

Spirit of Hope

Mount Hope Lutheran Church

Preschool and Childcare

May 27, 2020

Walk in a manner worthy of the calling which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3 (ESV)

COVID-19 UPDATE: By now you have most certainly followed or at least heard about the debate among some churches and the governor's restriction on worshipping together in faith communities. All along churches have been restricted to gatherings of ten or fewer people, which has primarily been for funerals; while all other church worship services, Bible study, etc. have been delivered online.

With the easing of restrictions for many businesses, which included maintaining a capacity of 50% or less with social distances and other requirements as well; churches were seemingly left out. This led to many questions and as you probably saw the MN South District of the LCMS and others to respond by sending the governor the reasons that they are choosing to resume in-person worship services and possibly pursue legal action for violating the right to assemble.

Then on Saturday, Gov. Walz declared that churches could meet while holding to 25% seating capacity and following safe practices for social distancing and such. As you may expect, churches are responding in a variety of ways. Some churches have elected to resume services this coming Sunday, Pentecost Sunday, May 31 while others are going to continue with online worship.

A group of Mount Hope leadership met last week to discuss our options. At this time, we believe it is best to continue worshipping online. Many factors played into the decision and it was certainly not made without much prayer and discussion. Coronavirus remains a very serious and dangerous threat. And while it may feel like the risk is lessening, the number of cases and deaths in our state continue to grow.

How can we best love and serve our neighbors? How can we best steward the gifts God has given us? One of the benefits of online gathering that is now getting some notice, is that many people who do not attend church regularly and some who have never attended are seeking and participating in online worship. We have seen this too at Mount Hope. Clearly, the Lord is using this to His glory! We miss and long for the day when we can gather together again. It will come. We can even serve as a Mountain of Hope by *Inviting Guests (to online worship) who become friends; friends who become family.*

Please continue to pray for Mount Hope, our country, the leadership, those on the frontlines battling during this pandemic and our world; COVID-19 will be conquered! We are praying for the day we will be able to SAFELY worship together again.

Serving together,
Pastor Fran Green

****Please look for an exciting opportunity receive the Lord's Supper in this newsletter.****

The Message

The Violent Wind

I love the image that comes to mind when I hear *there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind*. I am reminded of the sound of the door of an airplane opening prior to jumping out. I spent many years jumping out of airplanes, most of which occurred while I was a member of the Air Force parachute team The Wings of Blue. And just like the sudden sound that came in the Pentecost chapter of the book of Acts, indicating something big was going to happen, the door opening prior to a jump is the signal to get ready for action! It is not like some events or activities where one might struggle to gain people's attention so that things may commence, there is no mistake when you hear the "violent wind" that you need to be ready to go.

I can't help but wonder at the reaction and thoughts of those who were present at that day of Pentecost. I'll never forget my first jump and the shocking reality of what was about to occur when I heard the wind after the airplane door opened. I was certainly excited and waited with much anticipation having discussed and learned what was to occur that day. Even with the preparation and expectation, I would say that there is really no way to "know" how noisy and intimidated one feels when that door opens. I would suspect that those present at Pentecost might have said the same thing. I mean the disciples were certainly told by Jesus to wait in expectation for the power they would receive from on high, but must have been in awe when it actually occurred.

The day of Pentecost was an annual harvest festival for the People of God, which occurred 50 days after Passover. It was a spring feast where the people presented the first fruits of the wheat harvest to God and was also celebrated as the anniversary of the giving of the Mosaic Law. It was one of the feasts that all male Jews living within 20 miles of Jerusalem had to be present at the central sanctuary. Many others made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the festival. Let's take a closer look at the Pentecost reading from *Acts chapter 2*:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place (v. 1).

I wonder what the atmosphere was like as they waited. I'm sure they were praying, sharing stories about Jesus. At this point, I'd say they are sad and confused even though they had seen Jesus taken into heaven. Remember their comments from chapter 1, verse 6? *"Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom of Israel?"* They were not sure what was going to happen. Was an earthly rule going to be set up just like the time of King David? They certainly remembered Jesus' Great Commission, but must have been thinking about the enormous and even impossible task of living the life Jesus called them to live-without Him.

Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (v. 2-3).

Fire and the violent rushing wind indicated the presence of the Lord. They came from heaven where Jesus now was. Jesus is sending the Spirit to breathe new life into them; think about *Ezekiel 37:9. Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.* The dry bones in Ezekiel symbolize the defeated and dejected people of Israel in exile. They needed the breath of God to restore them. In *John 3:7-8, Jesus uses the image of the wind as He tells Nicodemus that he must be born again. The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.* Clearly, this is a great miracle! A transformation, a new birth and a new beginning for those now filled with the Holy Spirit. Peter, through the power of the Holy Spirit, will soon tell us the significance of this turning point in Salvation history.

