

Gospel and Sermon Transcript -Pentecost Sunday - May 24 2026

00:13

Some Pentecost red out there.

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As we mark this day,

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I think it is good

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to pay attention to the Scriptures that are included

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there are lots of different expressions of Pentecost, everything from the tongues of fire and mighty winds

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to something much more intimate and personal, as in John's Gospel.

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And we'll be spending some time emphasizing the latter, perhaps, more than the former today.

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We'll also be talking about connections between spirit and baptism.

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So it is fitting, I think, that we would again give thanks for our baptism.

01:00

The words for that are in your guide to worship and

01:05

we invite you to rise in soul and spirit, if not in body.

The Gospel John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

02:09

After he said this he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when

02:16

they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you as the Father

02:24

has sent me so I send you." And when he had said this he breathed on them and he

02:32

said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you receive, if you forgive the sins of

02:40

any, they are forgiven them. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

02:48

The gospel of our Lord.

02:52

Won't you be seated.

The Sermon

03:00

Lord, send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth. It wasn't sung

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particularly well but I hope that maybe the words and the melody will stick this

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week as our prayer is that the Spirit of God would breathe on us and breathe on

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the earth and renew its face.

03:26

Is that too much to ask?

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It is audacious.

03:36

I learned this morning that the religious experience in Canada in one respect is different

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than that in the US, maybe in degree.

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I have to go back a few years for this one.

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But my first foray among Lutherans was my time as an undergrad.

04:00

And there was a controversy that I was not aware of until I got to school.

04:06

And the reason I share it now is because of the grief and the sadness that some of the

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kids just expressed as they would talk openly and honestly about their faith.

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many of their friends were having these experiences where, unbidden, they would

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speak in languages that they had never studied. And these same kids would tell

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others, "If you have not had that experience, you're probably not a true

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Christian." I remember how hurt some of these people were that I would talk to.

04:47

I carry that because sometimes I think if there's not enough razzle dazzle does that

04:56

mean we're doing it wrong?

04:59

Does that mean there's something wrong with the church that we're not blowing the air

05:03

back on the glass figures or something?

05:07

That's why I really like John's Gospel, nicknamed John's Pentecost.

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Because together with the one that is much more demonstrative, much more flamboyant,

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is a quieter one.

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And I think there's room for both.

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So much so that I think I heard Linda's reading this morning through the lenses of John's

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gospel, maybe more than through Luke's eyes who wrote the book of Acts. A couple

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of details jump out that I think I'd like to share along the way and you can

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regard these as bonus material for which I will not charge extra.

05:52

Aren't these not Galileans? That was not the accent to be packing around in

06:00

in ancient Palestine. Galileans were considered groups. And yet it was through them that the

06:11

word of the Lord was proclaimed. And somehow by God's miraculous working people heard it

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in their own language, in their own way. And I would like to riff a minute on all

those

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place names. Sometimes I think that the reader on Pentecost Sunday kind of draws

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the short straw because it's, "Oh man, these are just..." Well, guess what? A lot of

06:35

those places don't even exist anymore. But the people, they exist in the heart

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and mind of God, even though those empires have come and gone and the

06:48

spirit still works. And it's here that I would like us to lean into John's gospel

06:55

a little bit. Because I think we can identify with being dispirited, afraid,

07:02

anxious, maybe even a bit directionless sometimes. I mean consider those in the

07:11

room locked for fear of the authorities that maybe they would be arrested next.

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As far as they knew Jesus was dead and was going to stay that way, as far as they knew

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everything that they had taught, believed, and acted out the last few years didn't seem

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to mean much.

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And then Jesus shows up.

07:39

And I think maybe we share something with those people sequestered in the upper room

07:47

when Jesus shows up.

07:50

He shows wounds not healed, and yet he's resurrected.

07:57

Does that make sense?

07:59

That we live in a world that is still wounded?

08:03

That our lives still have wounds in them?

08:06

And yet we get to see glimpses of resurrection.

08:16

Then there is Jesus speaking a word of peace twice and breathing the Holy Spirit.

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Many of us have been in close enough quarters with another human being where we know what

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that feels like to have warm, hot, sometimes even moist breath on our own skin.

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That's what the disciples experience. And I think that is somewhat in keeping,

08:48

isn't it? With John's witness that the very inner life of God takes on a very

08:53

human form. Is that true for us? That that inner life of God finds its way into the

09:06

human experience and it becomes enfleshed now? That Jesus makes himself

09:13

known to us in breaking of bread, in drinking of wine, in being a community

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as we fuss, trip, stumble, and grope our way forward, which we've always done as

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communities. And are we not like those first followers, somewhat dispirited and

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dismayed by the world around us when Jesus shows up? And when Jesus breathes

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that spirit. It's only then that the followers can be dispatched to carry on Jesus' work.

10:02

The commentator Cody Sanders from Luther Seminary in St. Paul looked at that passage about Jesus'

10:10

breathing on the disciples and did a quick word study to discover that the

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word used for breathe was a translated word directly from the story of God

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breathing life into the very first humans. Imagine that, having that kind of

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life breathed into us and among us.

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Oh, that'll never happen.

10:39

Oh yeah.

10:41

Excuse me while I stand by the baptismal font.

10:48

Remember our baptism and the baptisms that we enact here?

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These are the ones where we say we are baptized with water.

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and we are baptized with spirit.

11:04

And because of that,

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we, like those disciples,

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proclaim a risen Christ in word and in action.

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We work for justice and peace,

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and we care for the world that God made

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and that God so loves.

11:26

So even as we sing and pray, "Lord, send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth,"

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by spirit's doing, we just might be part of the answer to that very prayer.

11:44

As we pray for God's continuing to restore all things, we can yearn, we can wait, we can hope, we can lament,

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and probably should, but we can hold fast that God's love is steadfast.

12:03

And to that we say, Amen.