

Day of Pentecost May 31, 2020

West Kish Presbyterian Church and St. John's Lutheran Belleville, PA Day of Pentecost Radio Broadcast. Big Lewie radio AM 670, FM 92.9 May 31, 2020

CALL to WORSHIP - Sunday Morning Belleville bells

WELCOME ~

Good morning. This is Rev. Ela Robertson, pastor for West Kish Presbyterian and St. John's Lutheran in Belleville, PA. Today our bells declare Pentecost, the Sunday fifty days after Easter and the beginning of the 'season of the sending' as I like to call it. Our worship team this morning includes: Lisa Griffith - cantor and singer; Jim Buchanan - reader; John Haubrick -organ; Will Cullingford -recording tech; and Joy Byler and Kelly Byler - providing our bulletins, parts of which are omitted in our broadcast.

Over the last few weeks I have asked people, to reflect on what this time during stay-at- home orders and the shut-down of church buildings has meant to them theologically: How has your relationship to God changed through these days. What do you think God has been saying to you, to us, what have you learned, where is God leading us? Thank you Gwen, John, Matt, Lisa and others who have responded. Let us reflect on this again today.

Through the Holy Spirit let us invite Christ into our hearts and into our worship, with a prayer from the Preface for Pentecost.

PRAYER for PENTECOST

The Lord is Here - God's Spirit is with us!

This day we give you thanks because in fulfillment of your promise you pour out your Spirit upon us, filling us with your gifts, leading us into all truth, and uniting peoples of many tongues in the confession of one faith. Your Spirit gives us grace to call you our parent, to proclaim you to all nations and to serve you. Therefore we join our voices with angels and archangels, and with all those in whom the Spirit dwells. Amen

Our song of praise is *Hail Thee this Festival Day*, by Vaughan Williams. Lisa will sing the verses; everyone at home join in especially on the refrain!



CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

God of new creation, we confess that we have failed to trust your bountiful goodness. By the power of the Holy Spirit you brought forth the earth and its creatures in abundance. Yet, we hoard earth's resources and refuse to share your gifts. We dishonor your generosity by withholding our charity to those in need. We betray your kindness by dealing harshly with our enemies. We disregard your compassion by severely judging the sins of others. Forgive us. By the power of your Spirit renew our hearts and free us from sins that we may enjoy the fullness of your blessing upon all creation. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Sisters and brothers, the Spirit of God is resting on you, to restore, support, and strengthen you. Therefore, be at peace in the One who forgives and loves you; rise up and give God thanks.

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Let us extend the peace beyond the walls of our homes and into the world.

GREETING

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

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, by the power of your Holy Spirit, speak to us in the language of our hearts that we may hear your Word with understanding and answer your call with confidence. Amen.

LESSONS and PSALM (you are encouraged to read these in your celebrate, bulletin or Bible before the service.)

Numbers 1:12-30; Acts 2:1–21; 1 Corinthians 12:3b–13; Psalm 104:24–34, 35; John 20:19–23 or John 7:37–39

READING for PENTECOST ~ Jim Buchanan Acts 2:1-4, 16-21

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION ~ (sung by Lisa Griffith)

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL ~ John 20:21–23 The Spirit poured out

21Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." 22When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

REFLECTION on THE LESSONS Rev. Ela J. Robertson

Receive the Holy Spirit. As I'm thinking of these last eight weeks we haven't had much choice have we? We haven't been able to receive the bread and cup at the Lord's table, we haven't been able to share the Peace of Christ with handshakes, hugs and encouraging words, we haven't been able to enter the rooms of friends and congregants, and this may continue for some time. So, thank goodness, thank God for this command, for this promise: *Receive the Holy Spirit*!

The Holy Spirit has really been working over time. The Holy Spirit is the true virtual worship host, making our worship possible over the air waves, bringing us together with others, placing us momentarily in that favorite pew we always occupied, working through our imaginations, memories, hopes and prayers.

