

Let's talk, and dream and hope and pray,
as one people, one family, in this special place.

2000 years ago the Holy Spirit came, & the Church began.

St. Paul wrote:

“... whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just,
whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious,
if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.”^{vii}

“Have no anxiety about anything,
but...let your requests be...known to God.
And the peace of God, which passes all understanding,
will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

The Holy Spirit is the God's engine of peace.

And the Holy Spirit lives here.

She's part of us and She's part of this Place.

Today let the Holy Spirit open our hearts and eyes.

Ask God, and ask yourself:

- What are we are called do here?
- Where do we go Lord?
- What will you have us do?

These are good questions. The Lord has the answers.

Pray. Watch. Listen. Speak. And Act.

-AMEN

ⁱ I will pour out my Spirit [on...both men and women]; and they shall prophesy." Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

ⁱⁱ We've been cleaning up after Snowmageddon. A few weeks ago many of us bravely tackled sorting out the storage shed, the Bell Tower closet, and the old choir room. Lots of old books and papers and accumulated flotsam and jetsam, have found new homes.

ⁱⁱⁱ Thanks to everyone who has chipped in!

^{iv} Did you know that "Pentecost" means, "Fiftieth"? Isn't it cool that we're celebrating our 50th anniversary on Pentecost! Pentecost is celebrated as the day on which the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles (Acts. 2:1-13). Pentecost is the 50th day of Eastertide and the 10th day of the Jesus' Ascension.

^v Today we celebrate a nicely cleaned up church and school, with repairs soon underway.

^{vi} A lot of money will be spent rebuilding our church and our school! Thank Heavens for insurance!

^{vii} Philippians 4:5-9.