

Pentecost Sunday

Worship Service on 31.05.2020 for Tsumeb Congregation, ELCIN(GELC)

Prepared by Pastor Reinhold Schiele from Tsumeb

Prelude

Welcome

We worship together in the Name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Amen

On Pentecost we celebrate the "birthday of the Church". On this 50th day after Easter God poured out his Spirit onto the congregation and has not taken it away from them since then. So today we think on the things that the Bible tells us about the Spirit of God and acknowledge how God's Spirit works amongst us to this day.

"Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit", says the Lord Almighty. Zechariah 4:6

Hymn:

Spirit of the living God

Capo 3

D e B e D A7 D

Spi-rit of the liv-ing God, fall a-fresh on me. Spi-rit of the

A D G e D A D G D E

liv-ing God, fall a-fresh on me. Break me, melt me, mould me,

A D A D G D A D

fill me. Spi-rit of the liv-ing God, fall a-fresh on

Psalm 118:24-29 (ESV2016)

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.

The Lord is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you.

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

All : Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for evermore. Amen

Prayer

God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as you sent the disciples the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, look upon your Church and open our hearts to the power of the Spirit. Kindle in us the fire of your love, and strengthen our lives for service in your kingdom; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Lesson taken from the Gospel of St. John 14:15-27

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ says: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. (ESV2016)

Confession of Faith

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn:

Come, o come, thou quick'ning Spirit LH 134



Come, O come, thou quick'-ning Spi-rit, God from all e-ter - ni - ty!
May thy pow - er ne - ver fail us; dwell with - in us con-stant - ly.



Then shall truth and life and light ba-nish all the gloom of night.

Text: Heinrich Held 1658. Melodie: Meiningen 1693

2. Grant our hearts in fullest measure wisdom, counsel, purity, that we ever may be seeking only that which pleaseth thee. Let thy knowledge spread and grow, working error's overthrow.
3. Show us, Lord, the path of blessing; when we trespass on our way, cast, O Lord, our sins behind thee and be with us day by day. Should we stray, O Lord, recall; work repentance when we fall.
4. Holy Spirit, strong and mighty, thou who makest all things new, make thy work within us perfect and the evil foe subdue. Grant us weapons for the strife and with vict'ry crown our life.

Sermon on the Epistle: Acts 2:1-21

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine." But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" (ESV2016)

Dear Congregation!

Today we celebrate the festival of the Holy Spirit, who is God's Spirit, whom Jesus promised his disciples as comforter. The evangelist Luke, who we think also wrote the book of Acts, expands the experience of Pentecost to a great degree. There are four statements in this narrative which I would like to expand on:

- ***there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind***
- ***they were all filled with the Holy Spirit***
- ***began to speak in other tongues; we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.***
- ***everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.***

Luke depicts the Pentecost experience, i.e. the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, as an unexpected happening. *Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.* The sound like a mighty rushing wind that is suddenly heard would normally fill us with fear. Its like sitting quietly in the lounge, reading a book, watching a movie or enjoying a cup of coffee with our family or friends. Suddenly a strong gust of wind rips through the room. Someone jumps up to quickly close the windows and the door. Someone else asks: "Where did that wind come from?!" Maybe we hear the sound of the mighty rushing wind outside. To me the narrative does not clearly indicate whether the people actually felt the wind or

whether they only heard the sound. However, the experience put the people on edge. Especially when the first consequence of the sound became visible: *Divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.* In paintings the artists usually show tongues of fire above the heads of the disciples. This is a sign for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit; that the Holy Spirit had taken hold of them!

The second result of the sound of the mighty rushing wind was that ***they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.*** How can we imagine this happening?! A man describes his experience at a concert. The storyteller watched other visitors during the concert. There is a student, – possibly a music student, – who not only had brought a concert guide but also the score of the music. He constantly looked things up, turning pages back and forth. Another visitor was busily taking notes in his notebook. Maybe he was a critic writing about the concert for a newspaper. Nearby sits a smart lady, trying to take a sweet out of her handbag as quietly as possible. These persons are distracted, not concentrating on the music. “However”, the man says, “next to me stood an elderly lady. She leaned forward. She was totally at peace, keeping her eyes closed, listening to the music. Watching her you could read the drama of the music. Now and then a smile flits over her face and then deep concentration returns. You could say: The music has taken hold of her. She was deeply moved by it. She was filled by the music.” This raises a question in me: What fills me to such an extent that I forget everything happening around me? And so I ask you: What takes such a hold of you?!

