

RECTOR'S MESSAGE – MAY 24, 2026

Pentecost: "Come, Holy Spirit Come."

This Sunday marks the Day of Pentecost in our Church Lectionary. And in the Acts of the Apostles Chapter 2:1-21, the Day of Pentecost event with the coming of the Holy Spirit came to empower God's people; ordinary believers to be witnesses of Jesus to every nation, breaking barriers that divide people. Thus the core theme here is that God is reversing Babel (See Genesis 11:1-9 - Indeed, this theological parallel highlights how God moves from judgment in the Book of Genesis to restoration in the Book of Acts of the Apostles). At Babel, language divided humanity. At Pentecost, the Spirit of God enables the Gospel to cross every language and cultural barrier so that all people can hear and respond. A day like this reminds us of singing a song like this: **Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness**

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow through the wilderness
calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness,
wind, wind on the sea...*

The Spirit's work in Acts 2 wasn't a one-time event. It's the pattern for us as the Church even today! In this passage, the Spirit empowers ordinary people to witness, not just only Church leaders, teachers, or those we often see at the altar. But here there was a group of 120 disciples of Jesus in an upper room (Acts 1:15), praying and waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit as they had been commanded by Jesus (Acts 1:4-5). These were not just disciples or preachers of the Gospel or the temple priests, they were ordinary everyday people. In our day and time, the Spirit can as well work through anyone with an open mind and a willing heart: whether you're students, nurses, project programers, parents, immigrants or refugees. One does not need a platform or title for the Spirit of God to move; the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is enough.

In our 21st century reality, many believers feel unqualified or silent in this secular, digital, pluralistic world. However, Acts 2 says the qualification is being filled with the Spirit, not being impressive with titles, superiority of race, colour, language, ethnicity or culture. The Spirit breaks barriers of all these: language, culture, and nationality. Acts 2 lists Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Romans, Arabs, Egypt, Libya etc. in order to settle what might be any hindrance for people to freely express their faith. The Gospel crossed ethnic and geographic lines instantly.

And for us in the 21st century of the global and digital world, barriers now look like accomplishments, titles, fame, superiority of race, the eloquence of language, ethnicity, power or influence, politics, social class or generational divides. The Holy Spirit still enables believers to speak into those spaces. That looks like a cross-cultural mission, translating the Gospel into any space that is devoid of class or status; professional or layperson; refugee or immigrant. The Spirit is now calling us as a Church that reflects Acts 2:9-11 in diversity. The Spirit is calling us to bring boldness and clarity in a divided and confused world at the moment. On this Day of

Pentecost, the crowd that was “bewildered” with some among them becoming very judgemental while others sneered and said, those filled with the Holy Spirit, "were filled with new wine," and "were drunk.” But Peter didn’t have to apologize to inform them of their ignorance for making them understand where the Spirit of God is at work; nothing can stop it! He gave a clear, biblical explanation centered on Jesus’ death, resurrection, and Lordship.

For us today, we live in an age of information overloaded, skepticism and misinformation. The temptation is to stay quiet or water down the good news message of Jesus that looms so large in our time at the moment. But Acts 2 says the Spirit gives clarity and boldness to name Jesus as Lord, even when people mock. The Spirit’s work is tied to salvation and prophecy, not just experience. Peter quotes from the Book of Prophet Joel Chapter 2:28-32, that the Spirit’s outpouring leads to prophecy, dreams, visions, and “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” The “last days” means now, and “all people” means sons and daughters, young and old, captive and free, educated and uneducated. And for us too, the Holy Spirit’s work isn’t just emotional experience, it’s evangelistic and missional experience to bear witness to the truth. It points us to repentance and faith in Jesus. It points us to freedom from sins to reconcile us with God through the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, that means the Spirit’s presence is validated by transformed lives and people coming to Christ by what they proclaim in word and deed, and by also boldly testifying to the manifestations of what God is already doing in the world, as Apostle Peter boldly stood and did.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

With every blessing,

The Reverend Wilson Akinwale
Rector