**MODIFIED SERVICE FOR THE PENTECOST, MAY 31, 2020**

**ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, PHILIPSBURG**

Welcome to everyone on this Pentecost Sunday, where we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit, gathered safely from the comfort of our homes. What weather we are having, 3 weeks ago it was snowing, now we are having heat waves and warnings! The rain was a welcome site on Thursday and Friday for all of us who got their garden and flower beds planted this week. We can also tell that summer is on the way, Brenda has had lots of blacktail butterflies and a moth hatch from their chrysalis’ this week. Please keep David Doering and his family in your prayers, he was taken to St. Mary’s hospital by ambulance yesterday afternoon, after feeling short of breath.

Just a reminder that if there is anyone you would like to include on our prayer list, please call or email me, or send an email through the website. The Worship Committee met online this week, look for some new additions to our weekly emails and worship services in the coming weeks. We will also be setting up some GoTo Meeting times and coffee hours, this is similar to Zoom and simple to install. Be sure to look for an email in the coming weeks. Church Council will be meeting online this coming week and the Messenger will be a little later in being prepared as we wanted to include any discussions from Council.

Please remember that Zion relies on your continued support each week to meet our monthly expenses. Our PAR application and instructions are now found on Zion’s website for those who may be interested. Thank you to all who support and pray for our congregation.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

The Day of Pentecost is here: the day when the flames of faith dance in our hearts.  
The Day of Pentecost is here: the day when our babbling speech becomes the Good News for the world.  
The Day of Pentecost is here: the day when compassion is seared into our souls.  
The Day of Pentecost is here: let the people of God rejoice. Alleluia!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**OPENING HYMN-Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart- ELW 800**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

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**

1When 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. 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.’ ”

**SECOND READING:****1 Corinthians 12:3b-13**

3bNo 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, to another gifts of healing by the one 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.

**GOSPEL:****John 20:19-23**

The holy gospel according to John.

19When 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.”

**SERMON**

Have you ever watched a hawk flying in the sky on a windy day? Its wings are spread wide open, it is moving, yet it looks like it is completely standing still. The hawk is floating in the current of the wind completely trusting in that wind to keep it aloft and moving towards the location where it wants or needs to go.

The wind is a powerful presence in our lives. It can be beneficial by providing clean and renewable energy. The wind can guide sailboats safely to the shore. The wind aids in creation by helping flowers to pollinate; who hasn’t blown the fluff off a dandelion and watched it dance in the wind, and who has not felt the joy of a cool breeze on their face on a hot summer’s day. The wind can also bring destruction and chaos in seconds in the form of a tornado or hurricane, leaving lives lost and homes and businesses destroyed. The wind can fan and spread fire and flames through buildings, storefronts, and streets when protesters protest the senseless and brutal killing of yet another person of colour in the United States.

Today is Pentecost, the day we celebrate the pouring out of the Holy Spirit into our lives. When you think of the Holy Spirit, do you think of the wind? Do you think of the Holy Spirit as weaving its way in, through, and around our lives like a wind that weaves its way in and around us? Do we trust in the Holy Spirit like the hawk that trusts in the wind?

Our reading of Acts this morning is situated in the city of Jerusalem where the community is celebrating the Pentecost, the fiftieth day after Passover. The disciples have gathered in a small room, praying, anticipating, and waiting for the promise of God just as Jesus had asked in Acts 1:4-5. This had been a stressful time for the disciples, their beloved Jesus had been arrested, put to death on the cross, buried in a tomb, but was resurrected three days later. After his resurrection he spent time with them, speaking to them about the kingdom of God, reassuring their doubts and questions, and encouraging them to continue the work he had started, then he left and ascended into heaven.

So picture it in your minds; the disciples are gathered, there is a celebration going on outside, the room is hot and stuffy with a slight breeze blowing in, many are praying, some may be pacing back and forth; waiting for the promise, waiting for God to show up, waiting, praying, anticipating. Then suddenly, a violent wind appears and enters the room, flames, and tongues as of fire emerged and rested upon the disciples. As the wind and fire appeared, those gathered were filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit, it began to weave in, around, and through them and they began to speak in different languages proclaiming the Word of God, other than their own. The power of the Holy Spirit got the attention of the folks on the street, many of whom were non-believers who believed that the disciples had drank too much wine. The power of the Holy Spirit Peter, emboldened Peter (the same Peter who denied Jesus on the night of this death) to speak the truth of Jesus Christ to the non-believers. He spoke passionately and courageously of the prophecy of Joel in the Hebrew Scriptures, he spoke of Jewish history and the presence, promise, and fulfillment of Word of God. He spoke of trust and inclusiveness where ALL are welcomed and included Jews and Greeks, men and women, sons and daughters, young and old, slave and free, as well as those who were beyond the walls of Jerusalem. Yes, ALL in the world were welcomed, ALL belonged and ALL were worthy, regardless of colour, race, or creed. This was Peter’s first sermon and from this the early church was born and the disciples were empowered to lead and proclaim the Word and works of Jesus Christ just as Jesus had instructed them to do. The power of the Holy Spirit weaved its way in through and around the crowd that day, they heard Peter’s message, they found the hope and courage of Jesus Christ, so much that three thousand non-believers made the decision to follow Jesus. And from that day the church was born.

How does the wind of the Holy Spirit affect us today? Does it weave in, through, and around the congregation of Zion? Does it weave in through and around us in our homes as we continue to socially distance from one another? Does it weave in, through, and around those who lie in the loneliness of a hospital room? Does it weave in, through, and around the family of George Floyd and the generations of other people of colour who have lived with inequality? Our world right now is struggling with chaos, racism, illness, and grief. The Holy Spirit emboldened Peter to speak of inclusion and the unconditional love of God through the work of Jesus Christ, and it changed his life forever. Right now, our world needs the power of the Holy Spirit to blow into our lives to accomplish God’s purpose in the world. As Christians we are called to love one another, we are called to work for justice, we are called to look into our mirrors and understand the privilege that is given to us in the world simply because of the colour of our skin, we are called to understand the pain and anger that is caused when we stay silent and make excuses for criminal behaviours. We are called to love one another.

The disciples waited and prayed in anticipation for the Holy Spirit to arrive, they trusted that the Holy Spirit would show up. The hawk soars on towards its destination trusting in the current of the wind to take it where it needs to go. Can we have faith and trust that the winds of the Holy Spirit will weave in, through, and around us giving us the opportunity to be the presence of God in the world, a world that is desperate for justice and inclusive love for all regardless of colour or race? Can we be like Peter and speaks our own words of truth? Let it be so. Amen

**HYMN OF THE DAY- Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading- ELW 401**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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.

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. Enable us to speak our truths as Peter spoke his. 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, PSWs, and hospice workers as they care for those in need. We pray for all who long for comfort, especially all affected by Covid-19, Eddie, Elaine, Ruth, Mary Ann, Reta, Susie, David, Donelda, the family of George Floyd, and those we name in the stillness of our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, you breathe life into our bones, and your Spirit brings truth to the world. Send us this Spirit, transform us by your truth, and give us language to proclaim your gospel, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gathered into one let us pray as Jesus taught us  
**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever.   
Amen.**

**BLESSING AND SENDING**

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen**.

The God of all grace  ☩ bless us now and forever.  
**Amen.**

Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Send forth your Spirit, O God, **and renew the face of the earth.**

**CLOSING HYMN- God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind- ELW 400**

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.