

Moved to Call

The Spirit Moves: Part 1 “Moved to Call”

Rev. Cameron D St.Michael –May 28, 2023

Pentecost

Readings: Acts 2:1-21; John 20:19-23

Reflection: Psalm 104

Greeting: We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have access by faith into grace in which we stand. God’s love has been poured out into our hearts, Through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Prayer: O Heavenly Father, we seek your wisdom and truth on this day. Let us join together with one voice and one heart to celebrate your presence in our lives. Help us to remember that we are one in Jesus Christ, our Lord. And may our advocate, the Holy Spirit, be a constant reminder of mercy and grace. Let us come together to celebrate your steadfast love that endures forever. May we turn to you always to help us in our daily lives, remembering the gentle guidance of the Spirit. Amen.

Reflection: Psalm 104

O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, great and wide; creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great. There go the ships and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it. These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground. May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works— who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke. I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 104:24-35 NRSVue)*

We read the words of Psalm 104 and hear of God’s wisdom and majesty. We hear of God’s glory in all things. In what ways do you rejoice in the Lord? How has God renewed your life? Do you share the blessings of the Lord with others? Do you praise God to those around you? What does that praise look like? How are those things reflected in your prayers? How can we work together in the Spirit to share God’s love with the world?

Prayer: O God, when all things come to their end, you bring us into the city of resurrection of your Son. Shelter every nation and tongue with your Spirit and feed us all with joy unending. We thank you for all you have already done and the great love that has been shown to us. We lift up our joys and our concerns, bringing all things before you. May we experience your grace in our laughter and our tears. May you strengthen us in sorrow and in celebration, knowing you are with us. And may you guide us in love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Alleluia.

Now let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Sermon:

Our scripture readings for today come from the New Revised Standard Version Bible. Our first reading for today comes from Acts chapter 2 verse 1 through 21.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every people under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, 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 Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine." But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Fellow Jews and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon 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 upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' (Acts 2:1-21 NRSV*)

Our next reading comes from John chapter 20 verse 19 through 23.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If

*you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”
(John 20:19-23 NRSV*)*

This is the word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Today we look at the Holy Spirit. As part of that we will be reflecting on how the Spirit moves us. This week I wanted to look at the way the Spirit calls us and moves us to call others. Our main reading for today is our Pentecost narrative from Acts. We see the disciples being filled with the Holy Spirit and when this happens, we see them begin to speak to the crowds that are gathered. And it's not just that they stand up and they speak, they speak and are understood. That matters because they are able to reach out and speak to people they wouldn't otherwise have been able to speak to. They can reach more people because of the Spirit. This highlights a big part of what the Spirit is doing with these early disciples. It isn't just receiving the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. No, it is that they are reaching out and calling others to faith by being able to speak directly to them. It is enabling them to reach out. And that struck me as I was thinking about the way that we are moved by the Spirit. We often talk about the Holy Spirit in more vague terms. And I think that is because the Spirit is hard to define. When we look at the Trinity, we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father and the Son are both much easier to define parts of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit can leave us with a lot of questions, because the place of the Spirit can be more difficult to define. And so, I wanted to at least try to address some of those questions in this Pentecost message. That when we celebrate the disciples being filled with the Spirit, that we reflect on what the Spirit means for us here and now.

I often think of the Holy Spirit as not just an advocate but also a presence that we feel. I think it's what helps us to feel peace and to have what we need to be able to reach out to others. When we look at our reading from John, Jesus offers peace when he invites the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit. Because I think the Spirit brings peace because it brings that presence of God into our lives. And I think it's important because it means that the Spirit helps us to find peace and it helps us to be able to think and to do. When we hear about the Holy Spirit, we often hear about these very big situations. That Spirit descends like tongues of fire, and everyone begins speaking in these different languages. This is the most dramatic outpouring of the Spirit we are shown, but it's to highlight the importance of the spirit. I think sometimes we downplay the Spirit because if we're not having a "tongues of fire speaking in foreign languages" experience, then it's not the Spirit. But I think it's important to recognize the way that we are called by the spirit and the way that we call others through the Spirit. Because it opens up for us a way to think about and express our faith. I say this, because when I think about the Spirit as part of my life, I think about that holy presence that strengthens me when I'm not sure what to do, or if I don't know that I can do it. And we do see that presence in our reading today. In Acts we start with all the disciples being together in one place. They aren't out and about. They aren't out in the community inviting others to faith right now. They are simply there. And the only interaction that we've had so far in Acts has been among the

believers themselves. That we haven't heard anything of them being out in the community, them calling others to follow Christ. That they haven't been ready to launch a public ministry. But then the Holy Spirit pushes them into the community. Because it's pushing them to call others to know the peace that they know, to know the love that they know, to experience God through the love of Christ. And they're pushed by the Spirit.

That's the relatable part for me. I've never had a tongue of fire rest on my head that allowed me to speak in a foreign language, and that's okay. I've never been in a situation where that would be helpful. But I have had the Spirit give me the strength to be compassionate. I've had the Spirit fill me up with the strength to give comfort when I didn't know if I would be strong enough. I know that the Holy Spirit has helped me to find the words that I needed to speak of peace, to speak of love, and to speak of comfort in times of distress and hurt. And I am thankful for that, because it brought that peaceful presence to me so that I could share it with others and call others into that love. And when I think of the spirit, that is what I think of. That presence that's there to guide us and lead us, to help us to do what it is we need to do. Which includes being able to call others to know the Spirit. Because I think sometimes we desperately need that help. Just like the disciples not knowing what came next, that they were guided into the community by the Holy Spirit. That sometimes we need that push. Sometimes we aren't sure what decision it is we are going to make, and we don't know which way to go. And we can ask the Holy Spirit for guidance.

