

**“You Shall Be My Witness”
“Pentecost Promise”**

Pentecost is known as the birthday of the Church. It is when the disciples experience the fullness of the presence of God through the gift of God’s Spirit. The power of Pentecost is the reality God’s Spirit is not just for a select few such as the disciples long ago, but all people in all places are included. This experience of the Spirit is as real now as it was then. People still seek the presence, peace and the power of God’s spirit to change lives and transform communities. We have also celebrated our graduates and scholarship recipients. What better gift for them, than God’s Spirit and presence as they continue in their educational path or begin a new job. May this week be filled with God’s Spirit. Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“Pentecost Promise”**

Prayer for the Week

Come, Holy Spirit, come, Breathe into our hearts this day. Bless us and inspire us, that we may live Spirit-filled lives of love and compassion for all. Amen.

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

Study Guide

Monday, May 21, 2018 Acts 2: 1-4

This is the beginning of the familiar Pentecost story. The Day of Pentecost was the pivotal experience for the early church. Not to undermine the Easter experience...but the Pentecost experience truly was the birthday of the church. Up to that point, individuals had an experience with Jesus, from his healing, his teaching, and his presence on earth. The gift of the Holy Spirit is a gift for all. "They were all together...all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit." The Spirit is what binds us all together, from those first believers until today. It is the Holy Spirit that gives the church the energy, the passion and the power to make a difference in the world. *Today, take some time to see where the Spirit is at work in your life.*

Tuesday, May 22, 2018 Acts 2: 1-8

Part of this passage was read yesterday. Re-reading the first four verses puts the next verses in context. The experience of God's Spirit is Difficult to describe...the sound of the wind, the sight of tongues like fire. However, the evidence of God's presence was very apparent. Each disciple began to "speak in other languages as God's Spirit gave them the ability." In this passage, they describe actual languages, but if one thinks about it, believers are often called to describe their experience of God in a way that someone else can see, touch, hear and know the love of God. *What kind of language do you use to proclaim the love of God you have experienced? Do you write it, say it, or live it? Today, write down some of the languages you use and are willing to use to proclaim the love and grace of God.*

Wednesday, May 23, 2018 Acts 2: 5-11

People that witnessed that first Pentecost were "amazed and astonished." Those first followers of Jesus spoke of the power of God as they had experienced it in Jesus and in the Spirit. God has the power to change lives, change perspectives and change the world. The promise of Pentecost is that God is still active in the world. God will speak in unknown languages in order for the outpouring of God's love and grace to be made read in the world. The out-powering of God's Spirit at that first Pentecost was the first evidence that God's love is for everyone, not just for a select few. It is grace amazing. For long-time believers, this grace and power can also be uncomfortable. The newness with which God is reaching out to the world can be unsettling, but God is always doing new things! *How have your been astonished and amazed at God's work in your life and the world? Today ask God to speak to you in a new way so that you are able to share that love and grace with all.*

Thursday, May 24, 2018 Acts 2: 8-21

Some people always mock religious experience. Sometimes in our 21st century world, people think that this is the only time and place people have made fun of religious folk. Peter and the disciples were mocked. Some did not believe, some thought they were drunk. Peter shared from the prophet Joel that the time was coming that God would pour out the Divine Spirit on all people. This is a powerful witness, God's Spirit would be poured out on men, on women, the young, on the old, on those who were free and those bound by slavery. God's Spirit is not bound by our understandings. God's Spirit is for ALL people in ALL places and in ALL times. It is important to remember Pentecost each year and celebrate this gift. *Today, thank God for the gift of the Divine Spirit. Pray that you might be surrounded by that Spirit and that our community of faith might be renewed as well.*

Friday, May 25, 2018 John 14: 15-21

Jesus was preparing his disciples for his death and his physical absence from their day to day lives. Jesus promises his followers that they will never be bereft, alone or orphaned. God's presence will be with them in a new way. There are various definitions for that presence or spirit: Companion, Advocate, and Counselor. What is real is that God is with us because of the gift of Pentecost. *How do you experience God's spirit?*