

Pentecost Church

May 18, 2008

Acts 2: 37-42

The Holy Spirit filled the Disciples at Pentecost. After the life and death and resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the disciples were gathered in a closed room where they felt wind and saw fire and understood the purpose of Jesus Christ. They were filled with the boldness to go out and preach it. Peter's words pierced their hearts and they said "what should we do?". He said repent and be baptized and you will be filled with the holy spirit. They did and they were and the church was born. So today, Pentecost, is the birthday of the church.

Not happy birthday but sing vs. 1&2 of A Church's One Foundation use words on 546

2000 years and we are still the church. Sometimes Christians fought and split up. 1000 years the orthodox in the East and the Catholics in the west split. Then 500 years ago the Lutherans and Reformed and English protested and split from the Catholics in Europe. But even with divisions, the church is as healthy as ever.

Vs. 3 of A Church's one Foundation

We are the church because we know people need Christ!
Jesus Christ is the solution to the deepest longings of the human heart and the answer to the most serious problems in human society. And so the church keeps making ways for people to repent and believe and be baptized and filled with the Spirit.

But that's not all. People need the church. The Holy Spirit has put us together in churches because grace comes from God through people. We are embers who will go out unless we burn with other embers. Faith is a group activity. Our songs, our prayers, our Bible study, our worship and our service fizzle out if we do them alone. The lessons others learn from the Holy Spirit are the lessons we need to hear. A place to know and care for each other

Lots of churches do that. But we don't all make and live as disciples the same way.

Some people need this particular church.

Why do they need this particular church?

Tradition and relevance

Experiential and cognitive (feeling and thinking)

Willingness to deal with the ambiguities and challenges (questions and disagreements) of faith while holding fast to the truth of the gospel;

Appreciation for the role of women in the church

Proclamation of both the personal and social gospel

A big suburban Kansas City United Methodist Church saw that the urban public school system was so poor and broken that it couldn't keep good teachers and materials. The church talked about how Kansas City schools had been started in the 1830's by two

Methodist pastors. The Church people wrote letters to each of the 5700 employees of the school system, thanking them for their hard work under stressful conditions. Some of the suburban teachers transferred in to the city schools for a while. A cook called the person who wrote her letter and cried over the phone. "This is the first time I've ever received a thank you letter, she said. It showed the love of Jesus to the school, and it was social holiness for the congregation.

That's what I mean by social faith.

Our church and other Ripon Churches are raising money this summer for backpacks and school supplies for public school kids who can't afford them. Social holiness.

Examples from notes of ways the church changed society

We are a church with an emphasis on personal commitment to Christ, preparing people to stand for their faith in the world. We are making disciples whose faith can stand at home and the world. We do that by taking people deeper into the faith, finding ways to answer tough questions, knowing what they believe and why, so they can give more than simplistic answers when people need to know. So they can respect those who are different without compromising their basic core beliefs.

Children need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

Our teachers take time each week to prepare ways to get that news across to our children.

Sermons are to show the relevance of scripture and Christian faith to daily life.

So we sing, not happy birthday but

(Sing vs. 5 of A Church's One Foundation)