

It's hard to overstate the drama of last week,
the drama of Pentecost.

We all show up to church on Easter,
and there is nothing to compare
with the ferocity
and the power
of new life.

We are Christians
because there is Easter.

That is the simplest truth.

But last week was the Day of Pentecost.

We all show up to church when Jesus was born on Christmas;
we all show up when he was raised from the dead.

That is the life the disciples knew:
Jesus was born and they followed him.
They betrayed him;
they feared for him and for themselves
as he was being crucified.

That's the kind faith life that we can understand.
We look around at each other
and we see the church that we love.
They looked around at Jesus,
saw him working
and there he was,
dependable for all that time:

Jesus was the reason they had left it all behind.

And then Jesus seems to leave them.
He wasn't taken;
death could not steal him away.

He rose on Easter,
lived among them another forty days,
and then...he left.

Last week, on Pentecost,
we celebrated the return,
a new birth of God's power in the world.

There can be no Pentecost without Christmas and without Easter,
but there would be no Christians
if the Holy Spirit had not come,
just as Jesus promised it would.

Last week the wind from God swept down,
alighted on the disciples as an ever-burning,
all consuming fire;

they were empowered
to carry on the work that Jesus had begun in them.

And then it was the next Sunday.
A run of the mill Sunday.
A, *what do we do now* Sunday.

Today.
Trinity Sunday.

English bishop and theologian NT Wright
describes Trinity Sunday this way,
*Trinity Sunday is where you find yourself when,
having been swept off your feet
by the rushing mighty wind,
you get up,
dust yourself down,
and survey your new surroundings.*

*The room where you are now standing
is filled with light and warmth.
Sunlight streams from open windows and skylights,
bathing every corner in its glow.*

*The room is large
but curiously shaped,
being long and quite thin,
but with lateral extensions either side about two-thirds of the way along.*

*Exploring,
you discover that within this cruciform shape
there is everything you need for a rich and fulfilling human life.*

*And as you make your way around,
you realize something else.
The air you are breathing has a different taste
- like exchanging the city for the mountains,
only more so.
It's clearer and fresher,
and you feel as though with that stuff in your lungs
you could do things you'd only dreamed of up to now.*

***In the New Testament,
the Trinity isn't an abstract theory;
it's where you live.***

The Trinity is where we live.

Wrapped up in the mystery of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It's no wonder that the next six months of the church calendar
aren't chock full of holidays and happenings.

It's the long,
green season.

We call it the Season after Pentecost,
but some churches call it Trinity Season.

The Trinity is the place we live.
The place we grow.

But first we have to dust ourselves off
after the Holy Ghost wrecking ball of Pentecost,
the whirlwind of Good Friday
to Easter Sunday
to resurrected Jesus
and Ascension Day
and Pentecost.

Everything,
all in 50 or so days.

We pick ourselves up
and dust ourselves off
after the whirlwind,
and we walk into the rest of our lives.

We just get busy living.

We have lately found ourselves swept off our feet
by a whirlwind of changes.

It is trite to point out
that COVID caused us all to reevaluate our relationships,
to reexamine what is most important in our lives.

It is trite,
but it is the truth.

Every single one of us is still undertaking that work.
Reevaluating;
reexamining.

It's a new life,
whether we like it or not.

As a church we are returning to old, familiar patterns.
That is good!
Exciting even.

They were old patterns,
lasting because they have served us well.

But we are not only returning;
we are dusting ourselves off
and walking into the rest of our lives,
into new life.

How can we welcome each other back to the old, familiar ways?
How can we welcome each other into whatever God has for us next?

Just as important,
how can we continue welcoming new people
to share the life that God has for them,
here,
alongside us?

More than a year ago,
I wrote a sermon I never preached.
I wrote it,
anticipating the changes that the virus would bring on a Sunday morning,
and then things changed even more.

We planned to forgo the common cup starting that Sunday,
and we wound up staying home for nearly a year,
staying out of our building for just more than a year.

Now, we are back, here
but WHY are we here;
what are we here to do?

Here's a bit of what I wrote last year,

*Our purpose, as Christians,
is not to perform sacraments or ancient rites.
Our purpose is to proclaim the love of God.
Our purpose is to make that love known.*

*It's a miracle that our ancient practices have served us so well
for all this time.*

*They will continue to serve us well.
But they become sacraments,
not because they are magic,
but because they are an outward and visible sign
of an inward and spiritual grace.*

*That grace is present to us,
 not when we perform our worship just right,
 not when we **do** anything...just right;
that grace is present to us,
 not because of anything we do,
 but because God has offered himself to us!*

*And so,
 in the coming days and weeks,
 no matter the patterns our lives take,
 no matter the practical realities with which we are faced,
 we remain grounded in the central task
 God has set before us:
 to accept God's grace
 and to proclaim it.*

We had no idea how uncertain those coming days and weeks would be,
in March 2020.

We have lived that uncertainty.
I wonder how it blesses us?

We have been knocked down by the gusty wind of the Holy Spirit.
I wonder how it blesses us
as we dust ourselves off
and walk into whatever place God is leading us next?

It is a long green season to come.
Easter is nearly a year away;
209 shopping days until Christmas.

Let's don't wait that long.
Let's start looking for Jesus, right now.

So our question becomes,
where is our Easter, right now?
where is our resurrection?

Where is our Christmas, right now?
where is God being born today?

The Holy Spirit has blown through town.

Today is a run of the mill Sunday,
Trinity Sunday.

What do we do now?

We live.
Raised from the dead.
Empowered by the spirit,
Looking for Jesus,
everywhere we go.