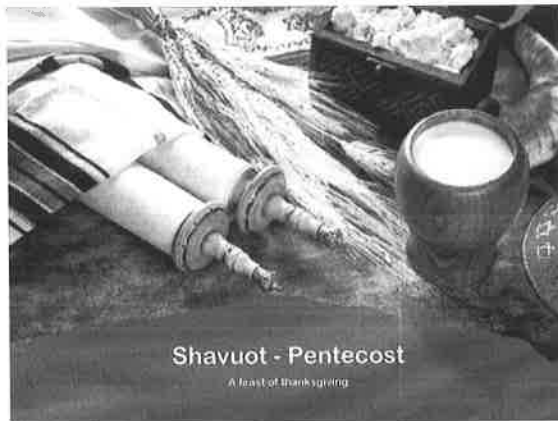


OPENING SLIDE8:32



7

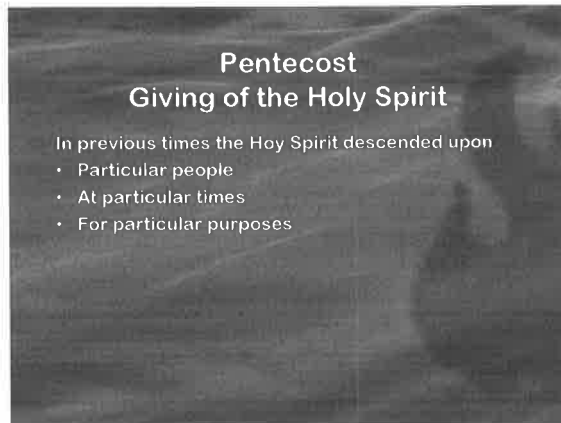
Pentecost was originally a Jewish festival- now called Shavuot – the festival of first fruits Celebrating both the joy of God’s prpvidion snad the giving of tehe law One of three feasts every observant Jew was required to go to Jerusalem for if they lived anywhere within a few days walk.

If you were an observant Jew living anywhere in the far-flung Roman Empire – going to Jerusalem for Passover and staying until Pentecost 5 weeks later was at the top of your bucket list! People would travel for weeks, sort of camping along the way, to get there.

That’s why in Acts we read that there was this great “tailgate party “at the temple steps, with people of all kinds of different languages. They were celebrating the first harvest that promised God’s provision for them and their families. But even more, they celebrated the giving of the Law – the Torah – God’s holy word that was their connection to the God they had come to worship – and to each other as well – their common bond in the midst of diversity.

And now – suddenly – this turns into a huge surprise! Peter – the guy who had run away when Jesus was arrested, Peter – the guy who seemed to be always putting his foot in his mouth – was transformed by the power of the resurrection of Jesus, and by the Holy Spirit he had received – at a particular time and place (the Upper Room when Jesus appeared to the disciples) found himself standing up on those steps and preaching!

1



Before this day, the Holy Spirit came upon people from time to time, but the Spirit was not available to everyone. The Spirit came to particular people, at a particular time to equip them to do a particular task – we can think of Samson, and Samuel and Daniel, and Elizabeth and then, of course, the Virgin Mary

But Jesus promised his disciples before he left them, that when he did, he would send them another Advocate– The “Walker Alongside”

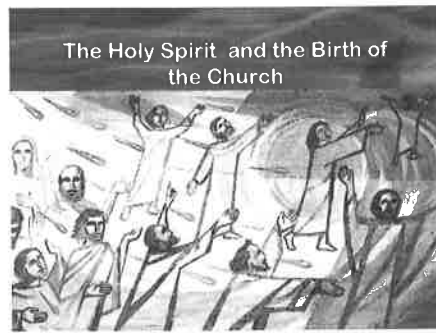
He promised

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who believes in me (That is you! That is me!) will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.”

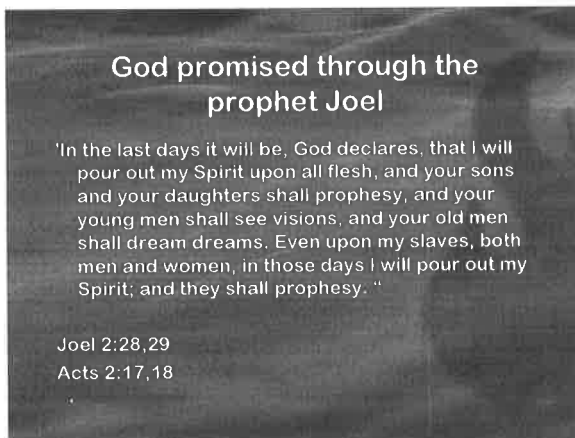
And he promised”

And somehow they – and we – would be equipped to “*keep his commandments*”, to ask for things according to his will and purpose and see them happen,

Jesus promised the “*Spirit of Truth*” would come and that Spirit would teach them all they needed to know and remind them – and us, - of all Jesus had said. That Spirit would abide with us and never leave us....



