



Connections

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful;
and kindle in us the fire of your love.*

**SPECIAL
ISSUE #11**

PENTECOST - THE DAY THE CHURCH WAS BORN

Of all the amazing events in the New Testament, none are more incredible than what happened on the day the church was born. Here were the apostles, a small group of men from country towns, who had just been through the most frightening and bewildering time of their lives. Their leader was gone. They were adrift.

Then suddenly, as Jesus had promised, this band of ordinary people were empowered to preach and heal fearlessly in His name. So strong was their new vocation that the Bible records that 3000 people were baptized on that one day!

Pentecost (from the Greek pentecoste or 50th day) is a major festival in the church, celebrated on the Sunday that falls on the 50th day of the Easter season. It commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and other disciples following the Ascension of Jesus Christ (*Acts 2*), and it marks the beginning of the Christian church's mission to the world.



The Jewish feast of Pentecost (Shavuot) was primarily a thanksgiving for the first fruits of the wheat harvest, but was also associated with a remembrance of the Law given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. The story of Shavuot is on the next page of this issue of *Connections*.

The church's transformation of the Jewish feast to a Christian festival was related to the belief that the descent of the Holy Spirit on the followers of Jesus was the firstfruits of a new gift from God that fulfilled and succeeded the old gift of the Law.

In the early church, Christians often referred to the entire 50-day period beginning with Easter as Pentecost. Baptism was administered both at the beginning (Easter) and end (the day of Pentecost) of the Paschal season.

Eventually, Pentecost became a more popular time for baptism than Easter, and in England the feast was called Whitsunday (White Sunday) for the white garments worn by the newly baptized.

In most churches, priests wear red vestments during Pentecost and the altar is dressed in a red frontal cloth to symbolize the "tongues of fire" that descended on the disciples from the Holy Spirit.

As the early apostles said so long ago, we say today, "Come, Holy Spirit, come."

One Family in Mission.

A Pentecost event

*Join Anglicans and Lutherans across Canada as we
celebrate the unifying power of God's Holy Spirit.*

Sunday, May 31 4pm EDT / 1pm PDT
www.anglicanlutheran.ca/pentecost



Tomorrow will be Dancing Day!

In the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Chapter 62, we read "...you shall be called My Delight...". We are God's delight. God's words, God's chosen new name for us. "My Delight". Those words remind us of how precious and delightful we are to our Heavenly Father.

Good reading during the moments when we start to falter and wonder what is going on in our world. The prophet encourages us to "go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples...".

In 1963, the late great song writer, poet and theologian, Sydney Carter, wrote a hymn, Lord of the Dance, using the melody from the American Shaker song, "Simple Gifts". The song follows the idea of traditional English Carol music by saying "Tomorrow will be Dancing Day". It is told in the first-person voice of Jesus of Nazareth. It portrays Jesus' life and mission to be a dance. "I see Christ as the incarnation of the piper who is calling us. He dances that shape and pattern which is at the heart of our reality...I sing of the dancing pattern of



Jesus. (Sidney Carter, *Green Print for Dance*)
The hymn has six verses, but the chorus is my favorite in times of need:

*"Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he".*

Sydney Carter was later ravaged by Alzheimer's disease. The only thing that brought him back to the world around him was singing his songs. He sang them until his life's end. He believed in God's delight and the importance of dance.

Look for delight in the simple things around you. Sense the sounds, the visual and the smells of living in Paradise. Be observers of "The Dance" of God's delight all around you.

Watch our Sunday morning gatherings; you will see middle-aged to senior people adapting to the medium of proclaiming and celebrating the liturgy online. Come to our Zoom coffee hour; you'll see the faces of your friends and hear their voices as we all rejoice in being together, even virtually.

We are God's delight and we delight in His creation. We "live in Him and He lives in us" will help us get through the tough moments as we fight this pandemic together and it will help us prepare for "Tomorrow will be Dancing Day"!

OUR JEWISH NEIGHBOURS CELEBRATE SHAVUOT

The festival of Shavuot on May 28 celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. It encourages the Jewish community to embrace the Torah's teachings and be inspired by the wisdom of Jewish tradition. Shavuot is the Hebrew word for "weeks," and the holiday occurs seven weeks after Passover.

Like many other Jewish holidays, Shavuot began as an ancient agricultural festival that marked the end of the spring barley harvest and the beginning of the summer wheat harvest. In ancient times, it was a pilgrimage festival, during which Israelites brought crop offerings to the Temple in Jerusalem.

In modern times, Jews no longer bring agricultural offerings to the Temple in Jerusalem. There are, however, several rituals that have become popular ways of celebrating the holiday. For instance, some people stay up all night studying Torah. This custom evolved from a story that says that when the Israelites were at Sinai, they overslept and had to be awakened by Moses. So, to make amends and prove that they won't fall asleep while waiting, like their ancestors did, many modern Jews stay up all night, or go late into the evening, to study and celebrate receiving the Torah.



