

The Messenger

Early Pentecost, 2019

The Church of the Messiah

114 North Third Street at Madison

Pulaski, Tennessee 38478

The Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee

John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop

*The mission of the Church of the Messiah is to be a growing witness of
our Faith in Jesus Christ in the midst of the community
through worship and sacrament in the Episcopal tradition.*

Our leadership:

- ✠ The Rev. Jess Reeves, Priest-in-Charge
- ✠ Pat Woolard, Music Director
- ✠ Senior Warden, Dr. Grace Meier (20)
- ✠ Junior Warden, Patsy Bryant (21)
- ✠ Secretary to the Parish, Marqueda Forrester
- ✠ Clerk of the Vestry, Sandy Ring Hall
- ✠ Treasurer, Kristi Watson
- ✠ Vestry members: Pat Dunnivant (19), Angela Hallmark (19), Solon Holt (20),
Hatherine Steever (19), Andy Hoover (21).

**AWAY WITH GLOOMY DOUBTS AND
FAITHFLESS FEARS** Hymn 541

One of the words that has become prevalent is the ad hominem use of *phobic*. We are constantly accosted with the shrill decry that any and all forms of disagreement with the predominant political/social agenda disclose a phobia, e.g., homophobia, Islamophobia, gynophobia, transphobia, etc. Our call-out culture is more and more given to the slinging of derogatory epithets. But what is really being said? A “phobia” is defined properly as an irrational fear that is persistent and tends to avoidance. It is (mis)applied to people generally these days who maintain that homosexual unions, though legal, cannot be “marriage” and that transgenderism is unwholesome or detrimental to individual and collective mental health. Increasingly, the legal system punishes such non-compliance when it is applied in the public square.

Initially, it is a smear that works. Accusing someone of being mentally or emotionally deficient because they harbor an irrational fear is certainly a very negative value judgement. Most people become defensive, and rightly so, when their character is thus impugned. So the strategy works for the assailant. But where common sense is never even tried, a responsible citizen, much less Christian, should then respond by loving reproof to correct the unsound thinking discharged. In regard to liberalism’s culturally-destructive aggressions, most in disagreement do not “fear” at all, and they often have a quite rational basis for their disagreement. The *phobia* slur is just an irrational moniker to be ignored, laughed at, or refuted.

On the other hand, as Christians truly accept a responsibility for their neighbor, no matter how misinformed, misguided or threatening, the further response is not to ignore or meet fire with fire. We are to pity the afflicted. We are to bear patiently with persecutions. We are to follow the model of Jesus who was accused and convicted of charges which were totally erroneous and even

so absurd as to be self-evidently malicious. While it is not charitable to move to motivations hastily, sometimes the patent extremism is too clearly an indication of malevolence to be ignored or glossed over. When thinking of the social justice verbal and actual violence afoot today, far beyond not fearing, perhaps we should fear for those so possessed by an ideology.

The prophets of old were caught in this unhappy position. They prayed and wept in remorse for the transgressions of their neighbors and their people who were aggressively miscreant. Similarly, should we not pray for and grieve for our churches, leaders, and our culture as it defiles God’s Word written and goes after dissenters? Should love not fear for the welfare of even its deranged assailants? As a side note, the history of the church in England shows the brilliant, beautiful, and beneficent legacy that has come from dissenters, e.g., John Milton and John Bunyan. Most of the martyrs of Christianity were dissenters who refused to accept the immoral mandates of the powerful in their days and times.

Our allegiance is to God. When post-Pentecost Peter found himself on the wrong side of the law and the civil authorities, he insisted that when in dispute, we must obey God rather than man or any man-made/governmental authority. We are entering into a world in which our allegiance will be tested similarly. Will we roll over and obey conventions and councils that refute what is abundantly clear in Holy Scripture and Tradition because the majority so decrees? Will we meekly pay our dues to fund and thus promote what we know by God’s Word is unwholesome and damaging to all concerned? To go along is to sacrifice integrity and betray our love of Him who said, *if you love Me, you will keep my commandments*. Convenient compromise is a profound misdirection which will lead us into all error, and eventually despair.

