

Palm Harbor United Methodist Church
GOODBYE'S ARE HARD
John 14:25-27

This is a different kind of service this morning. It is Pentecost and we are going to celebrate communion. At Pentecost we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the Holy Spirit's coming as being the birthday of the church. The Holy Spirit transformed the disciples from frightened, lost, confused men into powerful proclaimers of the gospel.

Our scripture lesson this morning comes from the Gospel of John, Jesus is preparing his disciples for that time when he would no longer be with them. READ SCRIPTURE-John 14:25-27.

Jesus fulfilled this promise to his followers. After his death and resurrection, he appeared on several occasions to assure his disciples that they would not be alone and to remind them of the mission he had for them. They were confused about what exactly their role would be in the future. Would they return to fishing and collecting taxes, and the routines of everyday life? What would they do next? What would their lives be like in a post-resurrection world? But, Jesus reminded them that he would not leave them without hope. He would send the Holy Spirit to comfort, inspire and lead them.

We are in one of those times of uncertainty now. Do we return to work, to church, take our usual summer vacation, send our kids to summer camp? What will our lives look like post-pandemic?

I believe we can take comfort, as the disciples did, in knowing that no matter what the future holds for us, we are not alone. The Holy Spirit will be with us.

So what exactly is this Holy Spirit? It is the presence of God that comes to dwell with us. In our scripture lesson, Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will advocate for us, teach us, and remind us of all that he taught, and that no matter what we face in life, we do not face it alone.

The Holy Spirit is the presence of God that comes to comfort us in times of grief and sadness. I know from experience that when we lose someone we love, it is very difficult. We feel abandoned and very much alone. It

is never easy to say goodbye to those you love. Actually, it is heartbreaking. We need help to move forward with life

The disciples loved Jesus and they needed strength and comfort and inspiration to carry on once he was gone. So, Jesus promised them that he would send the Holy Spirit to help guide them through his departure and lead them into the future. We know that the Holy Spirit will also be with us in our times of grief and sorrow. So, no matter what the future holds, we will not face it alone.

This morning, your much beloved pastor, Dave Baldridge, is going to come and share with you.

DAVE MADE A STATEMENT

I know that this is very sad news and that your hearts are breaking. You love Dave and Sara and they love you. Greater still is their faith and their love for Jesus.

I believe that we need the Holy Spirit to comfort us, guide us, teach us, inspire us and give us strength as we say goodbye to Dave and Sara. They have meant so very much to this church for the past ten years.

We know that no matter where they go or what they do, they will always be part of this church. They have left an indelible print on you this congregation.

This morning we want to share one last holy meal with Dave and Sara, so they are going to join us as we gather at the Lord's Table. I invite you to have your elements ready. When we come to the Lord's table, we ask the Holy Spirit to fill the elements of bread and juice or whatever we are using, in order that they may become for us the body and blood of Jesus, to inspire us and to enable us to have the strength and vision to continue Jesus mission and the ministry here at Palm Harbor United Methodist to which Dave and Sara have given their lives for the past ten years. He has called each of us. Dave may no longer serve this congregation but he will always be one who is called by Jesus to be in ministry to all the world. This morning we are united in our love for

Christ. If you love Christ, repent of your sin, and seek to live in peace with one another, you are invited to his table.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, as we join our hearts together, and on these gifts that represent the body and blood of Christ. Bless them and use them to comfort and sustain us so that we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ and one with each other and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

We who are many are one body as we all partake of this holy meal. This is the body of Christ, take and eat in remembrance of him. This is the blood of Christ, take and drink in remembrance of him.

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.