



"Day of the Lord"

Day of Pentecost
Saturday & Sunday, June 8-9, 2019
All Services
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Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Acts 2:1-21; John 14:8-17 [25-27]

Grace and peace be to you from our
Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus
Christ. Amen.

One of my earliest exposures to the Holy Spirit decides of course my baptism at the age of a year and a half when the pastor laid hands on me and anointed me with Holy Oil and offered prayers for the gift of the Spirit, was probably when we didn't go to church. And instead I would turn on the TV and I would watch the TV preachers. And I would see them on the stage with their arms uplifted singing the Spirit out into the choir and swaying them all, do you want to try it? The preacher with Holy Spirit happiness, "Come Holy Spirit Come, Come Holy Spirit Come!" And then we would go to church and I would realize in my congregation was nothing like that! I mean after all, we're Lutherans. We like our church a little more tempered.

Well on this Day of Pentecost, what do you expect today? Good music, delicious coffee, pleasant conversation, adequate sermon? Is that enough? Is that enough to satisfy your deepest souls desires? Is that all there is?

How about on this day that you and I believe that we might just have a powerful experience, or at least the realization that the Holy Spirit of the Most High God may, just may, make himself available to inspire and to strengthen you in your journey of faith? That if you come here today feeling down, you might be lifted up. That if you're a little angry at the world, that you might experience a moment of peace. That if you are burdened by pain, whether physical or emotional, that you might experience healing and restoration.

Maybe today, this day, this very hour might be the Day of the Lord for you!

In the Old Testament the expression "the Day of the Lord" occurs eighteen times. Every single time it occurs in the prophetic literature it is a time when Israel is suffering politically, economically, socially, religiously and God promises to set things right. God is going to make all things new; He is going to bring the **Day of the LORD** with all of his power, all of his might to bear on the people of Israel so they can experience the glory of God.

The Prophet Joel put it this way,
Blow this trumpet in Zion;
Sound the alarm on the holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
For the **Day of the LORD** is come, it is near—

In the New Testament both Jesus and other writers say, “the day of the Lord is going to come like a thief.” But it will be a time when the heavens and the earth experience God’s Holy Spirit and all things are renewed in God.

In John’s gospel that we just read both there and other places, Jesus promises the sending of a helper, an advocate, the Holy Spirit, who will come to remind the disciples and to help the disciples in their mission and their ministry. This Day of the Lord is a special time, a special day when God’s will and purpose for the world and for all humanity will be revealed in his glory.

And the very first disciples experienced a Day of the Lord on the Day of Pentecost when 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The disciples gathered in the open room waiting in hopeful expectation that God in Christ would give them the power that Jesus had promised. The power from on high would come upon them and that the promised Advocate, Holy Spirit, who would teach them everything that they needed to know and would remind them of the words of Jesus.

And the third section of the Creed, the Apostles or the Nicene Creed, it speaks to how the Spirit is that part of the God head which forms the church. It is the Spirit that gives us the gifts that we need for teaching, for reminding and for telling the gospel which is the key to what we do.

Martin Luther in his small catechism writing about the 3rd article of the creed puts it this way:

“I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead 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 on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith.”

We can’t convert anybody. What we can do is provide for opportunity with a Holy Spirit can speak to the heart of those who are struggling, those who are wondering, those who are searching, those who wish to experience life and life eternal. The Holy Spirit is the very life of God and the life of God’s church. It is not by chance that you ended up here today. It is the Holy Spirit which brings us together and which calls us to serve and enlightens us with faith. And this rag tag bunch of saints and sinners, this group of people that we are is called holy because the Holy Spirit sets up apart for a sacred and holy task. We are sacred in the Spirit but also universal in our community and gathering of believers. This living community has a Spirit.

And on the Day of the Lord the Spirit is unleashed on Christ’s church. It fills us, it gives us what we need to flourish. It gives us the gift for ministry, for some it might be teaching,

for others hospitality, for others administration or perhaps singing or playing an instrument. A multitude of gifts for a diverse church and world, and with these gifts we are sent out by that Spirit for these gifts are meant to be shared with a hurting world. God is for everyone and the Day of the Lord is universal, worldwide in its scope.

In the reading from Acts, we see the diverse places that are mentioned of people who are gathered in Jerusalem for a festival and how they hear the words of the gospel in their own native languages. These places represent the four corners of their known world. In the North, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Pamphylia and Phrygia. In the South, Arabia, in the East, Parthia, Mesopotamia, Mede, and Elam. In the West, Egypt, Libya, Crete, and Rome. It is not geographic, it is also ethnic diversity, Arabs, Greek, Jews, believers and unbelievers alike.

With the Holy Spirit barriers are broken down, men and women, slave and free, regardless of nationality or creed we all creatively share that gospel with our own stories of faith in the language of our neighbors and our friends and our family. In the Spirit we are to dream dreams and to see visions worthy of our great God. The Spirit gives us peace in all of this and makes us unafraid of the chances and challenges and changes of our world.

And so, on this Day of the Lord, on this day of Pentecost we wait and we welcome God's Holy Spirit in our faith. Jesus will not leave us alone, and when the Spirit comes on the day of the Lord amazing things happen. Gifts are given, barriers are broken, sins are forgiven, people are gathered, friendships are strengthened, adversaries are reconciled, people are blessed, communities are formed and reformed, bread is broken, and unity is established. Peace is received as a gift and the church our church is renewed.

Do not be afraid brothers and sisters, let us open our hearts, our minds and our souls to receive the gifts that are promised by our Lord Jesus! Come Holy Spirit Come! Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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