We have a serious fear threshold. We are bidden to love and fear the Lord innumerable times in God's revealed Word. This is not a cringing fear of punitive and fatal consequences for our inherent sinfulness. We supersede that vulnerability in Jesus Christ, and yet, we should still fear the God of all Justice and Truth, and the future that our neighbors are making for themselves by refusing God's commandments. Citizenship in God's Kingdom

HOW CAN PENTECOST MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

On a Sunday fifty days after Easter morning, Christians across the world celebrate Pentecost. While not all Christians recognize this holiday (holy day), it is generally honored in liturgical churches (Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Eastern Orthodox, etc.), in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, and in many other Protestant churches as well. By many avowals, Pentecost is the birthday of the church, but that is much too simple and rather misleading in most every direction theologically.

For Christians, Pentecost is a holiday on which we commemorate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the early followers of Jesus. Before the events of the first Pentecost, there were followers of Jesus, but no movement that could be meaningfully called "the church." Thus, from an historical point of view, Pentecost is the day on which the church was visibly started as a new cultural phenomenon. This is most true from a spiritual perspective, since the Spirit brings the church into existence and enlivens it. However, God's election of a people, plan in salvation history, and appointment of the means of our rescue and recreation are from time immemorial.

The English word "Pentecost" is a transliteration of the Greek word *pentekostos*, which means "fifty." It comes from the ancient Christian expression *pentekoste hemera*, which means "fiftieth day." Christians did not invent the phrase "fiftieth day." Rather, they borrowed it from Greek-speaking Jews who used the phrase to refer to a Jewish holiday. This holiday was known as the Festival of Weeks, or, more

may have its costs, but its future alone is glorious.

Under His mercy, JLR

simply, Weeks (Shavuot in Hebrew). This name comes from an expression in Leviticus 23:16, which instructs people to count seven weeks or "fifty days" from the end of Passover to the beginning of the next.

Shavuot was the second great feast in Israel's yearly cycle of holy days. It was originally a harvest festival (Exod 23:16), but, in time, turned into a day to commemorate the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai. This day became especially significant for Christians because, seven weeks after the resurrection of Jesus, during the Jewish celebration of Shavuot/Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon his first followers, empowering them and gathering them together as a church.

This event is recorded in the New Testament book known as The Acts of the Apostles. Chapter 2 begins, "*And when the day of Pentecost [ten hemeran tes pentekostes] had come, [the first followers of Jesus] were all together in one place*" (2:1). All of a sudden, a sound came from heaven, like a strong wind, filling the house where the people had gathered. Something like tongues of fire rested on their heads. "*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak*" (2:4).

The languages spoken by the early Christians were intelligible, understood and heard by thousands of Jewish pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Shavuot. The proclamation of the miraculous messages had to do with God's mighty works (2:11). Many who heard these messages in their own

languages were amazed, though others thought the Christians were just drunk (2:12).

At some point, Peter stood up and preached his first, so far as we know but rather likely, sermon. He interpreted the events of that morning in light of a prophecy of the Hebrew prophet Joel: God promised to pour out his Spirit on all flesh, empowering diverse people to exercise divine power. This would be a sign of the coming “day of the Lord” (Acts 2:16-21; Joel 2:28-32). Peter went on to explain that Jesus had been raised and had poured out the Spirit in fulfillment of God’s promise through Joel (2:32-33). When the crowd asked what they should do, Peter told them in no uncertain terms to repent, turn their lives around and be baptized in the name of Jesus. Thus would they be forgiven and would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (2:37-39). Acts reports that about 3,000 people were added to the church that day (2:41). Not a bad response to Peter’s first sermon!

Whether we believe the biblical account of Pentecost has everything to do with our estimation of the historical trustworthiness of Acts of the Apostles and the possibility of miraculous events actually happening. It has forever been the standard of the Church to believe that Acts 2 describes what really happened. The author of Acts, the same “Luke” who wrote the Third Gospel, was a reliable historian. Of course God could send the Spirit in astounding ways and empower people to speak in languages that they did not know. That is incontrovertible for a follower of Jesus Christ. So, then, what difference does it make for us today that the first Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit almost two millennia ago on the Jewish festival of Pentecost?

