

## Pentecost 2020

### The Reverend Allison English, preaching

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. It was a presence that inspired beauty and hope in the world for generations to come. 3000 people baptized that day. Filled with the Spirit of God. Rich, poor, Gentile, Jews— from every race and clan they gathered. And the church was born.

It's poignant today, as we gather, scattered across the city and beyond, still safely in our homes. In today's Gospel, it had been 50 days since the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Weeks since they gathered in that locked room and Jesus appeared in their midst.

They had gathered out in the wide open space where Jesus was lifted up into heaven. And there they were, gathered together in the City of Jerusalem. **(slide)**

There's a place that brought us all together in the first place. **(slide)**

A place that, in non-pandemic times, centered our lives each week around the Gospel of Jesus and the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. **(slide)**

A place where we gathered in all seasons. Come rain, shine, wind, rain, thick fog or clear skies. **(Slide x 2)**

A place in our lives, a presence that inspires beauty and hope in the world. **(Slide x 3)**

A place where we came in and trusted that when two or three were gathered in Jesus' name, there he was in our midst. **(slide)**

A place that stands alone this morning, while right here, right now, we gather. **(slide)**

## STAY ON EMPTY CHURCH

So, how is the Holy Spirit meant to show up for us when we're not able to gather together in our place? - **back to me - end screen share**

You have received the Spirit of God. You are baptized into the very Body of Christ. You sitting right where you are, have the presence and power of Jesus working in you from the top of your head to the soles of your feet.

Jesus said in today's Gospel: Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. He said it to remind the people to whom he spoke that the Spirit was coming. He said it to remind us that the Spirit has already come. That no matter where we find ourselves, we have been given the Holy Spirit.

All along until recently, we've been gathering together in one place. A place that comforts. A place that provides a sense of support and strength. And today, on the Day of Pentecost, we are reminded of what the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Advocate, is really meant to do.

We are a presence that inspires beauty and hope in the world.

All along we've been coming to this place, gathering in the hope of receiving that power of God's presence which is so magnificent, so extraordinary.

Today we've gathered in a 21st century version of Pentecost: young and old, women and men, speaking in multiple and hearing multiple tongues to proclaim the power of God for all to see visions and dream dreams.

Today is a day when I want you to hear the words of G. Lee Ramsey, Jr., "that yes, God occasionally anoints big dreamers who with their lives and words paint upon a global canvas, renewing visions for the human community— dreamers like Martin Luther King Jr. But God also anoints ordinary believers like the ones who sit in the pews [-or from their homes —] before the preacher."

You, too, see visions and dreams that can move the church and its surrounding community a little closer to "the Lord's great and glorious day."

Right there where you are: God anoints you.

God anoints you to imagine what is possible for life in the world today.

Calvary Church is a presence (**slide**)

Spanning Generations (**slide**)

Young and old, we are a presence that inspires (**slide**)

Your presence inspires us to sing a new song. (**slide**)

Your presence inspires hope to the hungry and care for the beauty around us. (**slide**)

Your presence inspires leadership and dreaming. (**slide**)

Your presence inspires us the beauty of radical invitation and connection for all people. (**slide**)

Your presence inspires us the beauty of an embracing welcome to all people. (**slide**)

Your presence inspires the hope of a table open to all people. (**slide**)

Your presence plants the seeds for what lies ahead. (**slide**)

In the Gospel Jesus declares,

“Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.”

When we gather: In Calvary’s building or **-slide-** from our homes on Facebook Live. **-slide-** In Zoom rooms or from a physical distance... The Spirit is at work.

The power of God is at work in us, love, peace, hope, and “justice will flow down like waters, and righteousness like an overflowing stream.” **-Slide-**

*In the last days, God says,*

*I will pour out my Spirit on all people.*

*Your sons and daughters will prophesy.*

*Your young will see visions.*

*Your elders will dream dreams.*

*Even upon my servants, men and women,*

*I will pour out my Spirit in those days,*

*and they will prophesy.*

What dreams has the Spirit of God given to you?

May we speak our dreams out loud and live them into reality.

Come Holy Spirit, Come.

Amen.

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*Thank you to Howard Helvey for sharing with us the bulk of the photos featured in the sermon this morning. He is an example of someone who dreams and sings when the Spirit says “sing.”*