



GPS GUIDE: JUNE 5, 2022

Grow. Pray. Study.

Eighth Sunday of Easter

Sermon: Pentecost

Acts 2:1-11

When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

There were pious Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered. They were mystified because everyone heard them speaking in their native languages. They were surprised and amazed, saying, "Look, aren't all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one of them? How then can each of us hear them speaking in our native language? Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; as well as residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the regions of Libya bordering Cyrene; and visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the mighty works of God in our own languages!"

Monday: Read Genesis 1:1-2

The original Hebrew word for “Spirit” conveyed a mind-boggling array of concepts, as diverse as a breath, a breeze, a powerful gale, the heart and soul of a human being, the waxing and waning of life, and the divine presence itself. Right away, in Genesis 1:1-2, the meaning of *ruach* is elusive. Is *ruach* wind or Spirit? Or both? What may seem confusing to us is actually a window to a magnificent world. The Hebrew word *ruach* opens a world of mystery, a vista of possibilities that encompass breath, winds, and Divine Spirit. The creative wonder of all creation fills our lungs with the very essence of God. Take a deep breath, God is here. Which aspect of *ruach* (breath, wind, spirit) speaks most deeply to you? The idea of Spirit is often the most difficult for us to trust, in what way could these other renderings of *ruach* help us to experience the Spirit of God?

Prayer: Spirit of God, speak to me today. Amen.

Tuesday: Read Exodus 13 :21-22

This is the story of the Exodus from Egypt. The people of Israel were journeying out of captivity and slavery into the Promised Land of God. And as we know only too well ourselves the journey from spiritual captivity into freedom in God is not one we can make ourselves without the guidance of God. We read in Exodus 13: “And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.” Here is a beautiful metaphor of God leading us as we journey through life. As the people of Israel wrestled with their own contradictions - being the chosen people of God yet experiencing the bitterness of captivity - God, by God’s light, led them into a new and better future. The light of God leading us gives us hope for this life, even as we struggle with our own contradictions. What is it that you are struggling with right now? In what ways do you feel bound up? In captivity? Where can you see God’s holy light guiding you toward a future of freedom?

Prayer: Help me see and follow your guidance in my life even when I struggle to understand my present circumstances. Amen.

Wednesday: Read Ezekiel: 37:1-10

In English translations of this vision, you’ll find all three words—breath, winds, and Spirit. Ezekiel is instructed, “Prophesy to the *breath* ... ‘Come, *breath*, from the four *winds*’ ...” As a result, “*breath* entered them,” and the bones “came to life...” The vision ends with the promise, “I will put my *Spirit* in you and you will live...” In English translations, you’re led to believe that the *breath* which is breathed into the bones is somehow different from both the four *winds* that gather and the *Spirit* that will be put into the nation of Israel. But in the original, it’s all the same word—*ruach*. English translations miss out on the drama of Ezekiel’s repetition of the word, *ruach*, almost like our own breathing, reminding Israel, and us, that the *ruach* of God inspires new life. How does this story of dry bones speak

to your own experience of God? In what ways might God’s Spirit be inviting you into new life?

Prayer: Living God, fill me with abundant, vibrant, joyous, faithful life. Amen.

Thursday: Mark 1:9-11

Drenched and dripping, Jesus was lifted by his cousin, John from the Jordan River. “And just as he was coming up out of the water, He saw the Spirit descending like a dove into him...” Mark’s gospel is unique in this account of Jesus’ baptism. Here, Jesus has his own moment, his own vision, his own heavenly revelation. The way Mark tells the story, the Holy Spirit came to Jesus gently, peacefully – like a dove. This is not the violent thundering and lighting of Sinai or the mighty rushing wind that fills the upper room after the resurrection, but the soft affirmation of a parent’s love. The intimate whisper “You are my son, the beloved.” Remember your baptism... words we speak to remind us that we, too, are beloved children of God. What do you remember, or what have you been told about your baptism? Can you imagine for a moment, God whispering, “You are my beloved” to you? What feelings does that phrase stir?

Prayer: Remind me, God, of my baptism, and my name, beloved child of God. Amen.

Friday: Read John 16:12-15

Just like *ruach* in Hebrew, the Greek word *pneuma* means breath and Spirit. This brief section from 16 lies in the context of a much longer instruction about those things Jesus wants his followers to remember. This section finds Jesus telling them that the Spirit of truth will lead believers “into all truth.” (v.13) In John 4, Jesus tells the woman at the well that God is Spirit. He was referring to the time, which has now come, when the Spirit of the Lord would no longer reside in temples built by human hands. Instead, the Holy Spirit dwells *inside* those who believe in Jesus. How does the Spirit lead you “into all truth”? How do you experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in your life? What evidence do you see that the Spirit lives in you? How might you more fully embrace the Spirit in your living?

Prayer: Come, Holy Spirit, Come. Amen.

Saturday: Read Luke 4:14-20

If you go back to the beginning of chapter four, you discover Jesus headed into the wilderness “full of the Spirit.” When have you felt full of the Spirit? What did the Spirit lead you to do? In the passage above, Jesus boldly declares his mission in this world. And it’s a big one. It’s bold. It will change everything. And it’s all about God’s justice. Jesus rolls up the scroll and, without much fanfare, proceeds to get to work. What does that mean for us? What is your mission? The Spirit anointed Jesus, how does the Spirit anoint you?

Prayer: Fill me with your Spirit, so that I might do the work of Jesus. Amen.

