Jesus spent 40 days on earth after his resurrection. Ten days after his ascension was the Jewish celebration of the *Festival of Weeks* held in Jerusalem. It was there that the Holy Spirit blew in and changed everything. We call it *Pentecost*, which means “fifty.” Fifty days after the resurrection, here’s what happened.

> When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 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. 3 Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

> Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. 6 And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. 7 Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? 9 Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”

> All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” 13 But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

*
Things Change! People change. You and I are different from when we first got here! We’re a few minutes older for one thing! Our body chemistry has changed. The earth has rotated on its axis. It’s all changed, in just a few minutes.

There are some things we don’t want to change and others things we do.

A young mom and dad hover over the incubator that contains their prematurely born child. They do hope things change.

A young teenager battles her cancer. She hopes things change.

A wife holds her husband’s hand in the Retirement Center and watches him fade from this life to the next. She never loses hope that things might change. They might.

* 

We’d better hope some things do change. We pray for God’s “kingdom to come,” and for God’s “will to be done.” That’s praying for change!

Something needs to change where there is prejudice and discrimination.
Something needs to change where people are homeless and without food or health care.

Something needs to change where children are abused and neglected.

Something needs to change where there is greed and the misuse of power.

Something needs to change where people of faith are at odds, when people are estranged and alienated from God – where there is need for reconciliation and forgiveness.

We’d better hope and pray Things Change!

* 

Pentecost was a day of change. Something extremely unusual happened. We have this long list of nations who were represented in Jerusalem that day.

Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs…” (Act 2:9-11a)

These were “devote Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.” (vs. 5) So Pentecost was not limited to the Church, or to the disciples, or to any one nation, but it was for the world. Pentecost was a unifying experience. When the Spirit of God blew into the room, the room changed. There are no boundaries with God. There is no one
nation that is blessed while others are not. Pentecost sends a huge message to the world. What is torn will be mended. What is divided will be unified. That’s change!

The frustrating part is that we cannot manufacture this wind of the Spirit. We can’t make it happen. We don’t control it. We receive it. We can’t budget for it, or plan for it in a committee. The control and the destiny of this wind, of this Spirit, belongs solely to God. So we wait, we watch, we hope, and we pray. Why? Because without this Spirit, we are but form without substance.

A container with no content.
A pool without water.
A house without furniture.
A car without gas.
A lamp without electricity.

You catch my drift!

Are we Spirit-starved in this modern world?
- We have plenty of data and information, but not necessarily more wisdom.
- We have plenty of programs, organizations, budgets and money, but we lack a clear vision of where all that will lead us.
- We have warships and weapons, prisons and courtrooms, but do we have true freedom and peace? Peace.
- We even have multiple denominations and religions, but are we lacking power?

Pentecost actually changed things. The Holy Spirit blew into the room and no one walked out the same. The Church was born! Unity came in the midst of diversity. Power came to weakness. Clarity came to confusion. Christ had opened the door for God to come and reside in every human heart. And it happened!

Yet, the Church today doesn’t seem to know what to do with Pentecost. We make a huge deal of Christmas, but have you ever gotten a Pentecost Card? Have you ever put up a Pentecost tree? *(Don’t tell anybody if you have!)* There are no Pentecost Carols! You don’t even get a day off for Pentecost!

We know what to do with Easter, but there’s no Lent before Pentecost. The Church is not packed on Pentecost Sunday. No egg hunts. No Pentecost Bunny! There’s not even any chocolate!
We can do Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Memorial Day, Veteran’s Day, 4th of July, Labor Day and even Super Bowl Sunday, but the Church is awkward when it comes to Pentecost. Why is that?

I’m going to make a guess. I think we are uncomfortable with the Holy Spirit. We’re fine with a baby Jesus and we can rubberneck the crucifixion, and even marvel at the resurrection, but we don’t know what to do with the Spirit of God blowing in on our everyday lives. It’s too powerful. Too much change. I’m right there with you.

We don’t know what to do with things we cannot control or manage. What if God wanted to change some things we don’t want to change? What if God blew in without an appointment? What would we do then?

What would we do?

Let us pray;

Dare we ask You to blow in upon us, O Lord? Yet, without Your Spirit we will perish, maybe not today, but soon enough. So we wait, we watch, we hope, and we pray for the change that only You can bring to the world. In Jesus’ name. Amen