

The Day of Pentecost - Whitsunday Year C May 15, 2016

As what some folk call the “God’s Story” part of the Liturgical Calendar begins to draw to a close, we are prepared for the second half of the year – the “Our Story” part which happens in Ordinary Time. And that preparation is in the form of a gift – the Pentecost gift of God’s Spirit, God’s community, and God’s call. It is easy, after all of the work of the calendar so far to just breathe a sigh of relief and just get through the last few weeks with as little effort and stress as possible. But, the Pentecost event needs our best efforts – and some new ways of thinking about it. Which I hope I’m helping to stir up in this post.

May your eyes be opened and your heart be filled as you celebrate the ever-present Spirit of God this week, and as you receive the empowerment of God for the journey ahead.

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

The First Reading - Acts 2: 1-21: The believers are filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and they start to praise God in various languages.

or **Genesis 11: 1-9** : Humanity seeks to build a tower that reaches the heavens, but God confuses their language and they scatter over the earth.

The Psalm - Psalm 104: 26-36, 37b : The world and all its creatures depend on God for provision and breath – which leads the Psalmist to commit to praise God.

The Second Reading - Romans 8: 14-17: God has given us God’s Spirit by which we know we are God’s children, sharing both in God’s glory and God’s suffering. or Acts 2: 1-21: See above

The Gospel Reading - John 14: 8-17, [25-27] : Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to be an advocate for his followers, and to lead them into truth.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

[http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Acts%202:%201-21%0A%2BOR%0AGenesis%2011:%201-9%0Acw%20Psalm%20104:%2026-36,%2037b%0ARomans%20%208:%2014-17%0A%2BOR%0AActs%202:%201-21%20%0AJohn%2014:%208-17,%20\[25-27\]](http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Acts%202:%201-21%0A%2BOR%0AGenesis%2011:%201-9%0Acw%20Psalm%20104:%2026-36,%2037b%0ARomans%20%208:%2014-17%0A%2BOR%0AActs%202:%201-21%20%0AJohn%2014:%208-17,%20[25-27])

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

God,
who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people,
by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit;
Grant us by the same Spirit
to have a right judgment in all things,
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort;
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end.

Collect Two

Almighty God,
who on the day of Pentecost
sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles
with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame,
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel:
By the power of the same Spirit
strengthen us to witness to your truth
and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Gracious God, Spirit of Life, surging freely, loving generously, seeking endlessly, move upon the face of our world and embrace all its creatures with grace. Startle the powerful and the humble with your power and tenderness, your purpose and determination, your patience and mercy. Hear our prayers of thankfulness and our requests for your intercession.....
Lord, hear our prayer....

Father and Mother of us all, we thank you for your nurture and your care - for how you pour your gifts out upon the earth blessing your people not only with bread and wine, but with talents and abilities, with dreams and visions, and with all that goes to make us one body - a body of light - of love and of care - of healing and of witness.... Lord, hear our prayer...

Heavenly Joy, Rock of Ages, Wind upon the Sea, we thank you for how you have made us to drink of the one Spirit and for how you work through us to bring wholeness and peace to the world. We pray O God that each of us in this part of your church - that each of us in St. Andrew's - both those of the past, those of today, and those who will travel with us tomorrow may find the perfect freedom that you promise in Christ Jesus and in dying to self and coming alive to him - walk his path of service and devotion, of sacrifice and of love. Make us a servant people with him, that like him, we may also share in your glory.... Lord hear our prayer....

Father, as we end this time of worship today, this time of celebration of the birth of your church, and for what you have done through your faithful

ones in this place and beyond, we pray too for those particular people that are upon our hearts, those named by our brothers and sisters here today and during this past week. We hold up before you... (Bidding Prayer)Lord, hear our prayer....

These things oh God, we bring before as a family, as your family, as people who would be one with you and with each other through Christ Jesus, who taught us to pray to you saying...

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

Rockies Net

POST COMMUNION

Faithful God,
who fulfilled the promises of Easter
by sending us your Holy Spirit
and opening to every race and nation the way of life eternal:
Open our lips by your Spirit,
that every tongue may tell of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS

Holy God,
you spoke the world into being.
Pour your Spirit to the ends of the earth,
that your children may return from exile
as citizens of your commonwealth,
and our divisions may be healed
by your word of love and righteousness. Amen.

Empowering God,
you gave the church
the abiding presence of your Holy Spirit.
Look upon your church today and hear our petitions.

Intercessions , concluding with:

Grant that, gathered and directed by your Spirit,
we may confess Christ as Lord
and combine our diverse gifts with a singular passion
to continue his mission in this world
until we join in your eternal praise. Amen.

Living God,
you have created all that is.

Send forth your Spirit to renew and restore us,
that we may proclaim your good news
in ways and words
that all will understand and believe. Amen.