The Holy Spirit reminds us of the true virtual, the true virtues, the spiritual virtues, the benefits of all that seems intangible.

What is the Holy Spirit? An equal member of the Trinity and we may get into that next Sunday on Trinity Sunday. The Hebrew word for the Spirit, 'ruach' is often translated just breath, but its meaning is much broader much weightier. As with most attempts to describe God it can't be captured in one word or perhaps any words at all.

It brings breadth, revelation and understanding to the Word. It binds us together in our community, in our studies, worship and devotion even when we can't be together. It helps our Councils and Session explore and expand and create ways to adapt to being the church during a pandemic.

The Holy Spirit issues in Christ's ministry through wind and water at John's service of Baptism at the Jordan River. The Holy Spirit issues in the disciples ministry through fire and the gift of tongues at Pentecost.

Symbolically, Pentecost is where the arms of the cross meet, where the vertical dimension and the horizontal dimension of the Christ story intersect. Revelation, incarnation, resurrection and Ascension, that vertical up-down connection between Heaven and earth is the story of the Easter Season which we have been following these eight weeks. Christ is revealed, comes down to be with us, teaches, is raised up on the cross, resurrected, and ascends into heaven. Pentecost enacts the horizontal dimension, Christ sends the Holy Spirit to ignite the disciples giving them the passion to reach out to share the Gospel. With the gift of tongues they go out in all directions North, South, East, West, to neighbors and nations beyond their own horizons.

As the vertical and horizontal dimensions can carry spiritual meanings, our language embraces these dimensions in how we express emotions and states of being as well. For example: 'He really brought her down; that's the pits; She's feeling pretty low about it; I knew he was feeling down but I didn't know he was that depressed.' On the opposite end of this pole needing an upper, getting high is often associated with drug abuse, prescription or otherwise, a panacea for or escape from feeling low.

People need an uplift from their down feelings. Yet, other forms of uplift are more enduring and transforming. God provides us with the experience of the beauty of creation mountains, streams, fields, forests. And we are blessed with that in Big Valley. God calls us to gestures of caring, random and intentional acts of kindness. We can encourage others as they surmount personal battles, and celebrate achievements of large and even small accomplishments a drawer fixed, a meal prepared, a list checked off, a cabinet built, a quilt pieced.

Do you remember when at the beginning of the shut down how you might have started feeling a little down and restless and think "I'll just get in the car and go to the mall, I'll go and get some ice cream or chocolate, or go to that new restaurant." I certainly do. It was like the light switch you always used was no longer by the door. Your mind would instinctively turn toward that something that you believed would give you that upper and then you remembered 'that store is closed, they're only doing take out, and we're supposed to limit leaving home to essential trips only.' What will I do now?

The tangible, go-to remedies for our discomfort were limited at that moment. The Holy Spirit seemed to bring forward other creative options. I found myself being led to pick up things on my walks, and throwing them together in various arrangements I called 'prayer collages' made of sweet gum balls and dried petals of fallen flowers. It was something that I would just spend a few minutes on each day but would keep a tactile remembrance of this virus and the people who had fallen to it alive in my sight and in my prayers. I will be posting some of these prayer collages on our church facebook pages. Could we, in those moments of feeling down, disturbed, fearful or unsettled turn to the perhaps more intangible but more real uplift of the Holy Spirit? I'm hoping that's maybe something we have been able to accomplish, a gradual rewiring of our instincts and impulses to seek solutions in things we can buy. Can we turn instead to God for our uplift, and share that uplift with a picture, a homemade card or a call to others? More than one person in these last couple of weeks whom I have asked, 'what God is saying to us in these times,' has responded with: 'realizing how much we don't need and realizing what is most important in our lives.'

Will we be able to hold on to that learning, forfeiting instant gratification for leaning on God's grace, looking to be uplifted by God rather than satiated by material appetites. Can we reset that trigger from spend to send and be the one who is sent as Christ's disciple to bring the love of God and promise of harmony into this world?

