

The Spirit is Alive and Well

Today we celebrate the beginning of the new age of the church. On this day in Jerusalem, the spirit moved with great power on about as many people as are here in church today. People saw miracles—lives were changed—and it is still happening today.

To help illustrate the change the Holy Spirit brings about in us, I want to share a story that I came across a few years ago. It's called "A Parable for Pentecost: Electricity"

A couple from Africa arrived in Kingston, Ontario and were given a fully equipped home to live in. They were handed the keys but no one thought of explaining about the electrical appliances. During the month of July, they went to bed when it got dark and rose with the sun. They collected firewood and were able to cook in the fireplace. They found water came from the taps and they did their washing in the kitchen and dried their clothes on the line. But by November they were cold, miserable and very frightened. Happily, some friends from a church nearby came to visit, found the house in darkness and they flicked on the lights. They showed the husband and wife how they could set the thermostat to heat the house and use the electric stove for cooking. The next week they learned about the washer and dryer, the vacuum cleaner, how to answer the telephone and dial up their friends. The television helped them find out about Canada and how people survived the Canadian winter.

To me that story illustrates the huge change that took place on the Day of Pentecost. In Acts 2:2, Luke writes: "And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind and it filled the entire house where they were

sitting." The couple from Africa discovered that they were living in a house in which they were free to enjoy light, and heat and the many appliances needed for the Canadian winter. But the Pharisees and other religious leaders of the day have never told the people all that God had for them. On the Day of Pentecost the early Christians began to experience the light and power available to them by the power of the Holy Spirit. Do you feel the light and Power from the Holy Spirit?

I hope you do. We need to remind ourselves of the power that is available to us. We need to let others know so that they can be free from fear, darkness and cold.

Each time we help someone understand what Jesus Christ has done for them—it's as if the spirit has come down again and touched that person. They glow with an energy that comes from their heart and we witness again the miracle of Pentecost.

Today we will share in Holy Communion. This act of joining together in the fellowship of Christian love is a way of tapping into the Holy Spirit and reminding ourselves just what kind of power is available to us. It's the power that helps us say the right thing when we are asked about our faith. It's the power that keeps us sane when the world around us seems to be falling apart. It's the power of peace and calm in the face of reproach. It's the power of love and forgiveness that turns away wrath. It's the power of God that vanquishes the devil. It's the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and saves us from death. This power—this Holy Spirit—is alive and well and living in the people who belong to God. If you're not sure that you have received the power of the Holy Spirit, then come forward during the prayer time and we will pray the prayer of repentance, forgiveness, and acceptance and ask God to give it

to you today. Or pray for God to touch you as you join with Christ during Holy Communion. This day of Pentecost can be the day you are born again and the Holy Spirit will be alive and well in you.

AMEN!