**Please Take Spare Pew Bulletins** to anyone housebound or absent this morning.

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**Before** the service, talk to God.

During the service, listen to God.

After the service, talk with each other.

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The hubris that resulted in the Tower of Babylon, and the divisiveness of multiple languages is healed by the coming of the Holy Spirit. People from all around the then-known world suddenly could understand one another as language barriers melted away. From a sermon of a sixth-century African preacher, name unknown: ‘If anyone says to one of us: “You have received the Holy Spirit. Why do you not speak in tongues?”, he should reply: “I do speak in tongues. For I am in the Body of Christ, the Church, which speaks in every tongue. For what did God signify by the presence of the Holy Spirit if it was not that His Church would speak in every tongue?’

* Lord, help me to speak intelligibly to those around me about you, your Son and the Holy Spirit.
* Give thanks for the work and witness of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan.

 *Text: Robert McLean © Anglican Board of Mission*

**FAITH BOOK:** Mini-reflections on the Sunday scripture readings designed for persons on the run.

**From today’s Acts of the Apostles reading**:

And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house where they were

**Reflection:**

Pentecost reminds us we never can be sure how, or in whom, the Spirit will work. The feast cautions us to keep ears and eyes open lest we miss what new life the Spirit is breathing into us.

**So, we ask ourselves:**

* What blocks do I put up to resist the change the Spirit might want to bring about in my life?
* Have I ever been surprised by the Spirit?

*Jude Siciliano, OP,*

*Southern Dominican Province, USA*

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**The Holy Spirit,
The Force of Forgiveness**

*How is God's Spirit different from the Force in Star Wars?*

With the arrival of streaming services, the Star Wars franchise keeps rolling along.  Children of all ages can relive (or look ahead to) the saga of the most profitable series in movie history (and more!). They can root for the Light side of the Force, and boo the Dark Side.

The Holy Spirit found in Christianity does not mirror the dual nature of the impersonal Force. Why? The Holy Spirit brings us love and hope. Love and hope do not have a dark side. And, both love and hope begin with forgiveness.

The Holy Spirit we worship, the Holy Spirit we possess, is the Spirit of divine forgiveness.

*Larry Broding,*

*word-sunday.com*

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**Ruach - Wind**

The rustling of the olive trees speaks of the movement of the wind. The Greek work for spirit has the suggestion of breath or wind; the Hebrew word - Ruach - actually means the desert-wind, that powerful unseen force that sweeps across the face of the earth, none knows whence or whither. The wind - the Spirit - it bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest its voice, but thou knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth. But you can feel its breath on your face if, hearing it pass, you go out and stand in its course. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit. Don't ask for credentials. Don't wait till you know the source of the wind before you let it refresh you, or its destination before you spread sail to it. It offers what you need; trust yourself to it.

*Archbp. William Temple,****Readings in John's Gospel***

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**The Jewish day of Pentecost** celebrated the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai. The story in the book of Exodus of the giving of the law is marked by characteristic Baal imagery: God appears on top of a mountain, with thunder, lightning, cloud, and earthquake. Exodus 19:19 says that when Moses talked to God, "God would answer him in thunder." So in Acts 2 God arrives in "a sound like the rush of a violent wind," and fire appears, not on the top of a holy mountain, but on the top of each believer’s head.

*Gail Ramshaw*

***Treasures Old and New: Images in the Lectionary***

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The history of Christendom is the history of an operation. It is an operation of the Holy Ghost towards Christ, under the conditions of our humanity; and it was our humanity which gave the signal, as it were, for that operation. The visible beginning of the Church is at Pentecost, but that is only a result of is actual beginning – and ending – in heaven.

*Charles Williams*

***The Descent of the Dove:***

 ***A Short History of the Holy Spirit in the Church***



**Celestial Fire**

Now an angel of the Lord appeared to

Moses in a blazing fire –

a fire that devours fire;

a fire that burns in things dry and moist;

a fire that glows amid snow and ice;

a fire that is like a crouching lion;

a fire that reveals itself in many forms;

a fire that is, and never expires;

a fire that shines and roars;

a fire that blazes and sparkles;

a fire that flies in a storm wind;

a fire that burns without wood;

a fire that renews itself every day;

a fire that is not fanned by fire;

a fire that billows like palm branches;

a fire whose sparks are flashes of lightning;

a fire black as a raven;

a fire, curled, like the colours of the rainbows!

*Eleazar Ben Kaller, c 6th to 10th century liturgical poet*

*trans. T Carmi,* ***The Element Book of Mystical Verse***

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Love flows from God into man,

Like a bird

Who rivers the air

Without moving her wings.

Thus we move in His world,

One in body and soul,

Though outwardly separate in form.

As the Source strikes the note,

Humanity sings--

The Holy Spirit is our harpist,

And all strings

Which are touched in Love

Must sound.

