

CUMC NEWS
June 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On June 9 we will celebrate Pentecost Sunday. You can read the second chapter of Acts to get a full account of what happened on that day. We are told there was a violent wind from heaven that filled the room the disciples were in, tongues of fire descended upon them, and they were given the ability to speak in other languages as they proclaimed the Good News. Though something like this can and does happen in people's lives, and though not usually being able to speak a different language that they've never learned before upon being filled with God's Holy Spirit, typically God's voice and presence is not so overwhelming. In fact we are told in 1 Thessalonians 5:19, "Do not quench the Spirit."

As believers and followers of Jesus Christ, God's Holy Spirit lives within us so we have God with us always as we live every day of the life God has granted us, but as well as what we are told in 2 Corinthians 1:22, that God "...put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

Not only during the one Sunday each year, Pentecost Sunday, do we remember and give thanks for the gift of God's powerful Holy Spirit, but every day let us remember the power of God within us, the very power that raised Jesus from the dead. And in remembering that, let us also realize that God does not always come in like a mighty and rushing wind and overwhelming us with His Holy Spirit. God often is that gentle, quiet, and easily-ignored presence and quenched fire. That is why even those who have learned about Jesus from an early age, who have had a mighty "Pentecost" experience in their lives, and even vowed to live and die for Christ can easily become complacent, lukewarm, and even uninterested in Jesus and his calling to live for him, sharing the Good News to everyone and to go and make disciples of all as possible.

None of us are immune to ignoring God in our lives. None of us are immune to losing our fervor and passion for Christ. None of us are a special kind of human or Christian who cannot be tempted, distracted, and even like a doubting Thomas. We all are able to, even as followers of Jesus Christ, to act like we do not follow Jesus.

My point here is not to make anyone feel guilty or to encourage you to compare yourself to anyone else. My point is that we all can easily forget to begin and journey through each day being more eager to listen to God's sometimes soft and quiet voice, and to not quench or extinguish the fire of God's Holy Spirit that is within us. Do not look at those who have forgotten to follow Jesus every day, not just every Sunday, with judgment. But rather cheer and encourage them by how you live, by your warm and caring invitations, and with your unconditional and grace-filled love...that same forgiving and overwhelming love of Jesus Christ.

In Christ's Love,

Taek