

## Happy Pentecost! [photo]

Appropriately, our series on the Holy Spirit is winding up on the Sunday that the Church worldwide celebrates **Pentecost**. So turn to someone close by, put your hand together like this (to form a dove) , and wish them “Happy Pentecost!”

The Jewish Feast of Harvest, Shavuot in Hebrew or Pentecost in Greek) was 50 days (penta means 50) after the Feast of First Fruits. Today we count 7 weeks or 50 days after Easter to celebrate Pentecost Sunday.

The Christian Pentecost was predicted in the OT in

**Joel 2:28-29** “... ,I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

The Holy Spirit made **a grand entrance as people from around the known world gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of the Harvest**. It was a perfect time for the apostles to launch the new movement by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus to many, in their home languages. 3000 believed that Jesus was the Messiah and were baptized to become the first church.

## ROLL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

This morning we’re going to explore the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church, the Global movement of God on earth that you and I and this local gathering, are part of. I have done some thinking, praying and surveying of my understanding of the scriptures and experiences we have observed to construct a list of different activities of the HS that impact us as we function together as the Church.

- I’ve chosen 6 words, with some synonyms, scripture, and examples to help us get the picture.

**UNIFY**/fuse/bond/integrate/merge/join

**Eph 4:4-6** You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness.

- Jesus’ last prayer with his disciples in the upper room was for UNITY.
- The Pentecost response of 3000 diverse individuals to the message was a **testimony to the Holy Spirit’s power to unify**. From an article by Jason Barnhart “Unity came through diversity and that diversity testified to the validity of their unity.”

- **Men's Frat:** [1 photo] every Thursday morning at 6:30 a group of men meets in the fireside room for Men's Fraternity. We are a very diverse group in our ages, life experience, careers, interests and politics. Often times we never get to the next video in the series because the conversation takes us elsewhere. The transparency, care and unity that we share is uncommon and deeply fulfilling. The Holy Spirit is the leader of the group.

**AFFIRM** / assure /confirm/substantiate/verify/authorize

**Rom 8:14-17** Those who are led by God's Spirit are God's children. For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God's children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God, "Father! my Father!" God's Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God's children.

- **GUA Peace in Civil War** – Early in our marriage we took an assignment with Youth for Christ in Guatemala. A civil war broke out there and everyone was very scared. One Sunday at the church we visited you could feel the tension and anxiety. During the prayer time everyone prayed aloud together. As the prayer swell subsided, a single voice remained, praying a language I had never heard. The pastor asked for translation and a person stood and said: "Thus sayeth the Lord, I am your God and you are my people. I love you as my children. You have nothing to fear. I will let no harm come to you. Receive my peace and live in it." An invisible blanket of peace descended on that place as the Holy Spirit confirmed our place before our loving Father.

**PROMPT** /inspire/stir/rouse/nudge /motivate

**Hebrews 10:22-25** So let's *do* it—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. ... spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

- **NICM Story** [3 photos] Deepak and Simi Dhingra from Punjab, North India, converted to Christianity from Hindu Sikhism and were rejected by all of their family, business colleagues and friends. They left for Australia to find some Christian support. While there the Holy Spirit prompted them to return to the Punjab to represent Jesus there. It has not been easy, but to date more than 21,000 first generations Christian have converted because of their faithfulness to the nudge of the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom is being established through their team's willingness to face persecution.
- **Stream analogy** Chance from New Hope share an illustration with me about responding to the Spirit's direction. Standing by a wide mountain stream, you can see and hear it's beauty. If you step into the water you can be refreshed and feel it's current & flow. But to fully experience it, you walk out to the middle and lift your feet and let the stream can carry you wherever it may.

**EQUIP**/empower /teach/instruct/prepare/train

**Jn 14:25-26** I have said all this while I am still with you. But the one who is coming to stand by you, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will be your teacher and will bring to your minds all that I have said to you.

- **Spiritual Gifts** are found in Rom12 / 1 Cor 12-14 / Eph 4
- **Body analogy** Paul emphasizes that God gives us special abilities so they can be used for the common good of the Church.
- **FGA Story [2 photos]** The Furniture Giveaway is a perfect example of many gifted people serving together with special abilities to make it happen. I love that 500 new students get furniture, but the best is to see the team in action. System thinkers plan the logistics, IT specialist create the programs, administrative help with registration and sorting, cooks prepare lots of food, teams pick up 2000 pieces of furniture, and the day of the guy show up with the pickup trucks and muscle to make it happen. It's like an orchestra playing a piece with many movements. All specializing in specific roles.

**PILOT** / guide/ /conduct/monitor/steer/ /direct

**Eph 4:11,13** Christ chose some of us to be apostles, prophets, missionaries, pastors, and teachers, so his people would learn to serve and his body would grow strong. Then we shall no longer be children, carried by the waves and blown about by every shifting wind ....

- **Bowling/plane / ship** Ever been at a bowling alley with the gutter bumpers? Or been in a plane that was landing in a high cross wind with everything shifting? Or on a ship in high seas? Its good to have a pilot you can trust.
- **Reformers** – There have been many times throughout history when the church has strayed from her purpose. Terrible things have been done in the name of the church. At the darkest hour, the Holy Spirit raised up Luther, Wesley, Calvin, Bonhoffer, CS Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr, or Timothy Keller to move the church back on track. Barton Stone and Thomas Campbell were mid-19<sup>th</sup> century reformers who sparked a movement toward freedom and unity in the church that became the Restoration Movement from which the Independent Christian Churches grew.

**SYNERGIZE**/multiply / reproduce / burgeon / 1+1=3 /diaspora

**Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- **Think Loaves and Fishes or 1+1=3!** The Holy Spirit takes what we offer and multiplies it beyond our dreams. Considering our investments in our Global Partnerships, we asked

our global partners to share how many converts and baptism they nurtured in 2022. There were 13,000 baptisms resulting from the ministries that we support globally.

- **Joana Jones [2 photos]** was an employee at General Electric when she was prompted to go to Burma to help with kids programming in the small church network she knew of there. At the only internet café in a town where she was stranded (longer story) she met **Josiah Aung Oo** who helped her to make contacts. Joanna used her network to develop a support base and staff with Josiah. Asian Christian Mission now supports a children's home, several schools, special needs centers, a nursing school, and aggressive refugee and disaster relief ministries that has relocated and settled thousands of families caught in civil war or natural disasters.
- In fact, **Cyclone Mocha [4 photos]** hit the west coast of the country on May 14, killing thousands and impacting over 1.6 million. In a video call with Josiah this week he said that they are organizing to send rebuilding supplies, food and water tomorrow with a team to arrive next week to begin rebuilding. He was excited to say that there was one church in the area but everyone else is Buddhist that they can share the Good News of Jesus with. They are seeking \$20,000 for this relief effort. We are planning to send \$5000 but would like for you to consider helping us to match that amount - or maybe send the \$20,000 they need? We can touch the lives of many who we'll never know at a pivotal time for them. That's the 1+1=3 factor, the fish and loaves phenomena that the Holy Spirit does in the Church.

#### **ACTION POINTS:**

- You can support the relief efforts in Myanmar as Josiah launches a \$20,000 campaign for relief and reconstruction this week. We are committed to \$5000 and would like to match. All Dollar Club donation for the next 2 weeks are going to Myanmar relief.
- Join with our local and global efforts to pray, fund and serve. This year our Community and Global Engagement partners reported 12,971 baptisms / 108,744 converts.
- As you are nudged by the HS don't just stand by and watch. Step in and lift your feet.

#### **COMMUNION TRANSITION**