Because Pentecost knits together several themes, emphases, and experiences, the answer is multi-valent. Some possible ways to concisely address how Pentecost matters today follow.

The Presence and Power of the Spirit - God pours out the Spirit upon all who put their faith in Jesus Christ and become his disciples (see Romans 8:1-11).

Christians are meant to live in the presence and power of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit helps us to confess Jesus as Lord (1 Cor 12:3), empowers us to serve God with supernatural power (1 Cor 12:4-11), binds us together as the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12-13), helps us to pray (Rom 8:26), and even intercedes for us with God the Father (Rom 8:27). The Spirit guides us (Gal 5:25), helping us to live like Jesus (Gal 5:22-23).

Personal Implications: Pentecost presents us with an opportunity to consider how we are living each day. **Are we relying on the power of God’s Spirit? Are we an open channel for the Spirit’s gifts? Are we attentive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit? Is the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, etc.) growing in our lives?** Most Christians I know, including me, live in the presence of the Spirit only to an extent. We are limited by our fear, our sin, our low expectations, not to mention our tendency to be distracted. Pentecost offers a chance to confess our failure to live by the Spirit and to ask the Lord to fill us afresh with his power.

The Central Role of the Church in God’s Work in the World - On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on individual followers of Jesus as they were gathered together in Jerusalem. This gathering became the first Christian church. New believers in Jesus were baptized as they joined this church. They, along with the first followers of Jesus, shared life together, focusing on teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. They shared their belongings so that no one was hungry or needy. As these first Christians lived out their new faith together, “the Lord added to their number those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47).

The fact that the Spirit was given to a gathering of believers is not incidental. It underscores the centrality of the church in God’s work in the world. The actions of the earliest Christians put all of this in boldface. The Holy Spirit is not only given to individuals, but also, in a sense to the gathered people of God. Thus, in 1 Corinthians 3, the Apostle Paul observes that the church is God’s temple and that the Spirit dwells in the midst of the church (3:16-17).

Personal Implications: Many Christians, especially those of us who have been influenced by the individualism of American culture, live as if the church is useful, an option to access as agreeable but unnecessary. We seem to believe that as long as we have a personal relationship with God, everything else is secondary. But Pentecost is a vivid illustration of the truth that is found throughout Scripture: the community of God's people is paramount to God's work in the world. Thus, Pentecost invites us to consider our own participation in the fellowship, worship, and mission of the church. It is a time to renew our commitment to live as an essential member of the body of Christ, using our gifts to build the church and share the love and justice of Christ with the world.

Moreover, those of us who are baptized, and confirmed, should examine our attitudes and actions. **Are we encouraging all of God's people to minister through the power of the Spirit? Are we eager for what the Spirit of**

God wants to do in our churches and communities through his empowered people? Or are we gatekeepers of the church who would even keep the Holy Spirit out of our carefully tended and controlled communities?

The role of every Christian is to encourage and support God's people for the ministry of Christ through the church, to the world (Eph.4:11-12). Sometimes, however, we fall short of this central pastoral calling. Pentecost is a day for us to recommit to equipping and encouraging all Christians for their full inheritance and responsibility as ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. When we do this, the Holy Spirit will freely use the church of Jesus Christ for God's purposes in the world.

by Mark D. Roberts at Patheos.com

Note: Yours to use in a Christian ministry, as long as you are not publishing it for sale. The source of this material:

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/markdroberts/>.

A Call to Prayer

The persecution of Christians in all parts of the world is at near "genocide" levels, according to a report ordered by Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt of Great Britain, reported the BBC in May. The review, led by the Bishop of Truro the Right Reverend Philip Mounstephen, estimated that one in three people suffer from religious persecution, and Christians are overwhelmingly (80%) the most persecuted religious group, it found. Mr. Hunt said he felt that "political correctness" had played a part in the issue not being confronted. What we have forgotten in that atmosphere of political correctness is actually the Christians that are being persecuted are some of the poorest people on the planet. The weakest (women & children) are the favorite targets.

