

May 19, 2024

Summary of Father Timothy Hoyt's sermon

This past Pentecost Sunday, our priest in charge, Father Tim Hoyt, opened his sermon by summoning each of us to reflect on our own personal Pentecost journey. After reminding us that the Greek word "pentekoste" means "fiftieth," and that Pentecost Sunday commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ, Father Tim spoke of his first experience with the Episcopal Church. He then shared other key moments of his spiritual journey, emphasizing that is was only a part of his Pentecost story.

When you are still living an experience, he told us, you may find it confusing, and you may feel what Margaret Atwood identified as the emotions associated with a "yet not ended story," which could include emotions akin to "a blindness" or "a wreckage of shattered glass." Stories only cohere when they reach their end point but it is worthwhile to think about where we find ourselves at different times in our journey, and to remember to have hope, and to realize that, as the hymn says, "God is working his purpose out." We should also remember that Pentecost was first experienced by a community of the Church, and was at once a communal and an individual event.

Father Tim concluded his sermon by asking us to think about how we are living our Pentecost, how our Christian identity is unfolding, how it is freeing us from guilt so that we can forgive others, and how it is maturing as we better learn how to relate our faith to life's circumstances. He urged us to write down the history of our Pentecost journey, and to use the process as an instrument of growth.

He ended with the prayer, "We thank you, Lord, for the ongoing work of your Spirit in our lives and in the world. May this Pentecost be a time of renewal and transformation as we yield ourselves to your Spirit's guidance. May we be instruments of your love and grace, shining brightly in a dark world."