And this coming of the Spirit happens in such a huge and vivid way, that no-one could make sense of it initially. Wind and fire and people speaking in languages they never learned. This dramatic outpouring marks the birth of the Church – the Body of Christ being formed in a way that would transform the world. It is, as Peter identifies, the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel given so many years prior



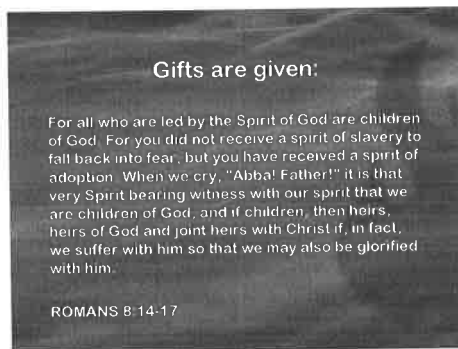
But as we come to it today, what we really want to understand is that although the Holy Spirit tends to come to us much more quietly now – here is what IS the same:

Every believer, every disciple of Jesus, upon trusting Jesus, receives that same Holy

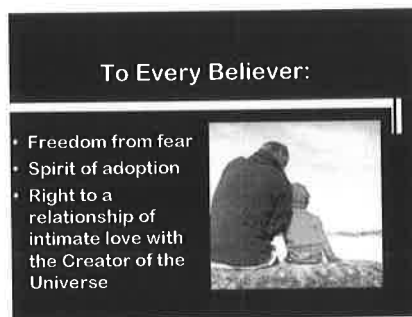


Spirit. That Holy Spirit comes bearing amazing and precious gifts:

Some of those gifts are personal gifts that bless us and bring us into an intimate relationship with God – that transform us from the inside out – changing the very DNA of our souls into people who can love and be loved in a way and at a depth that is beyond our imagination:



We are given, says Paul:



Free from the fear of rejection, or judgement or being less than perfect
The belonging – intimate, cherished belonging that every human being longs for – a need we try – and fail – to fill with human relationships that disappoint, with success, or activity oryou name it

The right to a relationship with the very Creator of the Universe
How would our lives change if we really and truly lived into this?????

These are the infinitely precious gifts we are given as children of God – and above and beyond that, we find that we are given other gifts as well. Jesus promised that we (

notice the plural here!!!!) we as the Body of Christ in the world, would do even greater works than he did while he was here. And so it is that the Spirit gives **every believer** gifts that are not for ourselves, but for the building up and equipping of the body of Christ, for the spreading of the good news of the Gospel. Gifts given to continue the work Jesus began.

In the Epistles, there are several lists of these gifts – and there are any number of helps we can use to assist us in identifying our particular gifts (If you are interested, speak to Rev. Peter or I and we can help you out here) but for today, just an introduction

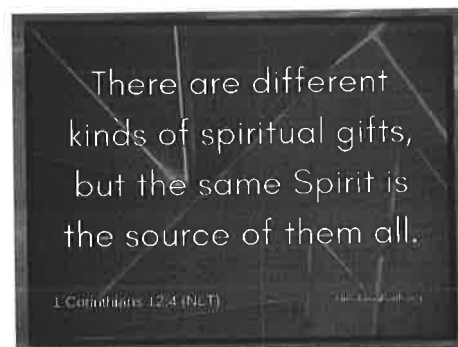
(Note the next slides will need several arrow taps to make the text come up on each slide)

We can think of the gifts in 4 categories – just to organize our thoughts:



Which gifts each of us has been given is not about who is most important, or who God loves best – God doesn't play favourites like that – but how God has planned for his Kingdom to become reality in our broken world.

St Paul tells us



SO the logical next question is:



How Do I Know Which Gifts Have
My Name On Them?

Signs you are serving in the area of your gifting – You have a sense of joy/fit

In a sense, we may all be called to somethings like hospitality or giving, but if this is your gift – you will be drawn into it at a deeper level than usual

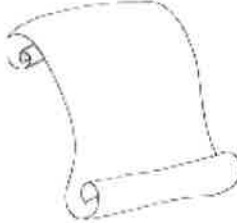
You have a drawing of your heart – feel God is calling you – others recognize it. -experiment
Sometimes gifts emerge as they are needed by the church or as we mature

In general, you will probably find your strongest gifting will fall in one of the 4 areas

Gifts of the
Heart and
Hands

These gifts involve the direct opportunity for service to individuals, for being God's hands on earth (LifeKeys)

Helps
Hospitality
Mercy
Faith
Giving
Voluntary poverty
Service
Craftsmanship



Gifts of Proclamation

these gifts involve conveying God's truths or revelations to others

- Evangelism**
- Teaching**
- Discernment**
- Knowledge**
- Prophecy**
- Wisdom**

Gifts of Action

These gifts involve moving individuals or the church toward accomplishing what God wants done

- **Leadership**
- **Administration**
- **Shepherding**
 - Pastor
- **Encouragement**
 - Counseling
- **Exhortation**
- **Apostleship/Missionary**
- **Intercession**



Gifts of Inspiration (Sign Gifts)

These gifts make us aware of God's power in our lives or provide new energy for the work of God's kingdom

- Healing**
- Miracles**
- Tongues and the interpretation of tongues**
- Celibacy**
- Deliverance**
- Martyrdom**

But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.



Prayer for Pentecost

a portion of a prayer by Joan Chissitter. Quoted by Diana Butler Bass in her Pentecost Cottage blog

Used to close sermon on gifts June 5 2022 St Brice's

McLaren

May the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
bring fire to the earth
so that the presence of God
may be seen
in a new light,
in new places,
in new ways.
May our own hearts
burst into flame
so that no obstacle,
no matter how great,
ever obstructs the message
of the God within each of us.
May we come to trust
the Word of God in our heart,
to speak it with courage,
to follow it faithfully
and to fan it to flame in others