

Moved with Gifts

The Spirit Moves: Part 3 “Moved with Gifts”

Rev. Cameron D St.Michael – June 18, 2023

Pentecost

Readings: 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Acts 19:1-7

Reflection: Psalm 103

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 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits— who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust. As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children’s children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. (Psalm 103:1-18 NRSV)*

We read the words of Psalm 33 and we hear of God's mercy and compassion. We hear of the way that God's love is poured out upon us. We are reminded that we are forgiven and called to forgive others. How do you show God's love to those close to you? How do you keep your heart near to the Lord? How do you extend God's grace to others? Do you celebrate the Holy Spirit's presence with your daily? How do you share the peace and love of Christ with everyone? How can we work together in the Spirit to share God's love with the world?

Prayer: O God, you are our hope and our praise. Help us to seek your wisdom in all that we are and do. May your Holy Spirit encourage us day by day. May we be strengthened by your steadfast love and faithfulness as we come before you in prayer, bringing to you our praise and our concerns. Help us Lord, that you lift us up in both our joys and our sorrows. May you be with us in grace and love in both our laughter and our tears. By your Spirit guide us and lead us to life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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 1 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 4 through 13.

Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of powerful deeds, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:4-13 NRSV)*

Our next reading comes from Acts chapter 19 verse 1 through 7.

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Then he said, "Into what, then, were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied, altogether there were about twelve of them. (Acts 19:1-7 NRSV)*

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

I have rewritten this sermon multiple times this week. All because I could not quite focus on what I wanted to say exactly. It's a problem that I seem to have with preaching on Father's Day. It's not so much that I don't know what to say as much as I feel like I have too much that I want to say. I think it's because being a dad I have lots of thoughts about what it is I try to do as a father and pass down to my children and the hope that I have for them. And much of it is things that I learned from my father. But it also means that because there's so much, I can struggle to put it all into words that will fit in just one morning. I chose the readings that we have for today because they reminded me of my own childhood and of my kids. Because our readings discuss how we are blessed by the Holy Spirit and that there are many gifts of the Spirit. That we share in one Spirit and that we share in many gifts that we share as one. And that those gifts help us to help one another. That as one body we have many parts and each of those gifts gives us something that we contribute to the whole. But as I thought about this I thought back to my childhood. Now, I have quite a few siblings and each of us always were looking for what it was we were good at. And it could be competitive. Not so much that we ever felt like we were directly competing with each other, but oftentimes there was that feeling that we had to find that one thing that was ours. That one thing we would discover that made us unique. Thinking we had to find that thing that would give us meaning and purpose, the thing that makes us special. And I thought about how sometimes we feel about our spiritual gifts in that way. That people can stress over what it is that the Holy Spirit has given them to make them special. What it is that they have to contribute so that they are a unique part of the whole. But more than that I was reminded of the way that we were raised that was contrary to that concept. And it's the way that I try to raise my children now. That they aren't going to have to look for something that makes them special or unique, because they're already special and unique. But what I do want them to discover is what it is that gives them joy that they can share with others. I want them to discover what it is that warms their hearts and brings a smile to their face when they can share it with the people around them. Because then, not only are they unique and special because of who they are, but they share a gift that is uniquely theirs because of the joy that they bring into the world. Because when I think about what I want my children to grow up knowing, I want them to know that they are loved. I want them to know that they don't have to find something that makes them belong or fit in because they already do. But that they are encouraged to have love and to share it.

I thought about that when talking about the Holy Spirit and the gifts that we have. Because when we look at Paul baptizing and sharing the Holy Spirit with the followers that he meets, he doesn't ask if they are worthy of the Spirit. He doesn't ask if they will be able to contribute something helpful. He simply asks if they have received the Holy Spirit, and when they say they haven't, he lays his hands on them and blesses them with the Spirit. He freely gives because it is a gift freely given by God, a sign of God's love for us. That the Holy Spirit is freely given to move us in love. That we have that Spirit to strengthen us in the gifts that have been given. That when we pour our love into them it multiplies that love. That we may share it because each one of us is already unique and special in God's eyes. And we, by the Holy

Spirit, are joined together as a family of God. And if I'm honest, I even feel a bit of a fatherly role to all of you. And you are free to chuckle at this because it gives me a chuckle too. I know that some of the age difference here works in the opposite direction. But because of the calling that I have answered, this call to serve, I often feel the same way about you as I do with my children. Wanting to use the gifts I have to be able to help everyone grow in their own gifts. I always feel that I want to nurture my children so that they grow in love, wisdom, and understanding as they grow in years. I want to nurture the gifts that they have so that they find something they love and can share the joy that it gives them with love. And I want them to always know that as family they are always loved, always welcome, and will always belong. And I want the same thing for all of you. I want to nurture those gifts of the Spirit so that all of you may be moved by the joy of our Heavenly Father. Now that you feel pressure to find what gift is yours and figure out how to use it, but you may know that to God you're already enough. That the gifts that have been freely given are there to increase your joy.

I see those gifts at work all the time and I pray that they always grow. Gifts of kindness and gifts of mercy. That we can look at what Paul tells the church in Corinth. That each gift is there for the common good. That each person has something unique to share. Maybe it is sharing wisdom, wisdom gained through experience and through years. Maybe it is knowledge, helping someone else who doesn't know. Maybe it is that your faith is strong enough that it strengthens the faith of those around you. Maybe it is that your generosity inspires others to be generous. Maybe it is discernment, that you are able to help make the difficult choices so that it helps alleviate that from others. Maybe it is that your peaceful presence brings the peace of Christ to those who are in need. Maybe it is that when you pray your words touch the hearts of others. Maybe it is that when you sing that melody reaches and touches our very souls. Maybe it is that your compassion helps others to always feel as if someone cares. Maybe it is a gift that I did not mention here but that is still just as important. And all of those gifts are of one Spirit. And we are moved with gifts, moved to help others, moved into the lives of others, all so that we may help others. We do it by inspiring joy because of the joy that we find in our Savior, Jesus Christ. We share it in the joy that we have being watched over by our Heavenly Father. It is the joy that comes from being moved by the Spirit. That we are of one body, redeemed by one blood, and that with God we are one family.

As for me, I am thankful for that family. I'm thankful for that family because I know that I feel welcome. I know that my children feel welcome and call this place a home. Last week I got to do something that I hadn't done in a while, and it made me appreciate this family that much more. Because I got to be on the other side of things. I got to sit down there instead of up here. I sat with my kids and got to sing. I got to listen with them. I got to pray with them. All in a way that I haven't in a while. Because things are a little different when you're up here. But it reminded me of how thankful I am that they have a place they can come and be welcomed. A place they can come and feel loved. And it gives me hope. Hope because all of those gifts of the Spirit will make an impression on them. And all of that love will carry on within them. And

that wherever they go, they will carry it with them and be able to share it. And I pray they will carry that feeling of being welcomed wherever they go. That they will carry that feeling of being accepted as part of God's family. That we are united by the Spirit, with each of us doing our part to encourage, to strengthen, and to heal. That we may share the joy and the hope of Christ. And I pray that it will help them to invite others to share in that unity. I hope they can invite others into that oneness. That they will invite others to be part of this family, to always feel loved and always feel welcomed. Just as you have done for me and just as you have done for my children. And someday maybe they'll pass that on to their children. And I hope that love will always be carried forward, with each gift inspiring a new joy. That a new generation may experience that love. That each act of the Spirit will inspire a new hope. That we may all be moved by the Spirit so that we may all know where it is we are loved. That we may be moved by the Spirit to know where it is we will always belong. 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	

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