

## **Pentecost ~ June 12, 2011**

**Acts 2:1-2, Psalm 104:24-34; 6-12-2011**

Today is the day of Pentecost on the church calendar. If this was not a communion Sunday for us, the color of the frontal and the communion table cloth would be red to signify joy and the Holy Spirit. This celebration comes fifty days after Easter Sunday and is considered to be the “Birthday of the Christian Church.”

In the Middle Ages cathedrals and great churches throughout Western Europe were fitted with a peculiar architectural feature known as the “Holy Ghost hole;” a small circular opening in the roof that symbolized the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the midst of the assembled worshippers. At Pentecost these holes would be decorated with flowers and in some places burning embers would be dropped down into the congregation. This practice was stopped when there were difficult consequences. A dove was also lowered while the story was read from the Book of Acts. (Wikipedia) It is a very important day in the life of the Christian Church.

The story from the Book of Acts tells us that the disciples were all in an upper room together when the Holy Spirit blew through the room and ignited a spark that energized that small group of people and sent them out into the world carrying the good news of the gospel of Christ.

We don’t know exactly what happened to those early followers to get them up and moving. But something did go on that encouraged them out of themselves and into the world to spread their new form of religion. It was a spark that lit the fire that still burns as Christianity. It was a spark that endured and still endures through great persecution. But it did far more than just jolt them all into action. It united them in a common cause.

We all know that much can be accomplished when people of a like mind unite to rally behind a cause. Sometimes people gather to fight for the good of all and at other times they unite for more destructive purposes. But, whichever direction they head in, they have had something happen that calls them together and makes them overlook petty differences as they move forward.

It is fascinating to see people, who would not ordinarily give each other the time of day, unite for a cause that is near and dear to their hearts and then, after they have reached their goal or been defeated, go back into their own lives again.

The early followers of Christ did not do this, they remained together in spite of their differences and moved together working to establish the Kingdom of God in the way Jesus had taught them.

We are far having established the Kingdom of God on earth. So, Pentecost Sunday issues the call, once again, for us to set aside anything that might separate us and encourages us to find those things that unite us and drive us forward.

It seems rather fitting that this week we celebrate communion together. It is a sacrament that unites us all as members of the body of Christ. Each one of us is important and essential to the functioning of this body. We need the minds and the hearts of us all, the prayers and the deeds, the chiefs and the Indians, the planners and the implementers. We need to come together to worship and work and play as a community of faith inspired by the Spirit that dwells within us

and among us. We need to remember to look past and beyond those things that seem to make us so different, one from the other, and discover those wonderful things that tie us together in love, and patience, compassion and understanding. We need to remember that we are all in this growth process together—the process of becoming the very best humans we can become-- and that our strength is in seeing one another as equal children of God.

As we share the elements of communion together, sense the unity the sacrament brings, a unity that should spark and inspire us all to do the very best we can for our God.

*-- Amen*