

McCabe United Methodist Church

Have you heard of the Holy Spirit?

The Book of Acts: A Spirit-Fueled Adventure

Pastor Mark Ehrmantraut, August 6 & 7, 2016

Good Morning Church!

Mark Batterson wrote: When you follow the leading of the Holy Spirit you don't know who you'll meet, where you'll go, or what you'll do, but you do know it's not going to be boring! (Draw the Circle: 40 Day Prayer Challenge, 18). When you allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you you're going to end up in places, and with people, you never expected. Living our faith is NOT boring! 😊

I love that about the Christian faith. The more we live it the more exciting it is!

In worship this summer we've been working our way through this Spirit filled adventure called the book of Acts. Spirit filled adventures is our story isn't it? That's the story of people called Methodists. Our history is grounded in the power and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. If you look around the outside of the building you'll see symbols with the Cross and Flame. There's a cross and flame is hanging on the banner in here. It's actually the symbol for United Methodists. The cross is the cross of Jesus Christ. The Flame, in part, represents the Holy Spirit. Take a look at the cover of the hymnals. You'll see the cross and flame...

We are people of the Holy Spirit.

Have you heard of the Holy Spirit?

Methodists came to the prairie frontier on horses and trains and in buggies. They came driven by the Holy Spirit. They went to uncomfortable places. They made great sacrifices, and in the process they brought hope and healing to the prairies.

Have you heard of the Holy Spirit?

It makes a difference because as people of the Spirit, and as we work our way through the Book of Acts, we might be asking, Where's the Spirit leading **US**? What frontier is the Spirit prompting us to reach?

As we ponder where the Spirit is leading us, let's hear our Scripture again. Paul is asking about a crucial shift in baptism. It's a shift from baptism before Jesus to baptism after Jesus. Hear this morning's Scripture reading again: Paul is in Ephesus

19 And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth Paul passed through the inland country and (he) came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. ² And he said to them, "***Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?***" And they said, "***No, we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.***" ³ And (Paul) he said, "***Then why were you baptized?***"

They said, "We were baptized by John, basically under his terms"

⁴ And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance. He told people to believe in the one who was coming after him. He was telling people to believe in Jesus."

⁵ (Then) on hearing this, ***they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*** ⁶ ***And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them...***

Friends, have you heard of the Holy Spirit?

Under the power of the Holy Spirit we are adopted into the Body of Christ. We're not just a group of friends. We're not just a social club. We're not just people networking for business purposes. We ARE people alive and changed and driven by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I have a hard time even wrapping my head around it. Jeremy Camp writes: The same SPIRIT that rose Jesus from the dead, this same Spirit is alive in you and me (Same Power: Jason Ingram and Jeremy Camp).

Can you wrap your mind around that? The same Spirit, the same Spirit that rose Jesus from the dead, that same Spirit is alive in you and me...

Living our faith to the fullest is an exciting adventure. Sometimes it's filled with joy, sometimes heartbreak. There'll be ups and downs and twists and turns, but at the end of the day that same Spirit that rose Jesus from the

dead, it's alive in us. And When we live our faith to the fullest it's the greatest adventure we'll ever take!

Friends, have you heard of the Holy Spirit?

In our Scripture this morning the people responded NO, WE HAVEN'T even heard of the Holy Spirit. And the Apostle Paul asked: Then Why were you baptized?

John baptized so people would turn God and repent. John baptized so people would recommit their lives to God. John baptized in preparation for the coming of Jesus the Messiah.

And when that One greater than John came, when Jesus came and was baptized by John, the Spirit washed over Jesus and we continue to wash with water in baptism as we are bathed in the Spirit.

Bathed in the Spirit we are Washed Clean...

Bathed in the Spirit we are raised to New Life in Christ...

Have you heard of the Holy Spirit?

Once we're baptized we spend the rest of our lives growing and seeking and serving. Once baptized, we spend the rest of our lives becoming the people God created us to be.

As we prepare for Holy Communion this morning, as we prepare for an opportunity to pause and remember our baptism, Pastor Jenny and I would like to invite you to pause for a moment as we enter this next movement in worship. We'd like to invite you to the altar for Holy Communion and we're going to invite you to the altar to remember your baptism, OR, if you haven't been baptized in the Christian faith, no one will leave here newly baptized today, but we'd like to invite you to consider visiting with Pastor Jenny or me after worship some time. We'd like to invite you to consider if it might be the right time for you to prepare for your own baptism.

Before you decide if you're going to come to the altar or not, let's take an intentional look at the baptismal language, at the language that goes along with living our faith to the fullest.

I will invite you to turn to page 50 in the red book, in the red hymnal that is in the holder in front of you. (Mark begins this section with the INTRO to this part of the service: Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Through the Sacrament of Baptism.....and affirm our commitment to Christ's holy church.

(Continuing through Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith)

On behalf of the whole church, I ask you:

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,

Reject the evil powers of this world,

And repent of your sin?

(I Do.)

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

(I Do.)

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior,

Put your whole trust in his grace,

And promise to serve him as your Lord,

In union with the church which Christ has opened
to people of all ages, nations, and races?

(I Do.)

According to the grace given to you,
will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church
and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?

(I Will.)

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

Born of the Virgin Mary,

Suffered under Pontius Pilate,

Was crucified, died, and was buried;

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;

He ascended into heaven,

Is seated at the right hand of the Father,

And will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting.**

This morning we'll be celebrating Holy Communion first, then you'll have the opportunity to receive the water in remembering your baptism.