Almighty God, who on the day of Pentecost sent your Holy Spirit on the disciples with the wind from heaven and with tongues of flame, filling them with joy and boldness to preach the Gospel: send us out in the power of the same Spirit to witness to your truth and to draw everyone to the fire of your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

Faithful God, you fulfilled the promise of Easter by sending your Holy Spirit and opening the way of eternal life to all the human race. Keep us in the unity of your Spirit, that every tongue may tell of your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

God who as at this time taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Common Worship*

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, ignite in us your holy fire; strengthen your children with the gift of faith, revive your Church with the breath of love, and renew the face of the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Common Worship*

LECTIONARY NOTES 1

Acts 2:1-21:

+ I have to admit - speaking in tongues is something that I don't connect to, don't understand, and frankly, usually don't take seriously. My only witnessing of speaking in tongues has left me more than a little skeptical. But I can't deny its frequent presence in the scriptures - so where does that leave me? Last year, a girl of approximately 9 year of age read this passage in church on Pentecost, and she whipped through Phrygia and Pamphylia like they were her hometowns. It was amazing. If I think about her reading this passage so flawlessly, I think I can get my head a little bit around the idea of speaking in tongues. When an unlikely vessel communicates an even more unlikely message, with unlikely abilities?

+ Pentecost. In some ways, these scene is one of the most exciting in the Bible. This is the moment of truth - Jesus is dead, risen, and ascended. The disciples

have been taught, prodded, encouraged, but most of all, entrusted with the good news. Will they carry it on? Will they stand up in the face of opposition and accusations? Yes! The start of the church.

+ Everyone who calls on God's name will be saved!

+ Notice that Peter quotes how God's spirit is poured out on all flesh: sons, daughters, young, old, slave free. Seriously, where do we get the idea that God only speaks through some people, whom we deem acceptable?

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b:

+ manifold: many and varied

+ Leviathan: same name as Jonah's whale is given - a big sea 'monster'/creature, or just generally a big thing of its kind: the 'Leviathan' of the redwoods would be the biggest of the trees. (check out Dictionary.com)

+ The dependence of creation on the Creator. While I don't like to think of God hiding God's face from me, the psalmist makes the point that we are dependent on God.

+ "I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being." Amen!

Romans 8:14-17:

+ "not a spirit of slavery, but a spirit of adoption." I'm always torn by Paul's language of adoption. On the one hand, I'm hesitant to think that we're not born into God's family, God's children. I shudder to think that God only adopts some as children, and not others, which is an unfortunate and often drawn conclusion of such theology. But on the other hand, there is a special-ness about God going the 'extra mile', as it were, to make us God's own. Out of God's deep desire to have us as children. I guess I just want to make sure God has no limits or qualifications for who is adopted! That we can all become heirs with Christ...

John 14:8-17, (25-27):

+ "Show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." "Have I been with you all this time, and you still do not know me?" I like this exchange between Philip (a highly under-played apostle) and Jesus. "We will be satisfied." What would it take from God for you to be satisfied? It seems we humans always need one more proof, one more sign, one more prayer answered as we want it answered. Jesus says, "don't you get it? I'm all you need to be satisfied." Do we get it?

+ Spirit talk - another passage where Jesus is trying to prepare the disciples, convince them that they can and will continue his work even after he is no longer physically present. Unfortunately, this passage is couched in John's highly repetitive and circular language, which makes it tiresome if not hard to follow. But the verses 25-27, which were in the lectionary two weeks before, give very understandable words of comfort with which to part: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives..." Indeed.

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By Beth Quick

LECTIONARY NOTES 2

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

Perhaps the oldest mistake we make with the Pentecost event is to speak of it as the Spirit's "coming" – as if God's Spirit was absent from the world before this. Jesus gives us a clue to a different understanding, though, when he says that "the world cannot receive him because it isn't looking for him...". Pentecost is essentially a breakthrough in our human capacity to apprehend and experience God's activity which is (and always has been) active in all of creation (including us). At Pentecost we learn to look for God's Spirit – and the readings for today make it clear that God's Spirit can be seen and found anywhere and everywhere we look. It is this awareness that there is nowhere that God is not that breaks down Babel's walls of division. In receiving the new awareness of God's Spirit we find that we all speak a common Spirit-enabled language – the language of God-imagined, Spirit-filled, humanity. Once our eyes are opened to see God's Spirit in all things (including those who are different from us, who are hostile toward us, and who are most repulsive to us), everything changes. We know ourselves (and all creatures) as St. Francis did – as God's children and siblings of one another – and we willingly share Christ's suffering (as Paul says) to bring God's creation into awareness of this unity and community in God's Spirit.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: Across the globe human beings suffer from a blindness to the Spirit's presence and activity. When we use the earth as nothing more than a resource to enrich ourselves, we have failed to recognise the Spirit. When we justify killing, exploiting, marginalising or dehumanising others, we have failed to see the Spirit in them. When we embrace a rampant individualism and consumerism, we have failed to recognise God's Spirit and the community of all things in God's Spirit. Pentecost is a wake up call for our world – how different might our politics, economics and environmental policies be if we recognised God's Spirit in all things, and if we took time to really learn our common language? How would this consideration impact how you pray, speak, act, vote, spend, advocate and play? How can you and your community participate in the Spirit's work and help others to recognise God's Spirit in all things?

