

**Christ Church, Georgetown**  
**The Day of Pentecost, Year A, June 4, 2017**  
**The Rev. Kristen L. Hawley**

***Don't be a Nimrod – be a Prophet***

*Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit on them!* So said Moses when God took the spirit of Moses and empowered 70 elders to lead beside him. Moses' words were then echoed by the prophet Joel, as Peter testified on the day of Pentecost to all who stood amazed and astonished... *God declares, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.* Friends, this is the Day of Pentecost, when we celebrate and remind ourselves that **we** are the young men and women, the old, the wise men and women, the slaves male and female – the prophets of today, the prophets of a future not our own. As Moses dreamed and God made reality – All the Lord's people are prophets, for the Lord has put his Spirit upon us.

To a people separated by language, economics, nationalities, pride and vanity – God sent the Holy Spirit. Sound familiar? *Like the sound of a violent wind*, the Spirit filled the house and everyone in it with the ability to communicate with the “other”, with the one who looked different, sounded different and came from somewhere else. The Spirit came upon them that day and declared to all that God's redeeming presence and power could be found not only in Jesus the Christ, whom ascended from their midst just days before, but *in them* and in all flesh.

On the day of Pentecost, the tower of Babel was reversed. You remember that Genesis story, yes? When the people of God, under the reign of King Nimrod got too big for their own britches, decided to build a tower to heaven upon the foundation of hubris, pride and vanities and God stopped them by confounding them; by scattering them and confusing their language. With the incoming of the Holy Spirit then, comes the reversal of the tower – instead of building up as they did, we continue the work of the Kingdom alongside the Spirit by building out. The prophets of God are called to go out, to dream God's dreams, to see God in others, to connect with those we think of as “other” and to build the Kingdom of God rather than the Kingdom of Nimrod, Kristen, Peter, Paul, or whomever.

As the Spirit blows through, the confusion and bewilderment of humanity breathes in a taste of the unifying power of God, and what was divided begins to heal, what was separate becomes whole, diversity in language, race, gender and color, become gifts rather than walls. At least, they do when we welcome the Spirit as prophets. When the Spirit first came and Peter was addressing the crowds – the people *were cut to the heart* and asked... *what shall we do?* Repent, be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit he told them and those that *welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added* to the church. 3,000 new prophets, 3,000 new Christians added on the day of Pentecost because they were willing to open themselves to the indwelling of God's redeeming presence and power.

Yesterday afternoon, I found myself at another graduation party – tis the season for celebrating academic. As I put pen to card again yesterday to offer our congratulations and blessings upon a family friend graduating from 8<sup>th</sup> grade and on his way now to a new high school, I wondered about what others write in such cards. What words of advice, inspiring quotations or scripture might people be offering Connor and his classmates? In today's world, what do we offer those among us on the

precipice of a new beginning? In a world, like Nimrod's, like Moses's and like Jesus's, where we are more often separated from God and one another than connected, where our divisions and reliance on self keep us from the love of God... what do we offer the newly born, the newly baptized, the newly graduated or the newly married? What do offer them when we, ourselves, are often at a loss for words when we contemplate the state of our world?

Well – God offered the Holy Spirit. God offered to dwell in us, to breathe in us, to come alongside us, and to guide us. God offered us the opportunity to be his prophets, to dream his dreams, to prophecy to Connor and the rest of the world that we were all created in the image of a loving God and are called to reflect and be love for the world, for this earth, for one another and all that was created. Maybe that should be our starting point. So...

Dear Connor, and all who stand ready to welcome the newness of tomorrow... be a person of hope and love. Tap into the power of your God given Spirit to be the change that the Spirit invokes. Be a builder of connections, not towers, walls or divisions. Dream alongside God of those things that could be – spread yourself outward towards the other instead of upward in a self-designed silo of want and greed. Welcome the Spirit within you and recognize the Spirit in others. Speak. Prophecy. Witness to the goodness that dwells in all of us. Be co-creators alongside God, brother and sister. Dear Connor, don't be a Nimrod –be a prophet.

Amen.