Countries where the suppression is nearly total are North Korea, Afghanistan, and Somalia. The highest persecution zone is between the Middle East and China; it is increasing in instances and legal applications in China and India. Every month, on average: 345 Christians are killed for faith-related reasons; 105 Churches and Christian buildings are burned or attacked; 219 Christians are detained without trial, arrested, sentenced and imprisoned. There are an estimated 75,000 imprisoned in North Korea.

The rise in those experiencing high levels of persecution was 14% over the last year. 245 million professing saints will be affected this year. Prominent international monitoring charities include Open Doors, Persecution.com, Christian Freedom International, the Barnabas Fund, and Release International.

Messiah Ministries

- *Morning Prayer, Monday-Saturday, 7 a.m.*
- *Sunday, Holy Eucharist, 10 a.m.; refreshments following service*
- *Wednesday, 7 p.m., Holy Communion*
- *Seasonal Bible Study, Wednesday, 5:45 p.m.*
- *Vestry meeting, Second Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m.*
- *Luncheon, Second Sunday of the month, except special occasions.
[No luncheons during the summer months; resume in the fall].*
- *Nursing Home Ministry: First Tuesday, NHC, 10:30 a.m.; Second Tuesday, Keestone. 10 a.m.; Third Wednesday, Ivy Crest, 10 a.m.; Fourth Wednesday, Meadowbrook, 10 a.m. Ref. the Hines.*
- *ECW First Thursday, 11:30 a.m., lunch at various locations TBA.*
- *Monthly Adult Christian Book Club, third Sunday of the month, 4:30-5:30 p.m.*

Church of the Messiah's Cookbook...

The Cookbook committee is busy working on the cover and recipes for the cookbook. The deadline to have our recipes and artwork for the cover sent to the publisher is June 24. We appreciate everyone who shared their recipes with us to make it a success.

Bible Study...

Bible studies will be conducted by the priest-in-charge on Wednesdays beginning June 5 at 5:45-6:45. Please attend and bring your favorite Bible, although there will be study Bibles available for your convenience if you do not. We will be studying the Pastoral Epistles, those named for Timothy and Titus in the New Testament. It is very important to a pastor that a congregation demonstrate interest in studying God's Word, so please consider joining in this time-honored means of Christian formation.

Camp Gailor-Maxon...

Several of Messiah's youth are attending camp in June. Van Hallmark, Shelby Jones and Logan Dubberley are attending Camp I, June 2 – June 8; Isom Wilbanks, Madison Jones, Ema Wilbanks, and Isabella Muth are attending Camp II, June 9 – June 15.

Christian Book Club...

The Adult Christian Book Club's book for June is Ben Hur by Lew Wallace. Thriftbooks.com has several used Readers' Digest editions that are richly decorated and reader-friendly formatted hardbacks for \$4.15. Other used book vendors are also supplied at similar prices. The correct ISBN number to use to locate is 0-89577-403-8.

Episcopal Churchmen...

Save the date for the **Episcopal Churchmen of Tennessee Annual Conference, August 16-18**, at DuBose Center, Monteagle, TN. Registration is open at tnchurchmen.org. Highlights include time with the Bishop, games and recreation, speakers which include football chaplain and coach Tony Eubanks, Vanderbilt basketball star and Christian secondary coach now, Drew Maddux, and football Hall of Fame member Johnny Majors.

RFD Schedule: June 20, Thursday, 6:00 p.m. sorting/repacking food, Sharp Annex; June 22, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, **Bridgeforth Middle School**; July 18, Thursday, 6:00 p.m., sorting/repacking food, Sharp Annex; July 20, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, **Sarge's Restaurant, Frankewing**; August 15, Thursday, 6:00 p.m., sorting/repacking food, Sharp Annex; August 17, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, **Elkton Middle School, Elkton**.

Serving our Worship, ---- The Church of the Messiah:

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JLR

June 2: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Chalice bearer/reader: Lewis Foster; Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Hatherine Steever; Flowers: Bennita Rouleau in thanksgiving for husband Donald, and Solon Holt in celebration of their wedding anniversary.

June 9, Pentecost: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Chalice bearer/reader: Cathy Roberts; Altar Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Patsy Bryant; Flowers: Bob & Patsy Bryant in celebration of their anniversary.

