

Worship Notes for May 31, 2020
Orrville Trinity UMC
Pentecost Sunday

Greetings! Since we're unable to gather in-person this weekend, here are some resources to make it easier for you to worship at home with your family or small group. Please be sure to practice physical distancing! Blessings in the power of the Holy Spirit! Pastor David

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, as we prepare to worship today, we ask that you will stretch our imaginations to sense the majesty and mystery of your ascension. Help us perceive how Jesus' presence in heaven can give us confidence in our praying and hope for the future. Through Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGES - Acts 1:1-8; 2:1-4, 42-47; 8:1-4

Acts 1:1-8 (Common English Bible, CEB)

Theophilus, the first scroll I wrote concerned everything Jesus did and taught from the beginning, ² right up to the day when he was taken up into heaven. Before he was taken up, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus instructed the apostles he had chosen.

³ After his suffering, he showed them that he was alive with many convincing proofs. He appeared to them over a period of forty days, speaking to them about God's kingdom. ⁴ While they were eating together, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised. He said, "This is what you heard from me: ⁵ John baptized with water, but in only a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

⁶ As a result, those who had gathered together asked Jesus, "Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?"

⁷ Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ Rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 2:1-4 (Common English Bible, CEB)

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Acts 2:42-47 (Common English Bible, CEB)

⁴² The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers. ⁴³ A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were united and shared everything. ⁴⁵ They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them.

⁴⁶ Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes. They shared food with gladness and simplicity. ⁴⁷ They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.

Acts 8:1-4 (Common English Bible, CEB)

¹ Saul was in full agreement with Stephen's murder.

At that time, the church in Jerusalem began to be subjected to vicious harassment. Everyone except the apostles was scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. ² Some pious men buried Stephen and deeply grieved over him. ³ Saul began to wreak havoc against the church. Entering one house after another, he would drag off both men and women and throw them into prison.

⁴ Those who had been scattered moved on, preaching the good news along the way.

PRAYER

Ever living and ever loving God, We praise you for your loving presence with us.

Come, Holy Spirit, take and transform our societies— that broken people find healing; that lonely people find love; that bitter people find peace; that fearful people find hope.

Come, Holy Spirit, take our world's leaders and governments and bring renewal—that communication can be open; that relationships between hostile people and hostile nations will evaporate; that a hunger for justice addresses the hunger for food felt by so many.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill your church—that our worship will be ever more pleasing to you; that prayers will change our minds instead of trying to get you to change yours; that our lives will make a real difference to real people in the real world.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our lives with your presence—so that more and more every day, all that we do and say and hope will be an act of worship to you and an expression of love to others, to the glory of your name. **Amen.**

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Acts 1:1-8

- Jesus instructed his disciples to wait and pray before they ever went out to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Why do you suppose it was so important for them to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit?
- How might things have gone differently if they had not waited?

Acts 2:1-4

- Try to imagine yourself with the disciples in the Upper Room on the day that the Holy Spirit came in power.
- What would it have been like to experience the wind, the tongues of fire, and the miracle of understanding languages you'd never learned? What does all of this tell you about the character of God?

Acts 2:42-47

- Reread this passage from the end of chapter 2. What activities do you see the early church doing together? List them out and discuss why each of them were important.
- Which of these do we still do well today? Which of them might we want to try and recover?

Acts 8:1-4

- Catalyst (noun): a substance that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without itself undergoing any permanent chemical change.
- The great persecution of the early Church acted as a catalyst, resulting in a scattering (or dispersal) of the disciples. How did God take something that was meant to harm the Church and use it to increase the spread of the Good News of Jesus?
- Could something similar be happening today, with the coronavirus pandemic acting as a catalyst? What role does something like digital technology play in helping to spread the Good News?