

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Advocate, God's Holy Spirit, who walks alongside us every day. Amen.

God doesn't create in half measures... ya know?

Think about our planet... and all the intricate details included on every level of life... from whole eco-systems down to tiny microbes.

Think about... us...you and me... There is no one else quite like you. You are unique and beloved... God knit you together after God's own image, gave you life with God's own breath... and loves you fully...

God doesn't create in half-measures... and all that God creates is precious and loved, including you...

And since the beginning of humanity, God has invited us to be in relationship with God... never forcing the relationship, but giving us that choice... because we are loved.

A choice to respond to the presence of God in our lives... in our world... in each other... and within our very own bodies.

What began as God's breath across the face of the waters, bringing forth life... guiding us as a pillar of smoke... a burning bush... a booming thunder... and a still, small voice...

Always speaking... if we are willing to listen... always guiding... if we are willing to follow... always inviting... if we are willing to respond.

Becoming human in the person of Jesus... entering our lives in the most humble way... teaching... loving... inviting... suffering... dying... forgiving and still loving... still inviting.

The presence of God around us and in us, in countless ways, reminding us that God's Holy Spirit... has been with us from the beginning, and God's Holy Spirit will be with us to the end...

Reminding us that God's Spirit *was* with us, and *is* with us, and that even though God in Jesus must ascend to the Creator, we have another advocate... the one who has been with us all along.

God's Spirit... the *pneuma* in Greek... the *ruach* in Hebrew... God's holy breath that fills your lungs and gives you life... is with you always.

God does not create in half measures... and God does not abandon God's creation.

But as with all things that are constant in our lives... we often overlook this continual holy presence with us... take it for granted... after all... how often have you stopped to consider the air in your lungs?

So, this was the scene in Jerusalem that day... Jesus had ascended, and now it was time to share the gospel story... time to witness to all that had occurred... time to light a fire under this message of good news!

God's Spirit... our constant companion... needed to get those disciples moving.

What better chance than to cause a holy disruption during Shavuot... the Festival of Weeks... the Pentecost festival in Jerusalem, which happens 50 days after Passover, commemorating the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people...

A time when Jewish people from all around the known world would have made a pilgrimage to the city to celebrate and honor God's word.

A mass of people... diverse and inclusive... together... for God.

This is the moment... this is the time... God's Spirit moves through... and causes a scene...

Like I said... God doesn't really act in half-measures.

The Spirit of God comes upon these people as a great, roaring sound like a violent rushing wind...

Filling the room and appearing among them like divided tongues, as of fire, and resting upon each of them...

And giving them the ability to proclaim the Gospel in whatever language it needed to be heard...

The Holy Spirit is in the house, demanding attention, engaging every one of their senses... for the Gospel must be heard.

The Gospel... must be experienced.

What a moment! A dramatic onslaught of action and motion... of speaking... and of hearing... confusion... and... of understanding.

Hearing the proclamation of the gospel... hearing the good news of salvation... of love and forgiveness.

Hearing, each in their native language... the message that Love has come and is making all things new.

Death is overcome and new life is born... new breath... new growth.

We are gathered by this swirling wind, but also provoked and pushed to give our witness... to tell our story...

For the Gospel must be heard... and God doesn't do with half-measures.

Pentecost is only the beginning... the fire that was ignited on that day burns within you still... guiding you toward God's love... and empowering you to share your story.

God's Holy Spirit... your constant companion... your ever-present connection to Christ within yourself and in others... is guiding you daily toward God's love.

And occasionally causing a holy disruption... either as that still, small voice that insists on being heard, or as a roaring wind... a sensory disruption that demands attention and cannot be ignored.

God's Spirit doesn't do with half-measures.

Shaking us out of our complacency... our routine... giving us the courage to speak up when our words are necessary... and the wisdom to be silent and listen, when our understanding is required.

God's Holy Spirit is igniting within us... attuning our senses toward God's will.

Whenever we feel that push... or pull... a gentle nudge or maybe a hard shove... toward loving more widely, sharing more generously... welcoming more inclusively...

Whenever we feel that call inside our hearts to extend and receive grace and forgiveness more openly... and freely...

That is God's Holy Spirit igniting within you... that is a Pentecost moment.

What happened to those disciples in Jerusalem on that festival day so long ago was amazing... incredible...

It gave birth to the church and lit a fire under the message, spreading the Gospel to the corners of the world...

For the Gospel must be heard, and God doesn't do with half-measures.

That experience taught them, and us, that God is doing a new thing... that the Good News of Jesus's death and resurrection must be heard, and that this is a message for all people, everywhere...

that there are no boundaries around God's love.

This experience connected them... connected them to the presence of God within themselves and within each other.

It reminded them, and us... that what began as God's holy breath across the face of the waters... still fills our lungs.

That our Creator, in whose image we are made, filled us with holy breath... guided us through wind, fire, thunder, and silence... loved us through Jesus and inspires us still as our advocate.

The experience of Pentecost is that God doesn't act in half-measures, and that God's message of love must be heard.

And so God's Holy Spirit... the pneuma... the ruach... is within you... sometimes whispering to you, and sometimes shouting... that you are loved...

You are loved with so much abundance that you cannot help but to share that love with others in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is yet to come... Our God and Creator, our Savior, and our Advocate.

You are loved with so much abundance... because God doesn't create in half-measures. And that... is a message that must be heard.

Amen.