

***The Day of Pentecost* May 15, 2016**

Acts of the Apostles 2: 4-8,12,13

The Unexpected Filling and Connecting

We have all been out in a roaring wind. Sometimes it is exciting and exhilarating. Sometimes it is down right aggressive or bone chilling. We have all watched a roaring grass fire or bonfire. Sometimes they mesmerize us. Other times they get out of control or their smoke drives us away. The strange thing in our story about Luke's **Pentecost** experience is that these roaring *elemental* experiences occurred indoors. So whatever was going on was certainly **unexpected** and got everyone's attention! Let's note two features of this experience. First, the experience **filled** the house and second, the experience touched or **connected** everyone there.

So today let's focus on **the unexpected through filling and connecting**.

In **Jesus'** day, **God** was believed to be high and lifted up. **God's** presence was believed hidden or confined in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. Like all religious traditions of that era, **God** was more associated with a time and/or a place; certain festivals and calendar dates than with all time and all places as is the case today. Things were to be kept separate back then.

So the first unexpected experience of the **Pentecost Spirit** is that it **fills** a simple house and then spills out to **unexpectedly fill** the world in which we live,

as portrayed by the bystanders: All the people from different lands and cultures who were in Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of 50 Days.

The second unexpected experience of the **Pentecost Spirit** is that it **connects** to all those in the house and then **unexpectedly** empowers everyone to communicate to **connect** with the known world. All the languages of the Mediterranean world are represented and employed. The

Spirit reaches out and continues to **connect** through any and all of the languages needed.

Some of the bystanders resisted the **connection**, refusing to be **filled** with the **Spirit** and called the disciples drunkards. I would say they were **filled** with and **connected** to their deepest longing, their bliss: **God's dream** for them and they just had to share it.

Pentecost marks the in-breaking of the **unexpected** experience that **God fills** all of life and **connects everyone**. **Pentecost** marks the coming to awareness that **God** is already and always in every person's every moment. **Pentecost** marks the realization that **God** is already and always present in each and every place. By extension, everyone is a precious child of **God**, somehow participating in **God's** dream for the world, wherever they are. Some people do very little with **God's** dream for them, **God's Spirit filling** and **connecting** their lives, while others get quite involved.

The Good News is that at any moment we can open up to this **filling** and **connecting**. If **God fills** the world: then **God** is in our every breath. If **God connects** everyone, then **God** is our every passion and concern. When we bring this together as conscious awareness, we **unexpectedly** become **co-creators** with **God** in healing the world. So, every moment matters!

For example: When we find ourselves becoming impatient with someone, somehow the person becomes less and less valued, less and less a precious child of God to us. They become someone to complain about or to.

But, in the Spirit of **Pentecost**, we **could** see this person as a beloved child of **God** participating in his/her own way, in God's dream for creation. We **could unexpectedly** begin to notice what is unique about the person.

We ***could unexpectedly*** take a deep breath and actually enjoy being in the moment. We might ***unexpectedly*** begin to experience a sense of ***connectedness*** instead of impatience or anger. This situation ***unexpectedly*** becomes a spirit ***filled*** moment.

Application for Today

Transformation in the Spirit can occur **any time, any place to anyone.**
The connections are already made. Expect the ***unexpected.***

Gospel Lesson:

Acts of the Apostles 2:

14-18

Peter speaks to the crowd, **“God has poured out God’s Spirit on all flesh.**

Look and listen.”

What does that mean for us today?

How do we look and listen in our own lives?

When Peter was saying Spirit, the people were hearing the Hebrew word **‘Ruah’**. Its original meaning is breath, wind, animating spirit.

Breath is always beyond us, yet totally around and within us.

Breathing is controlled by our autonomic nervous system. In a way, it is done to us. We can influence it by being aware of our breathing but we don’t control it.

Whenever we’ve tried to hold our breath what happened?

Right. If we actually had the final control, we might not be here today.

The interesting thing is that ‘Ruah’ as a word imitates our breathing.

Ru – inhalation.

Ah – exhalation. Let’s practice that.

Notice, we immediately become aware of our breathing.

Ruah: breath, wind, animating spirit. When we are aware of our

breathing we can become aware of the life giving Spirit of **God**.
Mindfulness of the Spirit draws us into prayer. When breathing and prayer
come together there is an ***unexpected filling*** and ***connecting***. We
recognize that as we are being breathed through by our autonomic system,
we are also being prayed through by **God**.

Soooo... **every breath can become a prayer.**

Praying is allowing our breath to be an encounter with **God** and
allowing our breathing to express our joys and concerns for others.
Breathing only happens in the present moment where **Spirit** is. Through
the ***unexpected filling*** and ***connecting*** of prayer:

We breathe with **God**,

As **God** breathes through us.

We breathe with one another,

As all shares the breath of life.

We breathe the breath of the believers

As the **Spirit** blew through them at Pentecost.

We share the breath of the **Spirit**

As we breathe forth blessing.

So how do we look and listen for the **Spirit** that is poured out on all people?

One way is through prayer.

Application for Today

We pray with the **Spirit**, as we become aware of our breathing
in the present moment, and allow care, concern and compassion
to ***fill*** us and ***connect*** to others through us.