

John Sampson  
"Come Holy Spirit, Come"  
Text: Acts 2:1 - 21  
Preached at KVCC  
May 31, 2020

Will you pray with me?

God, may the words of my mouth, and the meditations of all of our hearts, be acceptable to you, our rock, and our redeemer.

Amen.

Today is Pentecost; it's been fifty days since Easter. And God's Spirit keeps pouring out, and drenching the world, and humanity.

We hear the story of the coming of God's Spirit to those first disciples, those first followers of Jesus and his commandment of love. It invades them, and has them speak in tongues. It is the day when Peter tells the unbelieving crowd that has gathered to see what all the noise and chaos is about, he tells them that this is the day when those invaded by the Spirit will prophesy, and see visions, and dream dreams.

We tell this story today about an event of long ago. But we tell this story every year, year after year, because this story isn't about one unique event. It is about a truth available to all of us, even here, even now.

The story of Pentecost is about the foundation of the church, and the word church doesn't mean a building. The word church comes from the Greek ekklesia, which means a group, or a club. Just like we would say The Women's Gardening Club, back in first century Palestine people would have said the Jesus Club. Today is the day when remember the chartering of the first Jesus Club; today is the day when we recommit to our our Jesus Club.

And it takes two things: a group of humans who try to put Jesus's commandment of love right in the center of their lives, and the presence of God's Spirit. And when these two things meet we too can see visions and prophesy and dream great dreams.

Today is such a day. Because today is the day when we commission our Creation Justice Church Taskforce. Today is the day when God's Spirit invites us to come together and open ourselves to the possibility of embracing God's original purpose for humanity: to care for all of Creation more profoundly – both human, and non-human. But to do so in new ways that respond to the critical moment in which we find ourselves. At a moment when the world as we know it is slipping through our fingers with dire implications for humanity, and every species of life on this Earth.

Now there will be some who look at us, at the step we are making today, and sneer. Who say, in their own way, that we must be drunk, that we're just some lefty liberal tree huggers.

If the step we make today is only a product of our own ideological leanings, then yes, our critics might be right. We just might be some lefty liberal tree huggers, which doesn't mean that that is a bad thing.

But the words our spiritual ancestors share this morning call us to enter the path before us from a completely different direction. When those who had gathered around the spirit-drenched followers of Jesus on that Pentecost so many years ago, heard what the disciples were saying they didn't hear a political agenda, nor an environmental agenda. It wasn't an economic agenda, or even a public health agenda.

What they heard were people speaking about God's deeds of power.

At the core of this moment, as we enter into a time of discernment about whether or not our congregation feels invited to become a Creation Justice Church, the experience that will center us, is the deep and essential witness to the fact that Creation, all of creation, is the most beautiful and awe-inspiring of God's deeds of power. Our world is not simply a physical artifact. We are invited to approach it as a sacred expression of Divine love, given to us as a gift to tend and nurture. This is the calling that our sacred scriptures tell us we were made for.

That's what makes our path forward different from other groups that do wonderful and amazing work to conserve and heal our natural world. We come from a place of Spirit, and that makes our voice unique. That's what makes our dreams and prophecies unique. That's what makes our work and advocacy unique.

And what our story this morning tells us is that we should not be afraid to speak from a place filled with spirit. Because the scientists will understand, even as they speak in science. And the environmentalists will understand, even as they speak in environmentalism. And the farmers will understand, even as they speak in farm. And the children will understand, even as they speak in the language of a future world many of us will never see.

So come, let's open ourselves to God's Spirit, let's be saturated by God's invitation to a new future, let us begin our journey of what it may mean for us to become a Creation Justice Church. Let us embrace a new commitment to God's Creation. And let us envision a new sense of what it means to be church, to what it means to be in the Jesus Club.

Amen.