The noise and sounds draw a crowd. There has been much discussion over the years regarding the list of "nations". Certainly it would include countries where the Jews resided as a result of their exile. It is also pointing to the worldwide witness of the Gospel message. One scholar writes that *The People of God in the Old Testament were to be on mission, going to the nations, to bring them with them to Jerusalem to worship Him in the tongues of the nations. When the People of God did not bring all the nations to Him, he supernaturally brought the tongues of the nations to Jerusalem for a supernatural moment-a fulfillment of His prior command.* In the Old Testament the nations come up to Jerusalem, in the New Testament, the message goes out from Jerusalem. Let's skip down to Peter's sermon *Acts 2:12-16*:

What does this mean? Some, however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine.' Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.'

This isn't on par with some silly college drinking and partying movie! Even after the careless comment by an onlooker, Peter is saying something for our modern ears like, we haven't even had breakfast yet and lunch is not for three hours. In their culture the first meal was not taken until 10 in the morning and wine was only taken with the evening meal. Peter, the one who denied Jesus three times, is now boldly speaking on His behalf by the power of the Holy Spirit!

In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (v. 17-21).

Peter took the ridiculous objection seriously; they were NOT drunk at 9:00 a.m., and then spoke the truth. Taking them to the Scriptures he quotes from *Joel*, the last days are inaugurated here and continue to the time when Jesus returns again. The Spirit had been present corporately among the nation of Israel, but is now within each individual believer. This is the New Covenant foretold in *Jeremiah 31* and it is being fulfilled right now among them:

I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor or a man his brother, saying, know the Lord, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord.

The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is a replacement for the external guidance of the Mosaic Law, which was fulfilled by Jesus. Peter's sermon presents Jesus as attaining the exalted throne of David, but also as a greater Moses who ascends to God to grant the foundational gift, the Holy Spirit to Israel, as well as all who will believe. Jesus himself said He would send the Holy Spirit.

For Luke, the author of the gospel bearing his name and also the book of *Acts*, the filling of the Holy Spirit is for praise and proclamation. Thinking of Pentecost: in this feast of the harvest, the Lord received a new crop of believers. The people of God received the Law, but this time it was written on their hearts delivered by a greater Moses, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Towards the end of Peter's sermon he tells those present to Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him (v. 38-39.)

That includes you and me. We are filled with the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit enables us to confess and believe in Jesus our Savior and Lord so that our sins are forgiven and our broken relationship is restored. The Spirit also enables and equips us for witness and service. It is Power from on High. It is like the wind, we cannot control it, but if we step out by faith into it, we can use its power.

A few years ago while on a youth trip to the Rocky Mountains, one of my young men was struggling with the whole "Jesus thing". He was very intelligent and felt that belief in Jesus was for the weak-minded. We had had several conversations along these lines, but I never tried to convince him or argue with him, I just told him that Jesus was real and pointed him to the Scriptures. He did enjoy the outdoors and adventure; so somewhat reluctantly agreed to go along on this hiking trip. It was truly an amazing week in God's creation. I had a few conversations with this young man during the week and always kept an eye on him at devotions and times of worship. It was obvious that he was paying attention. The last night of the retreat after our closing, communion worship service, he pulled me aside with tears in his eyes said, "I don't know what's going on, but I believe God is here." After our long return trip we were back at the church and after

pretty much everyone had departed with their families, he came back into the church, grabbed me, gave me a great big bear hug, which was a little out of character and said thanks.

I can't explain what happened, other than say that he was filled with power from on high. The Holy Spirit truly did a number on this young man and by the end of our trip he called on the name of the Lord. God is truly alive and active in the world through the proclamation of His Word by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Communion at Mount Hope

Beginning this Thursday, May 28, Pastor will be offering communion at Mount Hope. Pastor will be meeting **by appointment** in the sanctuary with those who would like to participate. Appointments are offered beginning at 11:00am with the last appointment scheduled for 7:40pm. Appointments are 20 minutes apart allowing for **a visit of approximately 10 minutes**. The remaining 10 minutes allow Pastor to prepare for the next appointment.

Please call the office at 952 888 5059 between 9:00-3:00 and speak with Kim to set an appointment. Please leave a message if there is no answer as Kim has to step away from the office frequently. You can also email your request to Kim at church@mthopelutheran.org. At this time the plan is to offer communion every Thursday. If need be, a second day can be added. You are welcome to come as an individual or a family unit.

