

From the Pastor's Desk

How the Holy Spirit Moves Today in 100 Words or Less

Pentecost has come. As we gather together let us face bravely into the winds of God. We are listening for the sounds from heaven. In the distance we hear the rush of a violent wind and see flames of fire.

Surely God is in this place! How wonderful are the works of God! God longs to pour forth His own life into us. But, fire and a violent wind? What will this mean? What if God leads me where I would rather not go? What if I am asked to love someone I would rather not or forgive someone who as wronged me? This can be frightening.

The Holy Spirit led our ancestors into strange lands to speak boldly of the mighty acts of God. We too invite that Spirit into our lives. We step into the flame with trust. Let it consume us.

PB

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*Closer to us than our own breath and breathing, the Risen Christ fills us with his own Spirit-quietly, intimately. With this breath, this power, we then go about the everyday, unspectacular, grubby work (and it is work) of forgiveness.*

*Breathe, forgive; breathe, forgive; breathe, forgive.*

*Although we often long for the dazzling or spectacular, we live in a time, a world, in need of people who breathe in, regularly, the quiet power and grace of Christ's Spirit and people who, likewise, breathe out, regularly, the power and grace of forgiveness. Our world so spectacularly broken and burning needs people for whom reconciliation is as normal and natural as breathing.*

*"Breathe on us, Holy Spirit. Breathe on us breath of God."*

Sam Hamilton-Poore

<http://www.patheos.com/Resources/Additional-Resources/Closer-to-Us-Than-Our-Own-Breathing.html>

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In nudges and whispers. Like a seed growing, imperceptible at first. Like wind, invisible, refreshing, transformative. Like water, cleansing, renewing, powerful. Unpredictably. Uncontrollably.

Praying for us, with us, in us, through us. Convicting, like a judge in a courtroom. Comforting, like a mother with a frightened child in the middle of the night.

We know her work by experiencing it. She will not be pinned down, can only be described with analogies. But wherever there is forgiveness, redemption, reconciliation, grace, she leaves her fingerprints. Always the one connecting, making us into the Body of Christ, God's hands in the world.

Amy Becker

<http://www.amyjuliabecker.blogspot.com/>

*When we put the gospel to hip hop. When we share the church building
with the Korean congregation,. When we preach against homophobia.
When we break bread with Jews and Muslims.
When the teenagers lead worship.
When we invoke the ancestors and learn from their lives.
When we live at the borders offering water to those in the desert.
Harbor to those in danger and community when we don't fit in. . .
it is then that we speak in tongues.*

Monica A. Coleman
<http://monicaacoleman.com/blog/>

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*My God is in the next room, cooking unseen feasts  
and humming;  
moments of ache before rain when the whole June cloud  
is ready to burst through though no drop has yet fallen;  
dandelion blades that insist adamantly they must reside directly  
in the middle of your neighbor's blacktopped suburban driveway;  
sights of the shadow of a bird flitting by the sill near bed of an aging Grace,  
who can no longer move but counts herself lucky because at least she can still see.  
This is my God: expectant and grinning  
wild and near.*

Callid Keefe—Perry  
<http://theimageoffish.com/>

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Indeed, the Holy Spirit speaks to us today in surprising and wonderful ways. For the next three months, I will be on sabbatical where I look forward to rest, study and spiritual renewal. A few years ago, I climb to the top of Mount Sherman and was totally amazed at the view. I hope my sabbatical is somewhat like climbing Mount Sherman where I can get another view of my life and ministry. I deeply appreciate the ability to step out of my normal routine and the responsibilities of being a Pastor to look inward and take time for rest, renewal and study. Thank you.

About seventy five years ago, some native African people were assisting white business men on a several day journey through the jungle to investigate a possible business site. After three days of exhausting walking, the native people stopped and refused to go any further. When asked why, they said, “We need to wait for our spirits to catch up with our bodies.” Perhaps that sums up well what a sabbatical is all about. I will miss you during these three months but look forward to returning and continuing to be a part of this wonderful faith community called Shepherd of the Hills.

~PB