This is just the beginning of the season of Pentecost, the season of the sending, when we focus on being sent to uplift and be uplifted by the creative power of the Holy Spirit. This is the longest season of the church calendar extending to the month before Christmas. With some continued restrictions to businesses, institutions and large gatherings possibly extending into the fall or beyond, we have more time to practice resetting our go-tos, resetting them towards God. Perhaps that is what God is telling us, perhaps that is what the energy of the Spirit is helping us to do in this time. In the name Jesus, the one working within us always. AMEN

SPECIAL MUSIC for reflection and prayer

Mike Bratt, local Belleville guitarist plays *Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart and All is Well With My Soul*

OFFERTORY (you may submit your offering by mail, drop it off at the church or include it your automatic bill paying program from your bank.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING/DEDICATION (from Ps. 104:28) Almighty God, we have opened our hands to you, and our hands have been filled with good things. Receive the gifts we bring in gratitude for your care for us, and help us to bless you with dedication of our lives; through Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

APOSTLES CREED

- I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
- I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into Hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic

Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS of the CHURCH ~ (please pray the prayers in the celebrate insert, on our prayer list and pray for all that you hold dear to your heart.)

During Covid 19, there has been so much noise, so much news, so many things we felt we had to keep up with and had to know. We will continue now in prayerful silence. Help us to be in your presence gracious God, to lament for the many forms of loss and strife in this world and to pray for others and ourselves that we may know that the Spirit of God does descend upon our heart and that all is well and all will be well.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (at home)

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 today our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses (debts) as we forgive those who trespass against us (debtors); and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION and CHARGE

May the grace of God bless you with peace, may the love of Christ, sustain you in joy, and may the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with courage, and lift you up in all ways, always. AMEN Parts of our liturgy today are adapted from *Sundays and Seasons, Augsburg* Fortress, from the Lutheran Book of Worship and from Kimberly Bracken Long, *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Year A, Volume 1,* John Knox Press

Pastor: Reverend Ela J. Robertson Phone 740-338-7123 Church Office: 935-2032 Email us at <u>stjohnco@embarqmail.com</u> St. John's Christian Day Care: 935-2959

Please remember in prayer ~ Rufina Kanagy (wife of Joe Kanagy), Audrey Michael and Donna Snook (sisters of Lucy Magda), Kim Aumiller, Ev Young, Samantha Smith, our members ~ Betty Harmon (Elmcroft), Carol Yoder, Diddy Cleck, Betty Smith, Memory Lane ~ Nancy Aumiller and sister, Sally Shingler.

Please remember in prayer, Jay and Joy Byler and family, as they continue to grieve the loss of Jay's mother, Mary Byler, who died last week.

Our Daycare is scheduled to open tomorrow, June 1 with precautionary measures in place. *Please pray* for the children and teachers as we navigate through this process, as best we can.

Next Sunday, June 7 ELCA Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton will be sharing a Trinity Sunday message for all ELCA churches across the nation. It will be included in our bulletin and worship service.

Council is meeting next week, to review the Safety Precautions and Measures for re-opening. Unless something changes, St. John's worship service **will be** held in the church. Your Good Shepherds will be contacting you with further information.

> Checking account balance 1/1/20 \$ 16,763.74 January ~ May 27 Income \$93,714.75 Expense \$78,297.29 Net Income \$ 15,417.46







Pentecost derives its name from the Jewish festival celebrating the harvest and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai fifty days after Passover. Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the Holy Spirit as God's presence within and among us. In Acts the Spirit arrives in rushing wind and flame, bringing God's presence to all people. Paul reminds us that though we each have different capacities, we are unified in the Spirit that equips us with these gifts. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, empowering them to forgive sin. We celebrate that we too are given the breath of the Holy Spirit and sent out to proclaim God's redeeming love to all the world.