For your safety and for the safety of the Center families and the staff, we will be using the **East door** to enter and then heading right into the sanctuary. There will be hand sanitizer available at the entrance. We also ask that social distancing practices are followed and that masks are worn if at all possible. We do have masks on hand if needed. You will be able to drop off your offering and pick up a Portals of Prayer as well. You will not have access to the rest of the building at this time. **Thank you for respecting these guidelines.** Pastor will follow safety protocols when preparing the wine and wafer for communion.

If you fall into a Coronavirus **high-risk group**, please do not feel obligated to participate at this time. Make the best decision for yourself and your health. We care about you and look forward to a future when we are able to worship together again.

Daily Devotions

1 June	Eccl 9:1—17	John 9:24—41	
2 June	Eccl 10:1—20	John 10:1—21	
3 June	Eccl 11:1—10	John 10:22—42	
4 June	Eccl 12:1—14	John 11:1—16	
5 June	Prov 1:8—33	John 11:17—37	
6 June	Prov 3:5—24	John 11:38—57	
7 June	Prov 4:1—27	John 12:1—19	
8 June	Prov 5:1—23	John 12:20—36a	<i>Prov 6:1—7:27</i>
9 June	Prov 8:1—21	John 12:36b—50	
10 June	Prov 8:22—36	John 13:1—20	
11 June	Prov 9:1—18	John 13:21—38	
12 June	Prov 10:1—23	John 14:1—17	<i>Prov 11:1—12:28</i>
13 June	Prov 13:1—25	John 14:18—31	
14 June	Prov 14:1—27	John 15:1—11	
15 June	Prov 15:1—29	John 15:12—27	
16 June	Prov 16:1—24	John 16:1—16	
17 June	Prov 17:1—28	John 16:17—33	<i>Prov 18:1—20:4</i>
18 June	Prov 20:5—25	John 17:1—26	<i>Prov 21:1—31</i>
19 June	Prov 22:1—21	John 18:1—14	
20 June	Prov 22:22—23:12	John 18:15—40	
21 June	Prov 24:1—22	John 19:1—22	
22 June	Prov 25:1—22	John 19:23—42	<i>Prov 26:1—28</i>
23 June	Prov 27:1—24	John 20:1—18	<i>Prov 28:1—29:27</i>
24 June	Prov 30:1—9, 18—33	John 20:19—31	
25 June	Prov 31:10—31	John 21:1—25	
26 June	Josh 1:1—18	Acts 8:1—25	
27 June	Josh 2:1—24	Acts 8:26—40	
28 June	Josh 3:1—17	Acts 9:1—22	
29 June	Josh 4:1—24	Acts 9:23—43	
30 June	Josh 5:1—6:5	Acts 10:1—17	

June Celebration Days

Happy Birthday

7 Marcy Caspersen
8 Christina Brantner
13 Valerie Killam
13 Corinne Kroonblawd
13 Kathi Rokke
18 Kristen Melbostad
19 John Mack
19 Vance Melbostad
19 Joel Schleifer
20 Pat Roehrick
21 Elijah Mack
22 Arlene Oleson
22 Bob Tolzin
25 Claire Wuebke
28 Jeff Alt

Baptismal Anniversary

1 Armand Boehnke
1 Marjule Boehnke
5 Josh Adamek
11 Paul Hinz
11 Wayne Markel
12 Missy Quittschreiber
14 Lila Pietenpol
18 Emily Vogland
20 Emily Woodhall
23 Kayla Vogland
23 Wyatt Vogland
26 Claire McMullen
30 Corinne Kroonblawd

Wedding Anniversary

1 Tim & Kim Wuebke
12 Cory & Christina Brantner
12 Richard & Stephanie Hinz
13 Bob & Carol Tolzin
20 Vern & Pauline Von Deylen
21 Arnie & Hope Berg
21 Will & Marlys Herman
23 Al & Kathy Borgen
23 Jon & Ashley Cleveland

Sunday Worship Schedule

Services online during COVID19 shutdown

8:15am Traditional Worship Service

9:30am Connecting Hour

Bible Study / Sunday School

10:45am Praise Worship Service

Phone: 952-888-5059

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Mount Hope's Staff

Fran Green Pastor

Candy Frein Administrative Assistant

Christina Brantner Music Director

Kathy Sundseth Custodian

Kim Woebke Preschool and Childcare Director
Administrative Assistant

Steve Sundseth Custodian

Sam Killam Custodian

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Address Service Requested