Because the Holy Spirit is our reminder that Christ is with us, that the Father is with us, that we are one together. It is the presence that reminds me that Christ is never more than a prayer away. That God never leaves us abandoned. And it's the presence that allows me to get out of my comfort zone. Not just to go where I want to but to go where I'm needed. It may not always look the same and that's okay. As we will note in the coming weeks, the Holy Spirit moves us in different ways, unites us in different ways, and has different gifts. That our experiences in the Spirit will be different. But it's that difference in experiences that makes each one of us important as part of the community, because as each of us is strengthened in a different way each of us strengthens each other in a different way. This allows us to experience the Spirit fully through all of these different ways when we come together as one. For some of us the Spirit will move us to be able to pray in a way that unites us and draws our hearts together. For others it will help us to make the decisions needed to be able to reach out with a word of compassion to lift others up in a time of sorrow. For others, it'll simply be that your presence brings peace because the Spirit resides with you, and you share that peace with others. And it may look different because each of us is moved differently. But it means that each of us has a different call that we make to others to share in love, to share in peace, to share in Christ. And that when we are bound together and united in that kind of love that we are called to be one people. We have many gifts in the one Spirit because it's the one Spirit that calls us to be active. Just as we see with those disciples stepping out and speaking to people about God, inviting them to follow Christ. That the Spirit enables them to reach out to

the people there. Just as it enables us to reach out in our own communities to the people that we share Christ with already and the people that we call to understand God's love. That the Spirit moves us when we call and it moves us to call others.

So, when we think about the Spirit resting on us, we may think of it differently because the spirit moves us differently. But it always moves us into God's love. The Spirit always moves us to a greater grace and a stronger compassion. The spirit will always move us to where we need to be, even if we aren't sure we need to be there. Because the Spirit moves us in Christ and the Spirit moves us with our Heavenly Father. So, let us call upon the Spirit that we may call others into peace. Let us call upon the Spirit that we may call others to love. Let us call upon the Spirit to give us a spirit of justice. Let us call upon the Spirit to give us a spirit of truth. All so that we may speak the truth of Christ, inviting others to love, inviting others to know the peace that God offers. So that we may share in love and share in peace. So that all may know God's great compassion and that all may reside in that love. And that we may share in those blessings, moved by the Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of Confession and Pardon: God, you are with us even when we turn away from you. Guide us back into your loving arms. Judge us not by the perfection of our actions but show us mercy and love. We have strayed like lost sheep from your ways, failing both in what we have done and what we have failed to do. Bring us back into your fold that you may guide us and lead us in all things. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us and forgive us. May we walk in your love and trust your ways. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy upon you. May the Lord forgive all your sins and lift you up in love through Jesus Christ our Lord, and by the Holy Spirit keep you in life eternal. Amen.

Offering: If you are so moved to make an offering, you may send it to the church treasurer, or you may send it to the PO Box listed below. We are still the church, and the church still needs your support to keep doing all the important work that we do.

Lord's Prayer

Dismissal with Blessing: May we go forth reflecting God's love in our lives as we go forth in the peace of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Current Series – *The Spirit Moves*

Our current series looks at how we are moved by the Holy Spirit. In it, we will explore how we are united in love through the Spirit and the many different ways that the Spirit moves within us.

May 28th – *Moved to Call* – Acts 2:1-21; John 20:19-23

June 4th – *Moved as One* – Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 4:1-6, 25-32

June 18th – *Moved with Gifts* – 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Acts 19:1-7

Prayer List

Rev Charliam Renner	Bishop Frank Beard	Our Conference	Our Healthcare Workers
Patti Corder and the Greenup Ambulance Crew		Our Healthcare Workers	Eric Veach
Ed & Verna Titus	Henry Catey	Jake Kiser	Cindy Cisney
Tricia Adkins	Don Stewart	Ronnie Winstead	Lauren Stewart
Tom Finley	Laura Carlen	Rosie Chancellor	Chuck Hogan
Brittany Gilbert	Phil Hawickhorst	Ray Carr	Jane Williams
Alice Sherwood	Richard Durham	Kathy Hanks	Steve Carlen
Emily Blade	Tim Schnauz	Donna Carlen	Ernie Peters
Jess Shoot	Stanley Kiser	Corine Howard	Don Gilmore
Shirley Jester	Connie Brown	Don Blade	Marsha Overton
Darin Pease	Linda Carlen	Michael Nichols	Paul Cox
Taylor Waldorf	Harriet Tucker	Becky McGuiness	Joyce Sly
Sharla Tucker	Carson White	Dave Green	
Gary & Mary Winterrowd	Leo Smith	Sue & Bob Smyser	Larry Thompson
Evelyn Sue Icenogle	Greg Williams	Martha Roberts	Charlie & Charlotte Baxter
Paul Schulte	Lavon Figgins	Kara Newton	

Rev Camron D St. Michael

<https://stmichael.pw>

cdstmichael@outlook.com

(316)530-3182 (call or text)

PO Box 54, Charleston IL, 61920

* Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

+ Scripture quotations are from the Common English Bible, Copyright © 2011 by Common English Bible.