MARY ANSWERS GOD'S CALL

Sunday, which is the Day of Pentecost, is also the feast day of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This commemorates Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth as told in the gospel of Luke. Elizabeth is also pregnant, and their meeting gives rise to Mary's song we call "The Magnificat."



Scripture does not tell us where Elizabeth lived, other than "the hill country ... a city of Judah." Scholars think Hebron was likely. I have seen pictures of Mary beginning her journey, skipping like an excited school girl up a grassy green hillside.

There are not a lot of grassy hills between Nazareth and Hebron. There is about eighty miles of dusty rocky desert. There were thieves and robbers in those hills. This was not a school girl jaunt. This was an arduous (remember, she was pregnant) and dangerous trip, which would have taken many days of walking to accomplish.

And yet, when the Spirit said "Go", she went. When the Angel said she would bear a son, she said "Yes."

When Joseph said, "Marry me", she said "Yes." And so we honour this young woman. She listened. She believed. She was obedient to God's call. She bore a boychild and named him Jesus. And the world has never been the same.

snapshots



The Feast of Pentecost is the birthday of the church. Bring a cupcake with a candle on top to our Zoom coffee hour at one o'clock! And wear red (the Holy Spirit's colour) when you gather round the screen.



A note from our friend Rev. Claire Goodrich-Dyer wishes us well. She is on the e-list for *Connections*, so she keeps up with what's happening in our corner of the world.

Our new sign is installed, and it's a beautiful sight to see. Moving notices, bright colours, - sending the message that the church building might be closed temporarily, but we're still very much alive!



June 1 is Global Day for Parents, who have been seeing a lot more of their children than usual in the past few months. Makes you really appreciate teachers, doesn't it?



*Please pray for these members
of our faith community
and their families*

Anne S	Hector B
Annet K	James Y
Beverly B	Jenille L
Christina & Joshua	Joan N
Corinne P	Ken K
David M	Margo P
Deb A	Philip I
Ebun D	Sherri-Ann & Ron
Euphrasia	Viggy M
Felicia, Lucia, Sam	William I
Florence S	

and for all those affected by COVID-19

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**ALL SERVICES AND MEETINGS
CANCELLED**

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE



REFLECTION - Waiting on the Spirit

I watched a squirrel one day, marvelling at its ability to move so quickly, confidently and ably, from tree to tree, and along telephone wires, with such great ease. How I wish in this pandemic that careening in this new world was just as easy. It has not been so for me. First, I felt fearful when seven weeks ago I was



emailed that a clergy meeting was going to take place on ZOOM, virtually. I'd only just found out about ZOOM computer group gatherings. But now I had to join one. Very reluctantly! You need to know that I have the ability of a slug, when it comes to things technological ... both in terms of desire to learn something new and my ability to grasp the new thing (I think the latter bit affects the former).

As you can imagine, with learning ZOOM I was not as confident as a squirrel in its trapezing ability. But I knew I had to do it or I would miss meeting with fellow clergy and with Bishop Kevin. The harsh phrase, "suck it up, Pam" came to mind. It was like a mean, "Just do it!" when what I really needed was the voice of my own personal cheerleader, "You can do it," with pom poms waving in the background and a cheer, "Let's go Pam, Let's go!". I don't know

how you have felt in this new world, with all the unknowns and having to learn how to maneuver. I hope that you have been gentle with yourself. Please call me if you need a personal "cheer"ing up 647-470-1383.

I also want to attest to the fact that, although learning new technology makes me feel more fearful than trustful, the outcome of learning has been worth it. ZOOM has allowed me to join in the meditations with my spiritual advisor (open to anybody on Tuesdays at 10am and Thursdays at 7pm), which has brought refreshment to my soul during these soul-draining times. It has gifted me with time to wait on the Spirit and to be filled with the Spirit anew (just as the disciples waited on Pentecost).

In summary, be gentle to yourself and others in all that you face during this time. Try new technology (go on our website to view the service - www.christchurchscarborough.com, or join the ZOOM coffee hour, if you haven't tried this). Give yourself opportunity to wait on the Spirit of God. Life isn't all squirrely. Be at peace.

Pastor Pam

***Please note that beginning next week
Pastor Pam's day off will be on Fridays.
Feel free to connect with her any day but
Friday.***

Scripture Readings

May 31

Pentecost

Acts 2: 1 to 21

Psalm 104: 24 to 34 & 35b

1 Corinthians 12: 3b to 13

John 20: 19 to 23

June 7

Trinity Sunday

Genesis 1: 1, 2 4a

Psalm 8

1 Corinthians 13: 11 to 13

Matthew 28:16 to 29

