

The message for May 31 2020

Last week's message was a call out to all of us to move forward in our ministry at Central United and the community that we live in, in new and creative ways. Last week's message concluded with the words from the song "One more step along the world I go. It is from the old I travel to the new; keep me travelling along with you". After reading the message some of you might have been wondering, what can I do to help our ministry move forward at Central United? To help you answer this question, let us look at this week's readings.

For today's message we will be connecting to two scripture readings. The first comes from Acts 2, this reading is about the day we celebrate each year at this time, "Pentecost" and the gift of the Holy Spirit to both the disciple and to ourselves. The reading goes like this - **Acts 2** When the day of Pentecost had come, the disciples 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.

Our second reading speaks of the gifts given not only to the disciples but ourselves through the Holy Spirit.

1st Corinthians 12 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to

another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

What these two readings coming together are saying to us, is that on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has been given not only to the disciples, but also to us. If the Holy Spirit is with us, that would mean each of us has also been given talents and gifts by the same Spirit. Not all the same gifts, but different gifts and talents for us all to use to benefit the Central United community and God's world. Sadly, even as you are reading these words, some of you might be saying that you do not feel you possess the gifts needed to help or benefit the changes in our ever-changing community and world.

I believe this is not true. I believe you have several gifts and you may not realize you have them. To help you understand this I would like to tell you a little story of a man by the name of Ira Yates. Ira Yates owned a sheep ranch in Texas during the depression. He did not have enough money to continue paying on the mortgage - in fact he was forced like many others to live on government subsidies. Each day as he tended his sheep, he worried about how he was going to pay his bills. Sometime later a seismographic crew arrived on his land and said that there might be oil on his land and could they test drill. After a lease was signed, they went ahead. At 1115 feet a huge oil reserve was struck - subsequent wells revealed even more oil than the first well revealed. Mr. Yates owned it all. He had the oil and mineral rights. He had been living on relief - yet he was a millionaire. Think of it - he owned all that oil with its tremendous potential, yet he did not realize it.

How often are we like this - we feel helpless - unaware of the extraordinary power that we have available to us - that which is lying just below the surface in our minds and our hearts. We all have been given gifts and talents. Some that we are aware of and some that are

buried deep within us. What gifts do you have? What gift or set of gifts has God poured out upon you so that you might love and serve your God and your neighbour and your family in the way God has intended especially for you? During the next week, it would be nice if you set some time aside to think about that, to try to identify within yourself what God has given to you to use in your own ministries. This is a good exercise to do, because it forces us to think about what God wants to do through us and it forces us to pray and to read the scriptures and to think about what God has done through us in the past and where we feel God is leading us now. When we go through this exercise, we are activating the Spirit within us. We bring its power to the forefront of our lives.

What gift or gifts has God given you from the Spirit? Think about this question as we read the words from this week's hymn, "Take My life and let it be", vu506

1 Take my life, and let it be consecrated, all for thee; take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.

2 Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love; take my feet, and let them be swift and purposeful for thee.

3 Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee; take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose.

4 Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine; take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.

5 Take my love: and I will pour at thy feet its treasure store; take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.