The disciples, who experienced the sound *like a mighty rushing wind* were filled by the Holy Spirit. They were like the elderly lady absorbed by the music. Everything else became momentarily unimportant to them. And so, for us, Christians of our day and age, the question arises: What absorbs us? Are we willing to allow the Holy Spirit of God to fill us completely?

The third result of the sound of a mighty rushing wind was that the disciples *began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.* The audience marvelled at this occurrence. The festival of the day had attracted many visitors from all over the known world. They spoke a multitude of different mother tongues. The miracle of Pentecost was that they all could hear what the disciples were saying in their mother tongues. The actual miracle, however, is the fact that the people actually understood the message which the disciples proclaimed to them. I remember people who crossed my path who could not understand the Christian message. I would say that the miracle of Pentecost has not yet taken place in their lives. For wherever this miracle takes place we find the fourth result of the sound of a mighty rushing wind: ***And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.***

You and I are permitted to call upon the name of the Lord. We shall be saved. May you experience the sound of a mighty rushing wind in your own life. Amen.

Hymn:

Arouse, o Lord, that zeal inspiring LH 218

Capo: 3

A - rouse, o Lord, that zeal in - spi - ring the faith - ful
 from Zi - on's walls kept watch un - tj - ring, and fa - ced
 saints who wit - nessed day and night, whose voice in all the world is ring - ing
 foe, con - fi - ding in your might,
 still, and bring - ing hosts to know and do your will.

Text: Karl Heinrich von Bogatzky 1750. Melodie: Hamburg 1690, Halle 1704.

2. O that your fire might soon be burning, and soon from land to land its flame might leap! Send many, Lord, whose hearts are yearning as faithful servants in your field to reap. O Lord of harvest, now behold anew how great the harvest, but the labourers few.

3. O let your Word go forth unhindered, and let its splendour light up every place, till gentiles have in fullness entered within your gates, and magnify your grace. Awake your own in Israel, o Lord, and bless the course of your eternal Word.

Prayer of Intercession

Almighty, eternal God, we praise you this day for giving the Holy Spirit to the Church to bear witness to your saving truth in Jesus Christ. Fill your Church this day with heavenly power, and sanctify your people as they now come before you in praise and prayer.

We praise you above all else, for the precious gifts of light and life through your Spirit. We thank you for his inspiration of the prophets and apostles who wrote your Word. Grant that we may have eager and open ears for the Scriptures also today. May we receive the words we hear as your words, and so remain in your truth and life.

We thank you for protecting the Holy Scriptures so that we still have them today. Help us to appreciate them and to make them a lamp for our feet and a light for our path day by day. Help the precious truths of your Word to shine brightly among all people, so that many more may accept your truth with joy, and trust in the Saviour who gives eternal life to all who come to you by him. We thank and praise you for the fire and enthusiasm to spread the Gospel among the nations which the Spirit has given to your people ever since the days of the apostles. Give us a similar zeal, that people everywhere may learn to sing your praises and to rejoice in your salvation.

Loving Father, direct and rule our lives that we may grow daily on knowing and loving you and our Saviour Jesus Christ. By your Spirit renew in us sincere repentance for our sins and living faith, so that we may have the continual peace and comfort of Christ's saving love. Arouse within us a genuine desire for all that is right, holy, pure, and just. Cleanse us in both body and soul so that as temples of the Holy Spirit we may be loyal to our Saviour, obedient to his words, faithful to his Church, and untiring in deeds of love and mercy.

Heavenly Father, the source of all light and life, banish darkness from this world with the brightness of your saving truth, and lead all people by your Holy Spirit. May your truth and Word have pride of place throughout our land. Teach all to walk in your ways, and to revere your holy will. Help us to live in holiness, and save us from all unrighteousness. Grant us the spirit of mercy, kindness, peace, and goodwill.

Give your Holy Spirit, the comforter and helper, to all who must pass through dark valleys and deep waters, that they may find in you their strength and comfort for ever. Be the guardian of all in danger, the friend of all who are lonely, the strength of all who are tempted, the comfort of all who sorrow, the hope of all who despair, and the health of all who are sick. In everything, help us to be filled with the Holy Spirit, for Jesus' sake, in whose precious name we pray.

All else that burdens our hearts we place into the prayer you taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

Hymn:

By grace I'm saved LH 329

Capo: 3

By grace I'm saved, grace free and bound - less: my
Why tremb - lest thou with ter - ror ground - less? Has
heart, be - lieve, and doubt it not. Then this word
Scrip - ture e're a false - hood taught?
al - so true must be: by grace the crown is won for thee.

Benediction

Depart in the peace of the Lord.

The Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Postlude