

From the Pastor: Living in the Spirit

This month we begin the Pentecost season of the church year, that time when we follow Jesus' teaching and strive to learn what it means to be a disciple. We ask the question, "How is the Spirit moving in our lives?" "What shall we do now?" "How do we live in a way that represents our faith and pleases God?" and "What is the Holy Spirit's role in all this?"

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Writer Ian Coffey tells of the difficulty Bible translators had in translating the Scriptures into the Karre language of equatorial Africa. It was particularly difficult to translate certain ideas and concepts of the New Testament. One word was particularly difficult—*paracletos*—the Greek word which we translate as Holy Spirit. How could they describe adequately the work of the Holy Spirit so that these people who had little experience of the Christian faith could understand?

One day the translators came across a group of porters going off into the bush carrying bundles on their heads. They noticed that in the line of porters there was always one who didn't carry anything, and they assumed he was the boss, there to make sure that the others did their work. However, they discovered he wasn't the boss; he had a special job. He was there should anyone fall over with exhaustion. This man would come and pick up a fallen man's load and carry it for him. This porter was known in the Karre language as "the one who falls down beside us." The translators had the word they needed to convey how the Holy Spirit works in the life of a Christian. The Holy Spirit is the one who falls down beside us—the very Spirit of God, the breath of God, the mind of God, invading the life of the believer and nurturing the love of God and the love of neighbor, giving us power to discern right from wrong, helping us resist temptation, assuring us of forgiveness when we fall, giving us the grace that assures us of acceptance by our loving Creator.

That is what our faith is all about. If you are feeling very alone this day, know that God is alongside you. God will not let you go. And if you know someone who is hurting, be a friend, be a comforter, be an advocate just as Christ has been for you.

Let the Spirit loose in your life and see what God has in store!! Pastor Karen

* Our thanks to Bishop-Elect Becca Middeke-Conlin for providing this symbol of the Holy Spirit Pentecost Sunday. Eyes, because the Spirit is a living being, and glittery tool is sometimes flat, sometimes shiny ... little glimpses of change and movement, active in our lives.