

PENTECOST

May 31, 2020

For video viewing of music and service go to:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEO_pAVddaeV1_dOvvUd5eITX0IJKxqmM

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray together:

C: *O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen*

***THE FIRST LESSON**

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, the disciples 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 nation 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, "Men

of Judea 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.' "

***THE SECOND LESSON**

1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

No one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit. 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 miracles, 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.

***THE GOSPEL READING**

John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked 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."

SERMON: PASTOR RICHARD CARBAUGH

Fire has long been understood as a sign of God's presence - from the burning bush of Moses, to the pillar of fire leading the Israelites through the wilderness, to the tongues of fire resting on the people at Pentecost. On Pentecost Day, we celebrate the event by which God sent the Holy Spirit to fire up God's people. It is a good day to ask whether God's people are still on fire?

A woman, on her way out of worship, told the pastor that the sermon was 'warm'. Not exactly sure what she meant, the pastor nonetheless thanked her and left it at that. The next week, the woman again said that the sermon was 'warm' - so the pastor decided to ask her what she meant. Instead of answering directly, the woman invited the pastor to look up 'warm' in the dictionary. The pastor did, and discovered that 'warm' meant 'not so hot'.

On the other end of the spectrum, there is a story of a village church that was burning. A member noticed that the village atheist was in the line that was passing along buckets of water to douse the fire. The church member couldn't resist saying: "This is the first time I've ever seen you at church!" To which the atheist replied: "This is the first time this church has ever been on fire!"

For most people, the church probably falls somewhere between 'not so hot' and 'on fire'. Sometimes the embers are glowing; sometimes there is an explosion of energy - but mostly, the church continues to burn like a warm fireplace in the cold of winter. Pentecost serves to remind us that God's power has been given to the church, and that it is this power that makes it possible for us to be the church at all. When you think about it, power can be understood in at least two ways. It can be directed or it can be unleashed. It can work like a power plant or it can explode like a bomb. It can run the appliances in our homes or it can feel like the fourth of July. One is very spectacular; the other is more lasting. Whenever I went to special events or conferences, and there had been very uplifting worship or a great speaker, I found myself filled with energy and excitement. When I returned home and tried to carry that feeling into my day to day life and ministry, I found it hard to sustain. The experience was great, but I discovered life doesn't seem to be like that all the time.

At Pentecost, the Spirit exploded onto the scene, like tongues of fire and the rush of a mighty wind. It must have been quite an experience. Thousands were

affected by that burst of God's power. What they discovered, though, was that the feeling of that experience would soon give way to the realities of day to day living, and they would have to rely on the Spirit in a different way. The Spirit's power would be directed through the church, through God's people - and it would be this Spirit that would provide the staying power for the long haul. We all know that experience - the excitement of a birth or a wedding that must give way to the ongoing task of living; the energy of responding to a crisis or of grieving must give way to getting on with life. The same is true in our spiritual lives. Through our Baptism, through our life as God's people, we have been given a power that is not a flash in the pan, but is something that provides for daily, ongoing strength and support.

In the Service of Affirmation of Baptism, or whenever someone is installed into a ministry of the church, people are invited to respond to being asked if they will fulfill their responsibilities with these words: "I do, and I ask God to help and guide me." It is a response that can be used throughout our Christian lives. It is a response where we can just say the words, or it can be a response that truly believes that the power of God will indeed be with you to help and guide you in your life and faith.

Sometimes, we feel pretty good about what we have accomplished. Such a feeling reminds me of the story of the elephant and the flea. An elephant and a flea were walking across a bridge together. When the elephant and the flea reached the other side, the flea said: "Boy, I really shook that bridge, didn't I?!" We must never forget who is really doing the shaking. It is God working through us, carrying us. God is the elephant in the room, and because of that we are able to do great things in God's name.

It's somewhat like the story of a time when some church organs needed two people to play them. Of course, there was the organist who played the keys. But there was also someone needed behind the organ to make the wind with a kind of bellows so sound could be produced. After playing for a special service, the wind boy said to the organist from behind the organ: "We played that pretty good, didn't we?!" To which the organist replied: "What do you mean 'we'? There is not art to making wind!" Well, the next week came, and it was time for the service to start so the organist sat down to play. When she touched the keys, no sound came out. Realizing what was going on, the organist leaned around the organ and said to the boy behind it: "Okay, WE need to play now!" Like that organ, our lives can make no music unless the wind of God's Spirit is blowing through us. WE may believe we do everything on our own, but ultimately nothing good will come OUT of us unless we rely on the Spirit of God that is WITHIN us.

