



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

May 14-20, 2018

Pentecost Sunday

Sermon by Lead Pastor Doug Forrester:

"The Valedictory Address to the Jerusalem Class of A.D. 33 (by Saint Peter)"

Notes from sermon on 5/13:

Prayer requests:

Family Focus Questions (before sermon):

What is the story of your baptism and confirmation?

3 Questions for small groups (after sermon):

1. In the first chapter of Acts, when the eleven seek to replace Judas with a new apostle, they ask God to reveal who that should be by casting lots. How do you think God's will is revealed to us today?
2. Is it revealed in more than one way?
3. How do you discern God's will in your life?

Monday, May 14: Read Acts 2:1-13

As we look around, there are so many of us facing major turning points in our lives. Our high school seniors are graduating and leaving for college soon. Young adults who sang in the youth choir only a few years ago are graduating from college and starting careers. Eighth graders are becoming full-fledged members of our church upon Confirmation. Our friends are becoming parents, empty nesters, grandparents, widows, and orphans. "What's next?" we all wonder. "How will we know what to do...or if we can do it? How will we make it *alone*?"

The disciples must have been having these same questions as they watched Christ's ascension – our focus last week. This week, we get Christ's answer – Pentecost. Pentecost marks a turning point in the life and ministry of the disciples, as they receive the Holy Spirit and begin, by the power of the Spirit, to preach and convert believers. It is almost the end of their life as disciples and the beginning of their new lives as apostles, ones sent by God to spread the good news as witnesses. What new life might we all begin with the power of the Holy Spirit? What amazing things does God have in store for us?

Tuesday, May 15: Read Acts 2:14-21

We are all ready to “graduate” from something, be it high school, college, or Confirmation, or perhaps a bad habit, a fear that’s holding us back, an unhealthy relationship, or a job that’s not a good fit. While we may be ready for the change, it’s scary, often causing us to want to turn back to our old, comfortable ways. Peter knew that a great change had happened in the lives of Christ’s followers on the day of Pentecost, and in a speech like any great “valedictory address,” he is able to draw on the past in order to make sense of the present and motivate the listeners for the future. The prophets, Peter explained, had foreseen the coming of God’s Spirit. They were prepared for this. What’s more, God promises a “great and glorious” day ahead where all who call on God will be saved. How has God already prepared us for changes ahead? What blessings have we received through teachers, mentors, counselors, friends, pastors, and experiences (including difficult ones) that will help us in our next journey? How can we stay connected to God going forward, and help others (like our college students) do the same?

Wednesday, May 16: Read John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

So...how do we know what to DO going forward? Today’s parting words from Christ to his disciples gives us a great guide. First, allow the Holy Spirit to “testify on our behalf.” We don’t have to know all the answers, have all the right words, or even know where we are going. We can be confident that God the Holy Spirit is dwelling with us and in us, even *praying for us* (see tomorrow) when we don’t have a clue what to do. Second, draw on our past experiences with God. “Testify because you have been with me from the beginning...” Christ tells the disciples. Each of us can fall back on the times when we saw God at work in our lives. What did we learn in Confirmation? What love have we been shown at Reveille? What lessons of grace, wisdom, power, love, empathy, and hope have we already learned?

Thursday, May 17: Read Romans 8:22-27

Today’s scripture from Paul’s letter to the Romans is so beautiful and so powerful for all of us who are preparing to take that faith-filled step out into the next phase of God’s plan for our lives. First, we hear that all of Creation is behind us, “groaning in labor pains” until this moment in which we are born into the Spirit. We learn that some fear, anxiety, and pain is natural and part of the process, as we “groan inwardly while we wait for adoption.” Finally, we are never on our own to figure it all out, for the Spirit “intercedes” for us, according to God’s will. What might we be willing to try if we had full faith in these promises of God’s? How much anxiety can we avoid, knowing that all of Creation is behind us, the Spirit is in us, and God is before us?

Friday, May 18: Read Psalm 104:24-35

Hope, love, joy, peace, and purpose. These are the things we all want for our lives, and what God wants for us. Today’s Psalm expresses all of them. As we look at all the evidence in nature and in our lives that God is in power, we can have hope and peace. When we approach every day as God’s miracle of creation, we experience love and joy. When we sing to the Lord as long as we live, we have fulfilled our purpose. Just as the first apostles had no idea what their tiny group would accomplish in the world, we have no idea what ultimate purpose God has for each and every event and action in our lives. We simply know God is in control, has given us an Advocate and guide, and has already saved us. *Amen.*

Saturday, May 19: SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Acts 2:17a, 21

“I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh...
and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Sunday, May 20: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in prayer our Prayer of Common

Confession: *Holy and Merciful God, we do not know how to pray as we ought, and we know too well our constant failures to do as you have commanded and to hold fast to your word. Forgive us for the divisions we nurture, guide us to your way, keep us in your care, and lead us into faith. We trust your word that the Spirit of truth will show us all things and grant us courage and peace. Amen.*