Prayer of the Day

O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

Acts 2:1-21

Pentecost was a Jewish harvest festival that marked the fiftieth day after Passover. Luke portrays the Holy Spirit being poured out upon the disciples before the gathered and astonished people assembled in Jerusalem for the festival. Filled with the Spirit, the disciples were able to witness to the power of Christ's resurrection.

When 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.



How manifold are your I works, O LORD! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full | of your creatures. ²⁵Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too man-1 y to number, living things both | small and great. ²⁶There go the ships I to and fro, and Leviathan, which you made for the 1 sport of it. ²⁷All of them ¹ look to you to give them their food | in due season. R ²⁸You give it to them; they | gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled ¹ with good things. ²⁹When you hide your face, ¹ they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return 1 to their dust. ³⁰You send forth your Spirit, and they ¹ are created; and so you renew the face 1 of the earth. ³¹May the glory of the LORD en-¹ dure forever; O LORD, rejoice in | all your works. R ³²You look at the earth ¹ and it trembles; you touch the mountains ¹ and they smoke. ³³I will sing to the LORD as long | as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being. ³⁴May these words of ¹ mine please God. I will rejoice I in the LORD. ^{35b}Bless the LORD, ¹O my soul. Hal- | lelujah! R

First Reading, continued

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."

or Numbers 11:24-30 [not printed]

The spirit of God rested upon seventy elders in Israel who had been chosen to share the burden of leadership with Moses. When some became jealous that two others also had the spirit and could prophesy, Moses said that he hoped that all of God's people would be prophets.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

Paul is helping the Corinthians understand the relationship between our God-given unity and Spiritcreated diversity. The Spirit creates the unity of faith and gives all Christians diverse gifts for the common benefit of all. We need one another's diverse spiritual gifts because the same Spirit has given them to each person for the common good.

No one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

or Acts 2:1-21 [see First Reading]

Gospel

John 20:19-23

The risen Jesus appears to his disciples, offering them a benediction, a commission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when

they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

or John 7:37-39 [not printed]

Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as living water, quenching the thirst of all who come to him and filling the hearts of believers until they overflow.

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

We call on your spirit of unity, giving thanks for our different vocations. Activate and utilize the diverse gifts present in your church, that they reveal your love for all. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We call on your spirit of life, present in air, wind, humidity, storms, and oxygen in our atmosphere, breathing energy into all things. Heal with your breath the whole creation, especially those who struggle to breathe due to air pollution. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We call on your spirit of righteousness. Wherever we as a people are divided, unite us. Wherever we are prideful, humble us. Give each one of us a heart for justice and empathy. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. We call on your spirit of healing. Bless nurses, doctors, midwives, chaplains, counselors, and hospice workers as they care for those in need. We pray for all who long for comfort (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We call on your spirit of friendship. As Elizabeth welcomed Mary to her home, give us a spirit of welcome to those whom we meet in this congregation and outside these doors. Surprise us daily with unexpected grace, that we rejoice in every blessing you send. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We call on your spirit of hope. As you have led your saints in all times and places, stir in us the desire to follow their example, leading us from death to new life in you. Lord,

hear our prayer.

in your mercy,

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Visit of Mary to Elizabeth [transferred]; commemoration of Justin, martyr at Rome, died around 165) Luke 1:39-57. **Tuesday** Romans 8:26-27. **Wednesday** (commemoration of the Martyrs of Uganda, died 1886; John XXIII, Bishop of Rome, died 1963) John 7:37-39. **Thursday** Psalm 8. **Friday** (commemoration of Boniface, Bishop of Mainz, missionary to Germany, martyr, died 754) 2 Timothy 1:12b-14. **Saturday** John 14:15-17. **The Holy Trinity** (commemoration of Seattle, chief of the Duwamish Confederacy, died 1866) Genesis 1:1—2:4a; Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20.

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