*Mechtild of Magdeburg, 1207-1297*

*trans. Jane Hirshfield*

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**Monastic Wisdom**

**Generosity**

God’s generosity is so overflowing that God longs for each one of us – whoever we are, whether we feel like a stranger, or unworthy – to ‘come home,’ to come and live with God forever. You could say that the whole Gospel is about God inviting and welcoming each one of us with these gracious words, ‘Mi casa es su casa’: ‘my home is your home.’

*Br. Geoffrey Tristram, SSJE*

**Reciprocate**

Jesus assures us, “I will give you whatever you ask in my name….” We need to know a great deal about Jesus and the enormity of his love – what Jesus would want for those for whom we pray – then pray our hearts out. In our praying, we should presume that Jesus will very likely reciprocate, in asking us – asking you – to be a part of the answer to that prayer**.**

*Br. Curtis Almquist, SSJE*

**Known**

Others in this world can only know us partially, incompletely. Long after we have departed this world, it may only know our names – and maybe not even that. When the world forgets our lives , our loves, and even our names, we are assured that our Shepherd does not forget us – that we will “dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

*Br. Lain Wilson, SSJE*

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Unless we believe that …

The gospel is absurd and the life of Jesus is meaningless unless we believe that He lived, died, and rose again with but one purpose in mind: to make brand-new creation. Not to make people with better morals but to create a community of prophets and professional lovers, men and women who would surrender to the mystery of the fire of the Spirit that burns within, who would live in ever greater fidelity to the omnipresent Word of God, who would enter into the centre of it all, the very heart and mystery of Christ, into the centre of the flame that consumes, purifies, and sets everything aglow with peace, joy, boldness, and extravagant, furious love. This, my friend, is what it really means to be a Christian.

*Brennan Manning,1934-2013*

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Pentecost & the Tower of Babel *(Genesis 11:1-9)*

Sometimes, human achievement is mixed with human arrogance. Just because we have done something, should we repeat it? Just because we can do something, should we? These questions are ignored by some in the quest for perfection. Man, not God, is the height of ambition.

Gee, I wonder what God has to say about that?

The so-called "Tower of Babel" story was not a chronicle of human achievement gone bad, but a narrative of human arrogance in the face of divine rule. Men built a city; within the city, they built a tower that would "reach into the heavens," so they could "make a name for themselves." In other words, they wanted to reach God's level and garner God's reputation. Of course, such hubris had its cost. God confused their language, so to confuse and scatter the builders.

These results were the author's way of injecting divine judgment into arrogance. Most arrogant people fall from power, simply because they cannot work with others. They can't understand why others will not work with them, why others will not shown them deference, when the arrogant have not show others simple respect. Communication breaks down. The will to cooperate disperses.

Of course, what humans break, God can fix. The Babel narrative stands in stark contrast to the Pentecost found in Acts 2-3.

*Larry Broding,*

*word-sunday.com*

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***The Dismissal***

**Blessing of Light**

*The ministers go to the Easter Candle.*

*A minister says*

Blessed are you, sovereign God, overflowing in love. With Pentecost dawns the age of the Spirit. Now the flame of heaven rests on every believer. Strong and weak, women and men tell out your word; the young receive visions, the old receive dreams. With the new wine of the Spirit they proclaim your reign of love.

Amid the birth pangs of the new creation

the way of light is made known. Source of freedom, giver of life, blessed are you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

**Commission**

For fifty days we have celebrated the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ over the powers of sin and death. We have proclaimed God’s mighty acts and we have prayed that the power that was at work when God raised Jesus from the dead might be at work in us.

As part of God’s Church here in the Riverland, I call upon you to live out what you proclaim.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, will you dare to walk into God’s future, trusting him to be your guide?

**By the Spirit’s power, we will.**

Will you dare to embrace each other and grow together in love?

**We will.**

Will you dare to share your riches in common and minister to each other in need?

**We will.**

Will you dare to pray for each other until your hearts beat with the longings of God?

**We will.**

Will you dare to carry the light of Christ into the world’s dark places?

**We will.**

*If there are no other services on this feast the Easter Candle may be extinguished in silence.*

**Conclusion**

*The president says*

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

Today we have remembered the coming of God’s power on the disciples and we invite that same Spirit to drive us out into the wild places of the world.

*The prayer of blessing is said:*

May the Spirit,

who hovered over the waters when the world was created, breathe into you the life he gives. **Amen.**

May the Spirit,

who overshadowed the Virgin when the eternal Son came among us, make you joyful in the service of the Lord. **Amen.**

May the Spirit,

who set the Church on fire upon the Day of Pentecost, bring the world alive with the love of the risen Christ. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be upon *us* and remain with *us* always. **Amen.**

*A minister says*

Filled with the Spirit’s power,go in the light and peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**