LOCAL APPLICATION: It is all too common among Christians to speak of God's Spirit being "with" us and "not with" others who believe differently from us. We speak of churches and people where God's Spirit has "left" and we talk about places where we think God is no longer present. Whenever we fall into this trap, we have missed the gift of Pentecost, and have made our God too small. But, when we realise that God's Spirit is everywhere – although we and/or others may not be looking for or able to recognise God's Spirit for whatever reason – we find our view of these others changes. We suddenly discover that

God can be encountered in every person, and every place – from a untouched places of breath-taking natural beauty to slums and disaster areas. And, once we have seen this, we discover that, like Jesus, we would rather suffer than inflict suffering on these Spirit-filled ones. We would rather sacrifice than exploit Spirit-filled people and the Spirit-filled world for personal gain. We would rather listen for the language of our common humanity than deny the humanity of a single person – even if they deny ours. What would it mean for you and your community to take Pentecost seriously? What defenses might have to come down? What hands might have to be offered to others? What beliefs might have to be released? What actions might have to become obsolete? What people might have to be welcomed and embraced?

SERMON OUTLINE

Jn 14:8-17 No one comes to the Father

J makes another amazing claim - text.... In Him alone we have access to God/come to know God - *know my Father (7) as well* - new concept - novel idea - *No one (1.18) has ever seen God...*

1. Philip's Request 8: *Lord show us the father & that will be enough for us* - some request!! - on par with Moses (**Exod 33**) - *Show me your glory> you will see my back (23) but my face must not be seen; cf Mt 5.8: the pure in heart - will see God...*

2. Jesus' Response 9-11: *Don't you know me (9) even after I have been among you such a long time?* Philip had know from day 1 that Jesus was the Messiah - as he brought Nathaniel!

Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Col 1.15) - the radiance of God's glory (Heb 1.3) & the exact representation of his being. Jesus makes another amazing Divine claim: *Don't you know (10) that I am in the Father & that the Father is in me?* - intimate union which is demonstrated by Jesus' words & works...

a) the things he said: *The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather it is the Father living in me* - communicating through me words of wonderful teaching/truth. *Believe me (11) when I say that I am in the Father & the Father is in me.*

b) ... he did: *believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves* - **cf 10.25:** *The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me;*

cf Mt 11.4: *Report to John (Bpt) what you see & hear...*

3. Disciples' Reward 12-14: *Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing* - proven in the early Church (Acts) - *will do even greater things than these becous I go to the Father* - in power of H Sp - into all the world - 3000 converts in 1 day!

They would still need His power/blessing: *I will do whatever you ask in my name(13) so that the Son may bring glory to the Father* - just ask me for anything in my name & I will do it...

There is no limit to the power of prayer/Christ!

By Norman Porteous

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

"Golden Age?" the Rev. Canon Charles K. Robertson, *Day1*

A wise and mischievous lay leader once made the comment that if, as several church members proclaimed with great hyperbole, there had been a "golden age" in the life of his parish, he must have blinked and missed it.

http://day1.org/1946-golden_age

[Pentecost Sermons](#), Links to ten sermons by Pastor Edward F. Markquart, Grace Lutheran Church, Seattle, Washington.
http://day1.org/1946-golden_age

"[This Is It!](#)" the Rev. Dr. Emmanuel McCall, *Day 1*
http://day1.org/1044-this_is_it

Rockies Net - Sermon and Liturgy
<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-pent-sn.php>

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-pent-sesu.php>

"We've Got Spirit, Yes We Do!" the Rev. Dr. Hal Brady, *Day 1*
http://day1.org/4756-weve_got_spirit_yes_we_do

"'Nothing But' Misses the Point" the Rev. Canon Frank S. Logue, Sermons that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

The Holy Spirit came to Jesus' first followers on Pentecost, empowering the frightened pack of disciples to become a brazen bunch of evangelists. The curse of the Tower of Babel was reversed in one amazing outburst. At Babel, people were divided. Former fishermen and other followers of Jesus became interpreters par excellence. In this Babel scene played backward, the devout Jews from Elam, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Pamphylia and the like now hear the Good News of what God has done through Jesus each in their own native language.
<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2013/05/06/pentecost-c-2013/>

CHILDREN

Worshiping with Children, Pentecost C, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown
<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2013/04/year-c-day-of-pentecost-may-19-2013.html>

"Happy Birthday!" On the Chancel Steps, children's resources by Frances Woodruff
<https://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2013/05/05/birthday/>

Story for Children's Worship and Family Activity, at word-sunday.com: A Catholic Resource for the Lectionary by Larry Broding
<http://www.word-sunday.com/index.html>

Rockies Net - Sermon and Liturgy
<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-pent-sn.php>
<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-pent-sesu.php>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Breathe On Me Breath Of God
O Thou Who Camest From Above
Spirit Divine Attend Our Prayers
www.churchnewsireland.org

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O Spirit Of The Living God
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Deep Calls To Deep
Breathe (YouTube video)
All Who Are Thirsty (YouTube video)
Spirit Of The Living God (YouTube video)
Shine Jesus Shine (YouTube video)
O Let The Son Of God Enfold You (YouTube video)