Just look at those first disciples. Despite their declarations of faithfulness to Jesus, all of them flee into the night, all of them hide behind closed doors - until, that is,

Jesus gives them the Holy Spirit. Then, all heaven breaks loose. We are sometimes at a loss, just as those disciples were. That is why Jesus gives us the power of that same Spirit in our Baptism. Jesus knows we can't shake that bridge on our own. Jesus knows we can't make music on our own. Jesus knows we can't understand the Bible, or have community in the Church, or take up our cross, or live the Christian life on our own. The Holy Spirit has been given to teach us, to strength us, to guide us and to equip us to be faithful disciples.

There was a Garfield cartoon in which Odie the dog chased Garfield the cat up into a tree. In the next frame, both Odie and Garfield are resting side by side on a limb in the tree, when their owner Jon comes by. Looking up, Jon says: "Odie, dogs can't climb trees!" And Garfield is thinking: "It's amazing what one can accomplish when one doesn't know what one can't do!" When we let God's Spirit work through us and in us, we don't know what we can't do - because it is not just us, but the power of God in us. Indeed, we can know the PRESENCE of God that enables the church to be the church, the disciples to be the disciples, and struggling believers to feel hopeful. We can know the POWER of God that can take us beyond our human limitations, help us reach what seems unreachable, speak new languages of love and take strong stands with fresh convictions. We can know the PROMISE of God who, by sending the Holy Spirit, has shown us that God will not give up on us - even if we sometimes feel like giving up on ourselves, or even when we believe that the tasks ahead are too difficult.

So on this Pentecost Day, whether you are feeling 'not so hot', somewhat warm, or ablaze with fire - may our response to all of life's challenges and questions be: "I do, and I ask God to help and guide me". And God, through the Holy Spirit, certainly will. Amen.

***NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;

by the power of the Holy Spirit

he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen

***PRAYERS**

A: Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *(A brief silence.)*

A: We call on your spirit of unity, giving thanks for our different vocations. Activate and utilize the diverse gifts present in your church, that they reveal your love for all. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: We call on your spirit of life, present in air, wind, humidity, storms, and oxygen in our atmosphere, breathing energy into all things. Heal with your breath the whole creation, especially those who struggle to breathe due to air pollution. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: We call on your spirit of righteousness. Wherever we as a people are divided, unite us. Wherever we are prideful, humble us. Give each one of us a heart for justice and empathy. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: We call on your spirit of healing. Bless nurses, doctors, midwives, chaplains, counselors, and hospice workers as they care for those in need. We pray for all who long for comfort (especially). Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: We call on your spirit of friendship. As Elizabeth welcomed Mary to her home, give us a spirit of welcome to those whom we meet in this congregation and outside these doors. Surprise us daily with unexpected grace, that we rejoice in every blessing you send. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God, you are life. We pray for our world, our country, our community, our church as they face the challenges of coronavirus. We pray for those who grieve the loss of love ones, for the sick and their families, for those fearful of an unknown future. We pray for the millions of unemployed, for children and others at home - that they be safe from abuse. We pray for those who are alone and isolated during this time that they may feel your loving presence. We pray for all the hospital and health care workers, and all first responders, that they receive needed supplies and be kept protected in the work they do. We pray for those making decisions about how to live into the future and when that will happen. Keep us all in your care as we wait for a new day. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of families. For all our Messiah families and especially this week for the Deagle, Deere and DeGraff families. For the talents and good things You have given each of them. Keep them united and faithful to You and each other. Guide them, protect them and equip them to do Your will. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

C: *Our Father, who art in heaven,*

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy 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 those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

***BENEDICTION**

P: May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASTOR CARBAUGH'S OFFICE HOURS

For the time being Pastor Carbaugh will be working from home. If you need to reach him, his email address is: messiahmechpr@gmail.com. In the event of a pastoral emergency, he can be reached at 540-760-4089. Please be safe and take care during this challenging time for us.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

Beginning March 8th, we began providing a summary of the financial well-being of our congregation. Here is this week's information:

- Contributions to general fund averaged \$3031 through May 24th (down from \$3138 on May 17th).
- We are \$7829.41 behind the year-to-date budget needs (down from \$5300.41 behind the budget the week prior).

