

MINISTRY BY MAIL
Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship
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Pentecost Sunday, May 24, 2026

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(Hymns found in The Lutheran Hymnal, CPH, 1941)

Hymns: 224, 235:2, 226:1-6, 285, 234.

Lessons: Genesis 11:1-9, 2 Peter 1:1-18, John 16:7-15 NIV.

Sermon Text: 2 Peter 1:16-21.

Sermon by Pastor Robert Mehltrittter

In the name of Jesus Christ, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

Today, the Festival of Pentecost, is the day we celebrate the special coming of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, to the followers of Jesus 50 days after he ascended into heaven. On that day the Holy Spirit moved his disciples to speak the truth of God's Word to many Jews from 15 nations. This instant gift of speaking in foreign languages was apparently given more than once in the early days of the New Testament church.

Four times the Apostle John records Jesus' promise of sending the Holy Spirit, each time telling us things that the Holy Spirit will do for them. These include Jesus telling his disciples that ***"the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."*** (John 14:26, NIV84) and ***"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me."*** (John 15:26, NIV84)

Jesus promised to send another Teacher, Advocate, Advisor, Counselor, Comforter besides himself, to be with his disciples on earth until the end of time. That Counselor, Helper, Comforter, Spirit of Truth is the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost.

But the Holy Spirit hasn't given us gifts such as the ability to immediately speak foreign languages to tell others about Jesus.

So have we today been left out, that the Holy Spirit hasn't come to us in this special way? You have probably heard about 'the charismatic movement' which people claim refers to "the active presence and power of the Holy Spirit in daily life, including the use of spiritual gifts like speaking in tongues and healing." You may occasionally hear of someone saying that "the Holy Spirit spoke to me in a dream or in a vision". But we must beware of such false prophets. So what should we listen to?

The Holy Spirit also caused the Word of God to be written down by the apostles and evangelists and the prophets. Through the written Word of God, the Holy Spirit is on earth doing his work among men until the end of time.

Today the Word of God, words inspired by the Holy Spirit, assure us

ALL OF SCRIPTURE WAS GIVEN TO US BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 1. Scripture has been "Verbally Inspired"**
- 2. This means that all of Scripture is truth and fact and does not lie.**
- 3. This is the foundation of our preaching, teaching, and learning.**

In this letter the Apostle Peter wrote that Jesus' ***"divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."*** (2 Peter 1:3-4, NIV84)

How does the Holy Spirit come to you? How does the Holy Spirit come to anyone today, in the 21st century?

He comes to you through his written words. (Hold up the Bible.) Peter assures us ***“we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”***

In the Bible, the written Word of God, the Holy Ghost will remind Jesus’ followers of everything he has told them. This was done for us, today, too, because the Holy Spirit caused the entire Bible to be recorded for our learning.

Jesus said ‘the Holy Ghost will testify about me.’ To testify means to give evidence, to bear witness, to declare what is true. This was done, for example, on that first Pentecost day when Peter, moved by the Holy Ghost, spoke the Gospel as recorded in the second chapter of Acts. Peter was not alone. Others proclaimed the news about Jesus Christ in many languages to many people that day.

Today the Holy Spirit testifies to mankind through the Bible. And the Bible has been translated into hundreds of languages.

The Holy Ghost will convict the world of sin. Jesus said: ***“When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.”*** (John 16:8–11, NIV84) The Law of God, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures convicts all mankind of sin and makes them guilty before God. That is the work of the Holy Ghost.

All the words of the Bible are God’s Word because the Holy Spirit taught the human writers not only the thoughts but even the words they wrote. We call this Verbal Inspiration, word-by-word putting into their minds and pens the very words they wrote. All the books from Genesis, the first book Moses wrote, up to Revelation, the last book the Apostle John wrote are verbally inspired by God the Holy Ghost.

Jesus tells us this about the Holy Spirit: ***“The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”*** (John 14:17)

The Holy Spirit is unknown to the unbelieving world. He comes to mankind through the Word of God, the Bible. In the written Word of God, we are reminded of everything God wants us to know, and we can read it again and again.

How is it that the Holy Spirit will be with us forever? The Holy Ghost not only tells us once, but he wrote down what he wants to teach us. In doing this, the Holy Ghost gave us the Bible, just as it is explained especially in our sermon text.

The Holy Spirit speaks truth and only truth. Truth comes from God. Satan was a liar from the beginning. Satan asked Eve ***“Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”*** [Satan then lied:] ***“You will not surely die,” ... “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*** (Genesis 3:1–5, NIV84) Until that sin, man and woman did not know evil. Sin came into the world and condemned all mankind to eternal death.

You have all heard some imaginative stories. In literature they are called fiction. When they masquerade as truth, we must call them lies, falsehoods, untruths, and men have come up with many other euphemisms for lies.

Sometimes we can clearly understand and know that what we are being told is not truth, but lies. Sometimes, however, we have trouble separating fact from fiction. It may be the contents of the message, or it may be the false sincerity of the one telling us, but sometimes we can’t quite separate fact and truth from falsehood and fiction. But God’s Word is Truth.

Jesus himself said ***“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”*** (John 17:17, KJV)

When we must find out what the Holy Spirit wants us to know, we must Search the Scriptures.

Peter’s letters and all of the inspired Word of God are not cleverly invented stories. They are truth. They are fact. They are accurate. They are honest. They are telling about our salvation which is ours through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have been given the Word of God. We do not follow fiction. We follow the Word of God.

We rely on the Word of God. We do not rely on human tradition, human ideas, human opinion, human philosophy.

Because God has given us his unchanging word, we can trust it. It will not change. It doesn't swing back and forth like a pendulum. We have the true word of God to guide us.

When we speak of the Word of God, we must remember where that Word of God comes from. It comes from the Holy Spirit, and it is the foundation of our preaching and teaching and our entire lives as God's beloved children. We do not follow cleverly invented fiction. We have the Word of God that was given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

So are you lacking anything?

God has given you all you need to know for your eternal salvation. Don't neglect it! Don't look for other ideas from men! Don't reject what God tells you!

There are things God has not revealed to us, and we must rely on his omniscience in telling us what we need to know. But that is no excuse for not searching the Scriptures to find Jesus and all he tells us for our life on earth and our life beyond this earth.

You will be lacking if you don't feed on the Word of God regularly and frequently. Just like your body needs food and vital nutrients, your soul needs food.

We are assured that ***"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."*** (2 Timothy 3:16, KJV)

The Scriptures, the Word of God, given through the Holy Spirit, are the only way mankind can be made wise unto salvation, as we read in Romans 10:17: ***"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."*** The Holy Ghost works faith through the word of Christ.

What happens if someone isn't fed? He will die. What will happen to someone who has been baptized but isn't fed spiritual food? He will starve and die spiritually. If someone's faith is not fed, that faith will wither and die. And the result of that is eternal death in hell.

Jesus also said: ***"But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."*** (John 16:7) He went away. He died.

But of course, you know that death wasn't the end for Jesus. He rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

Forty days after he rose from the dead he left earth permanently, to ascend bodily into heaven. During those forty days he was personally teaching his followers – even more than 500 at one time. But after those forty days he was no longer physically, bodily with his followers on earth. And that is where his promise of the Holy Spirit is so essential. The Holy Spirit is still teaching us through the Bible.

It is because Jesus did all these things that we have any hope at all. It is because he did these things that we have the hope and assurance of eternal life. Hearing the Word of God works faith and strengthens faith. In all of that we see the gracious working of the Holy Spirit.

May the Word of God – all the words the Holy Spirit gave us – not only assure us of eternal life, but may it feed us every day! Amen.