

Bishop's Pentecost Message 2019



“The Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy, and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith” – Martin Luther, Small Catechism

Though our Pentecostal sisters and brothers spend a lot of time reflecting on the work of the Holy Spirit, we don't always do that as Lutherans. The festival of Pentecost calls us back and reminds us of the Holy Spirit that, as Martin Luther says, calls us through the gospel, enlightens us with the gifts of God, makes us holy, keeps us in the faith, and unites us to Jesus Christ in our Baptism. We are here because of the work and action of the Holy Spirit. It is good for us to remember it is the Spirit, poured out on the day of Pentecost, who calls us into the church, holds us together, and leads us forward as God's people.

Through the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, God shows us we are part of the ongoing mission of God. When our Lord Jesus was walking with the disciples, he was rightly in the lead. Jesus was the primary one teaching, healing, and performing miracles, except for the times when Jesus would send the disciples out on their own. That all changed on the day of Pentecost!

After Jesus' ascension, our Lord sent the Holy Spirit to lead the church. We can imagine the surprise of the disciples as this extraordinary power to proclaim the good news of Jesus throughout the world was poured into them. Now Peter, James, Andrew, and all the followers of Jesus, who had until now been standing in the background, were taking the lead in proclaiming the gospel and on that day 3000 were baptized.

You, my friends, have that same power in you. That same Holy Spirit who poured out on the first day of Pentecost was poured into you on the day of your baptism. Being led by the Holy Spirit, you are able to participate in the same mission of proclamation and healing. You are part of the work Jesus in doing in this world.

You demonstrate that power when you pray for, feed, clothe, and care for your neighbors. It might not seem as dramatic as that first

Pentecost, but it is the same love, grace, and mercy being poured out through you as it was through the disciples. We are led by the Spirit into this world to offer forgiveness and hope, new life and blessing. So whether the Spirit comes as a mighty wind with flame and power, or quietly into the private places in our lives, rest assured, the Spirit does come. The Holy Spirit is with you now.

Who knows what wonders might be wrought, in our hearts, in our homes, our churches, even in our world, as we are led by the power of the Holy Spirit.

May the Spirit bless, lead, and guide you

+Bishop Michael Rhyne