

Our Mission:

*To share Christ with the world
and grow disciples for Jesus*



Loving God and Loving Neighbor as Ourselves

Background:

The Day of Pentecost follows 50 days following the Passover. Think of the moment when the tongues of fire appeared over the heads of the disciples as a 'lightbulb' being turned on. Their ability to speak and be heard, is not just their ability to give witness to the resurrection, but it is the great reversal of what happened in Genesis at the Tower of Babel. What we could not seize for ourselves resulting in the confusion of tongues, God now gladly offers, and all can hear the Good News of God's act of reconciliation.

Theology Connection:

We struggle most with our understanding of the Third Person of the Trinity. We use language like breath or dove or wind to capture its dynamic nature. Nonetheless, we come back to Luther's explanation of the Third Article of the Apostle's Creed. It is not by my own power, wisdom, or might that I come to believe, but it is solely the work of the Holy spirit. Anything else would be another form of work's righteousness.

Application:

If we understand that our faith is a result of the work of the Holy Spirit, it might seem that there is but one thing to do; to pray that the Holy Spirit works upon our hearts. Prayer that asks God not to place something in our hands, but to strengthen our hearts to align us with his will would seem to be the natural response to the promise of Pentecost. Might we begin every prayer by first asking for the guidance of God's Holy Spirit in our lives? Might that change how we pray?

The Text: Acts 2:1-7,14-18, Galatians 4:4-7

Acts 2

¹When the day of Pentecost came they were all together in one place. ²Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

³They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?"

¹⁴Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

Galatians 4

⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

⁶ Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

⁷So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

ADULT

Have you ever shared with someone else, even your kids, about the moment that your faith became real; that it became your very own and not simply something you inherited from your elders? No one knows better, nor can they disagree when we speak of our personal encounter with God guided by the work of the Holy Spirit. As we celebrate Pentecost, this would be the perfect opportunity to remember and to share.

YOUTH

Please read Acts 2:1-7,14-18 and Galatians 4:4-7

Where there is breathe, there is life, and the breath of God is the gift of resurrection to those he loves. God's risen life has become our life. Think about that for a minute...

Christ's living presence is healing humanity and bringing humanity back into a relationship of love with family and with God. Jesus breathes on his disciples the Spirit so that they may continue his work of forgiving sins and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

What is the most dramatic thing you have ever witnessed? Do you enjoy telling people about what you experienced? Why or why not?

Please pray with me,

Dear God, thank you for adopting us into your kingdom and thank you the presence of the holy spirit that we feel daily. Help us stay in a relationship with you and help us love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

CHILDREN'S

People in Bible times often reserved tombs where they could be buried. Someone wanted to offer his tomb for the body of Jesus. Jesus was wrapped in special linens and a huge rock was placed in front of the tomb. It was Friday when Jesus was killed, and the next day was the Jewish Sabbath. Sabbath means day of rest. There were some women who loved Jesus very much. They wanted to anoint His body with special oils. They went on Sunday to do so and found an interesting and intriguing surprise! When the women arrived at the tomb, they found it empty! They saw two men standing by them in bright white clothing, they were angels. The women bowed their faces to the ground, and the angels told them that Jesus had risen from the dead! The women were so excited that they ran to tell the other, but they didn't believe the story. Peter jumped up and ran to the tomb! He looked in, but he only saw the cloth that Jesus' body had been wrapped in.

1. What did you learn from this story?
2. What is your favorite part of the story?
3. What do you think you would have thought and felt if you had been one of the women to discover the empty tomb?

Remember:

Jesus died to take away our sins, His resurrection completed what God had intended from the very beginning!

Pray:

Dear God, Thank You for saving us, and thank You for Your love. Help us to share the hope of Easter with others. Thank You for Your son Jesus. In His name we pray, Amen.