



Pentecost
June 5, 2022

Ascension Lutheran Church
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Grace and peace from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. After a few years living in Waukesha, my wife and I decided to start the process so that my mother could come to the United States. It was a very difficult process, like all immigration processes. But finally, after many letters from friends and interviews at the embassy, she was able to get her visa to travel. My mother was very excited because she had the opportunity to come and meet her granddaughters.

Within days of arriving in Waukesha, I was always looking for a way for her to spend time with the girls. And one afternoon, I called my mom and dad, and asked them to come to our house to take care of the girls because I had to go to the store. My wife was still at work. When I return from the store, I opened the kitchen door and I saw my mom, with her hands on her eyes, as if crying and moving her head up and down, to one side and the other, sitting on the sofa. On the other sofa was my father, with a concerned face because something was happening to his wife.

I approached her and asked her, what's wrong with you mom? Are you ok? Her response was, "Son, thank you very much for all the things you have done so that I came to meet my granddaughters and to come to know this place. I am dying. I have finally arrived in the United States to see my family and now God is going to take me."

I asked her questions trying to figure out what was going on. Eventually she told me this. "Your dad went to the basement and gave me some juice you had in the fridge. He asked me if I wanted orange juice or strawberry juice. I had never had strawberry juice, so I wanted to try something new. I've felt bad ever since." And you know what, the juice that my mom had drunk was this... a STRAWBERRY MARGARITA with 8% alcohol. My mother was not about to die, my mother was completely drunk because she had finished one of these cans. One of the babysitters had gotten drunk. And if you ask me what happened to my father, he didn't want a strawberry juice. He preferred a Sprite. He believed that he had given my mom the best. It never occurred to my parents that their church going son and daughter-in-law would have alcohol in the house. Welcome to Wisconsin. It was not the presence of the holy spirit that had caused this reaction in my mother, but rather the 8% of alcohol that had been consumed.

But on the day of Pentecost, the reactions that the apostles had were the product of the divine presence of the Holy Spirit, not from margaritas, although the villagers all thought that the apostles were drunk. The promise had been fulfilled. John the Baptist had previously announced in the wilderness. I indeed baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who comes after me is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to take off; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Jesus on multiple occasions announced to the apostles about the promise of the comforter, the one who will continue leading the mission of God's proclamation until the end. It is the comforter who makes it possible for us to be gathered this day in this holy place to worship and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

After 50 days the apostles and others were gathered in the same place where they usually gathered for prayer, just as we are gathered this morning. Suddenly a sound like a mighty wind came from heaven, and it blew and filled the whole house. Then tongues like fire appeared, spread out and rested on all those present. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues as the spirit gave them. Approximately 120 people were filled with the Holy Spirit and each one of them the Spirit had granted different attributes.

On the day of Pentecost, God revealed his powerful hand to those who had accompanied his son during his ministry, and encouraged them along a new path to places where God seeks to be fully known to all in their own languages. The city was filled with many people from different places speaking different languages, but the wonderful thing was that everyone understood what was going on in that room. God had started a revolution through the holy spirit, because the gospel begins to be proclaimed in different languages and adaptive to the realities in all communities.

It is the Holy Spirit who has made it possible for the gospel to be proclaimed in two languages in this place. It is the Holy Spirit who meets us in this room, it is the Holy Spirit who makes his presence felt in the other room with our Latino brothers and sisters. It is the Holy Spirit that makes it possible for us to live together as one community. It is the Holy Spirit who removes all those barriers of pride. It is the Holy Spirit that encourages us to be compassionate with those most in need, especially when we join in raising funds to help ministries in the world. It is the divine Spirit that opens us to people from different cultures and unites us as a universal family.

Brothers and sisters Without the Holy Spirit, it would be impossible for us to follow Christ. Without the Holy Spirit it would not be possible for me to preach to you in your first language. There can be no life without the day life giver, no understanding without the Spirit of truth, no fellowship without the unity of the Spirit. As a body without breath is just bones with skin, so the church without the Spirit is dead. With the death of Christ, the Church believed that everything had come to an end, however the Holy Spirit comes to the Church and empowers her to continue with the ministry. Just as the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus when John baptized him, so now the same Spirit descended on the disciples of the Lord to equip them for their mission in the world, and it is that same spirit that dwells deep within each one of us and Who accompanies us unconditionally in our lives.

So while the first disciples appeared drunk on alcohol as the Holy Spirit came down, that looks different in our modern time. May we surprise others around us with our overwhelming love for others, with our generosity, and our kind spirits.

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.