

“God Of Tempest, God Of Whirlwind”: The Holy Spirit In Our Daily Lives

As we enter into the long and hot summer months, our congregation will scatter like seeds across the earth. We will go on vacations near and far, visit family and friends, see places both familiar and new, and take time to rest. We might see one another more sporadically, and we might start to miss one another as the months wear on. This has me thinking of Jesus’ last speech to his disciples, right before he ascended into heaven at the end of his 40 days on Earth following Easter:

“The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”

John 14:26-27

As he gets ready to ascend into heaven, Jesus gives us one final promise—that even though he is no longer here with us in flesh, God will still go with us. God will breathe the power of the Holy Spirit into this world, and that Spirit will fill our hearts, guide our steps, enliven us, and give us the strength to continue to serve God in this broken and hurting world. We need not be afraid of what comes next in our lives or of how difficult the road of discipleship might be, because God has promised to be with us. When we struggle, when we celebrate, when we laugh, when we cry, God is alongside us.

What does that mean for us this summer, as we plan our time away and see one another less often? It means that wherever we go, we are accompanied by that same Spirit that filled the lives of the disciples on Pentecost. It means that we are empowered by God (yes, even in our ordinary lives, even on vacation, even you!) to share God’s story of love and grace with the world in places familiar and new. Just like the disciples scattered across the world after the Spirit came to be with them at Pentecost and spread the story everywhere they went, so we are scattered to do the same.

When you feel overwhelmed by that task, or maybe just feel a little tired in your faith, remember that you are not alone—you are a part of a huge cloud of witnesses that have gone before you. This June and July is filled with reminders about the big family of disciples that we belong to. Just look at some of the saint days we have to look forward to:

June 3: The Martyrs of Uganda, who died witnessing to their faith in God in 1886

June 21: Onesimos Nesib, Lutheran who translated the Bible into the Oromo language, died 1931

June 24: John the Baptist

June 25: Philipp Melancthon, a Lutheran Reformer and Martin Luther’s best friend, died 1560

June 29: Peter and Paul, apostles

July 6: Jan Hus, founder of the Moravian Church, martyred in 1415

July 22: Mary Magdalene, apostle

July 29: Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany

As you scatter across the world this summer, remember that God and the legacy of all these saints in light go with you. You are accompanied by the Spirit, and you are equipped to share God’s story with this world. Thanks be to God!

Peace,

Pastor Marissa