

From Our Conference Minister

Together in One Place (Acts 2: 1-21)

The Book of Acts has awe-inspiring stories that leave me yearning for churches to be imbued with a similar energy, conviction, courage and vitality.

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.” (v.1)

I often wonder what could happen if the Church were to once more, metaphorically speaking, be *together in one place*. Agreeing to disagree but not become disagreeable. Even on the day of Pentecost, not everyone was convinced that a good thing was happening among those who were caught up in the Spirit of God, yet they did not become disagreeable.

I also wonder what could happen:

- If churches with liberal views and conservative views could learn to listen to each other to form mutual understanding even though we seem to speak a different language
- If Blacks, Whites, Latino and Asian people would cross ethnic and cultural boundaries to worship together as a multicultural church

Pentecost reminds us that it is Jesus who calls us into community and unity. In last week’s lectionary passage from John’s gospel, we were reminded that Jesus prayed for us. He prayed anticipating the challenge of establishing unity amid diversity all kinds of different people *together in one place*.

What Pentecost moments have you noticed throughout your life, or even recently?

Pentecost moments happen as the Church continues to be created anew by the Spirit. When we open our eyes to see things in a new way, we open our hearts to new possibilities and hope. According to Walter Bruggemann we “... *think, imagine, dream, (en)vision a future that God will yet enact.*”

At Annual Meeting this year, Association Executive Committee members are invited *together in one place* to participate in a “Think Tank” session to envision new possibilities for the churches they serve. I am eager to see what the Spirit will do in our midst.

Pentecost was meant to show us who we are as the church. This is our story just as much as it is the story of the earliest disciples of Jesus. Like them, we are the church. We are the gathering of Jesus’ followers filled, empowered and moved by the Spirit of God. We are a people sent and powered by the Spirit of God to create new possibilities, life and bring hope into lives of all people everywhere.

May who we are show in what we do. Amen.

In Christ,

Monica

Rev. Dr. Monica Dawkins-Smith - Conference Minister and President