

## **“The Pentecost Fire and Wind”**

Acts 2:1-4, 17-21

June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017

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Pentecost is a significantly important Christian season because the church was born on this day. It is the celebration when Christians powerfully experienced and witnessed God’s love, power and guidance through the encounter of the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, Christian faith is not alive. The red color symbolizes the Holy Spirit and its dynamic power and lively movement. Don’t get me wrong! Jesus’ disciples and followers of Christ were faithful Christians even before they experienced the Holy Spirit. When they experienced the Holy Spirit, their faith became stronger and more passionate in the assurance of God’s love and presence always in their hearts. The Holy Spirit assured them of their Christian faith whether Jesus was physically with them or not. Simply speaking, before the Pentecost fire and wind, Jesus’ followers and disciples were frightened, discouraged, timid and lack of confidence as children of God. But through the Pentecost event, they were became forceful, confident, unified advocates for their *experience* of the risen Christ with a clear sense of purpose and mission as people of God and the body of Christ. Church began as a new faith movement--and community.<sup>1</sup>

Today’s Scripture reading helps us imagine what the Holy Spirit looks like. It is like wildfire, violent flame or a strong wind. Let me share a little background of the Pentecost fire and wind communal experience. After Jesus was gone back to heaven, his disciples were panicked and in chaos. Some began to doubt their faith and others started worrying about the future of the church. When they gathered together, they experienced the powerful presence of God through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Even though you believe in the Creator God and accept Jesus Christ as the Son of God, incarnation of God’s love, you have no way to have the assurance of God’s grace and mercy without the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the only way to guide you to feel the loving God in you.

*How do we experience the Holy Spirit’s touch?* I am not emphasizing that you should experience a supernatural phenomenon like Jesus’ disciples such as a gushing and powerful wind that will sweep you away suddenly or a house fire in your home in order to meet the Holy Spirit. The Pentecost experience is more like your inner experience that will bring you a transformative energy and excitement to enable you to dream dreams by the Holy Spirit’s touch on you!

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<sup>1</sup> An excerpt from Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake’s sermon, “Driveway Moments” Accessed June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017  
Internet source: “day1.org”

I asked Virginia Grabe to share her signature scarf dance in celebration of Pentecost, the presence of the Holy Spirit in our church. Will you please welcome our beloved sister Virginia?

(Enjoy her dance for a minute.)

Virginia's dance was so gentle and caring. But her touch for each person was bold, direct, powerful and personal as did the Holy Spirit for the disciples. Jesus' disciples might have experienced the Holy Spirit's touch in their hearts like Virginia's dance. If you raised your hands, she could have come to you and touched you! The Holy Spirit always wants to work in us and through us when we are ready and welcome to accept the Holy Spirit.

The background music was "Somewhere Over the Rainbow". This song was written and sung by actress Judy Garland for an old movie, "The Wizard of Oz (1939). A young girl, Dorothy in the movie sang this song to talk about her dream. Actually it represents everyone's dreams in a symbolic way. "Some place where there isn't any trouble. Do you suppose there is such a place? It is not a place you can get to by a boat, or a train. It's far, far away. Behind the moon, beyond the rainbow... And the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true."<sup>2</sup>

Pentecost is the day when church community receives the gift of the Holy Spirit and experiences the power of the Holy Spirit so that church and Jesus' disciples were starting dreaming dreams for the future. They were able to stand firm and took courage to move forward because they met a powerful and mighty God. Don't forget this. Your God is not a small God. What we believe in our God is that "God is bigger than your past, your pain, your fear, your scars, your hate, your doubt and this world." The Holy Spirit that Jesus' disciples experienced today was powerful enough to transform them, from sadness to joy, despair to hope, and survival to renewal. When the Holy Spirit comes to us, the Holy Spirit encourages us to dream, makes us visionary people who can envision new possibilities. When we experience the power of the Holy Spirit, it will transform our lives, our church, and grant us energy to move forward.

A Spirit filled congregation is led by the Holy Spirit's vision and dream with a wildfire passion. John Wesley, our Methodism founder inspires us. After he felt the Holy Spirit, he became the leader of the Methodist movement. John Wesley emphasizes passion, saying that "I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power."

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<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Over\\_the\\_Rainbow](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Over_the_Rainbow) Accessed June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017

Where do we most need the Holy Spirit in our church? I hope to see many more fellowship opportunities, small group gatherings and mission support groups. I envision that our church will be more interested in social justice, community outreach and even environmental global warming issues with God's passion. The Holy Spirit gives us blessings to dream dreams beyond our limitations and situations. The work of the Holy Spirit challenges us to move out of our comfort zones and dares us to move forward. May the Spirit of God continue to work in us, touch on our lives, challenge us and guide us in our direction and future. I pray that God will pour out the Spirit upon all of us and open our doors and receive the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Amen.