WE ARE THE CHURCH TOGETHER

A thank you was received this past week from the Virginia Synod for our continued support with our monthly benevolence payment to their office. "As we all grapple with the impact of COVID-19, we want you to know how much we appreciate your congregation's partnership in the Virginia Synod. Thank you for being church together even as we find ourselves physically separated." 60% of our offering to them supports ministries in Virginia. The remaining 40% is shared with the ELCA Churchwide Organization to support a variety of programs including COVID-19 resources.

CAROLINE FURNACE, CAMP AT HOME

'Camp at Home' (\$0-50) is an exciting online Summer Camp through Caroline Furnace! Camp at Home will have live, small group "cabin time" once a week, plus large group and pre-recorded praise breaks, fun activities that you can do at home, Bible studies, BYOL (bring your own lunch) community time, FAITH5, and daily vlogs from our Program Directors, Andy and Caroline. Long story short, Camp at Home is guaranteed to be lots of fun! Registration for 'Camp at Home' is now open at no cost. Sign up for 'Camp in a Box' (\$50) if you'd like to get fun camp surprises and activity supplies delivered right to your door! To Register go to: <https://carolinefurnace.campbrainregistration.com/>.

To view a schedule go to:

[https://static.wixstatic.com/media/da5cfb_a13255e3bcb94884ba90c4eb5a7ff549~mv2.png/v1/fill/w_1403,h_388,al_c,q_90/Screenshot%20\(43\).webp](https://static.wixstatic.com/media/da5cfb_a13255e3bcb94884ba90c4eb5a7ff549~mv2.png/v1/fill/w_1403,h_388,al_c,q_90/Screenshot%20(43).webp)

PLEASE APPLY: JOAN BARNES SCHOLARSHIP

Church Council wants to remind possible candidates that applications for the Joan Barnes Scholarship are available on the church website, <https://messiahmech.com/> under the "ABOUT" tab. Please note that all applications are due no later than June 22nd to the church office. All information along with the application has also been put on the church website. If you have specific questions about the scholarship or application process, please contact Sally Bennett at sallybennett3317@gmail.com and she will assist you.

PANDEMIC HOPE: A FAMILY DEVOTIONAL FOR LIFE DURING COVID-19

Built around "Faith 5", *Pandemic Hope* is a Devotional for families that focuses on the new realities we are all living in each day. It provides daily readings and activities for 8 weeks to work together with those who you are staying safe at home with. To read and download this devotional go to:

https://www.vasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Pandemic_Faith_Devotional.pdf

EVENTS CANCELED

During this pandemic time, the Virginia Synod has canceled the following events for this year: Synod Assembly, Power in the Spirit, Kairos, Launch, and the Junior-High event in July. For more information, go to the Synod website: <https://www.vasynod.org/>.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

To continue in your faithful giving, mail in your offering to the church office, 8154 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111, or use on-line giving through Vanco which is available on the church website. See messiahmech.com for more details.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Those who would like to place announcements in our Sunday 'ebulletin' please send them to Donna Shaw at dmshaw70@gmail.com by Wednesday for inclusion.

Prayer List

WE PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Kenneth Deere	"Doc" Kondaki
Adam Dworak, Sr.	Linda Krupa
JoAn Firebaugh	Mac McAllister
Bill Fulop	Roberta McMillen
Elisabeth Gardner	Pat Motley
Werner Gardner	Nathan, Ruth Schroeder & family
Steve Gilnett	Judy Schwerdtfeger
Geoffrey Honan	

WE PRAY FOR OUR EXTENDED FAMILY AND NEIGHBORS

Danny Allen, friend of the Whirleys
Boyd Allison, friend of Jean Wightman.
Family and Friends of Dennis Anderson, father of James Anderson.
Joe Griffin, friend of Anne Mason.
Pete Gunn, friend of the Schwerdtfeger's
Christina Nibali, sister of Anita Philip.
Dee Schroeder, sister-in-law of Roger.
Tim Schroeder, nephew of Roger.
Family and friends of Wanda Umlauf, Vicar Ginny Banister's mother
T.J., grandson of the Whirleys.

Pastor Carbaugh, as he walks with us in this interim time
Our veterans, their fellow soldiers & their waiting families
All law enforcement, firefighters & first responders
The people and pastor, Rev. Katherine, of All Souls Episcopal & our shared ministry

Hospitals, nursing homes, other health care facilities
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
The World Health Organization Medical researchers and scientists
Schools, workplaces, government institutions and municipal agencies
For all who travel