June 16, Trinity Sunday: Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Mary Dubberley; Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Pat Dunnivant; Flowers: Joann Bryant in thanksgiving for family.

June 23: Acolyte: Logan Dubberley; Chalice bearer/reader: Cynthia Low; Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Angela Hallmark; Flowers: Joann Bryant in thanksgiving for family.

June 30: Acolyte: Kenzie Tate; Chalice bearer/reader: John Hughes; Altar Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Solon Holt; Flowers: Grace Meier in celebration.

July 7: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Chalice bearer/reader: Andy Hoover; Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Grace Meier; Flowers: Solon & Liz Holt in thanksgiving for Daryl Brindley's birthday.

July 14: Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Teresa Hughes; Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Andy Hoover; Flowers: Joe & Patti Stagner to the Glory of God in thanksgiving.

July 21: Acolyte: Logan Dubberley; Chalice bearer/reader: Rich Woolard; Altar Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Hatherine Steever; Flowers: Charly Wood.

July 28: Acolyte: Kenzie Tate; Chalice bearer/reader: Crystal Woolard; Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Patsy Bryant; Flowers: Fr. Jess Reeves in loving memory of Anne C. Reeves.

August 4: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Chalice bearer/reader: Lewis Foster; Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Pat Dunnivant; Flowers: John Davis in celebration for the United States Coast Guard's birthday.

August 11: Acolyte: Kenzie Tate; Chalice bearer/reader: Cynthia Low; Altar Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Angela Hallmark; Flowers: Kathey Herrington.

August 18: Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cathy Roberts; Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Solon Holt; Flowers: Joe, Patti, Dylan, Hallie & Jake Stagner in loving memory & thanksgiving of Deloris Hammel.

August 25: Acolyte: Logan Dubberley; Chalice bearer/reader: Mary Dubberley; Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Andy Hoover; Flowers: Bennita Rouleau in thanksgiving for Terry.

IF I AM WRONG, I AM DEAD WRONG

When it comes to the Bible, we've all got a choice to make. We can take the Bible on our terms, or on its terms. We can choose to follow it some of the way, or we can choose to follow it all the way. We can dabble in it, or we can dive deep into it. At some point we have to choose.

Many people choose to relate to the Bible like a map that offers *a* route, but not *the* route to their destination. They'll follow it some of the way, but for at least part of the journey take what looks like an easier path. Many people choose to relate to the Bible like one item at a buffet. They'll put a bit of Bible on their plate, then also a bit of this and a bit of that. But as time goes by and I continue to live out my little life in this world, I become more and more convinced that there's nothing better than to go all-in with the Bible. I've come to realize I'm so all-in that if the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong. In fact, if the Bible is wrong, I'm so wrong, completely wrong, shamefully wrong, devastatingly wrong, and wrong about all that really matters in life and death.

If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about the origins of this world. This world, this universe, was made by God and for God, an incredible *ex nihilo* act of creative superiority.

If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about the origins of humanity. They were created in the image of God as the crown of God's creation.

If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about the purpose of humanity. The Bible tells me that mankind was put on this earth to bring glory to God. We exist to do good for others which in turn shines a spotlight on our ultimately good God. This stands in the face of a mission of personal empowerment or human achievement.

If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about the purpose of family. The Bible tells me that marriage exists to serve as a miniature of the relationship of God to his people through the complementarity of husband and wife. It tells me that marriage exists as the context in which we have the responsibility to create more

people who bear the image of God. Marriage is the founding of a new family and family is the building block of society.

If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about the great problem and the great need of human beings. The Bible tells me our great problem is that we've sinned against a holy God, become rebels against him, and desperately need reconciliation. We are not good people who make the occasional poor choice, not innocent people who sometimes act ignorantly, but evil people who refuse God and our fellow man. Our great need is not self-esteem or tolerance or new forms of politics or economics, but the forgiveness that comes by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.

If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about the future. The Bible tells me that history will culminate in the return of Jesus Christ who will come to judge the living and the dead. He will come as victorious King, as righteous Judge, to bring some to eternal glory and condemn others to eternal condemnation.

If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about today's most pressing cultural issues: homosexuality, gay marriage, transgenderism, abortion. If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong about today's most pressing theological issues: the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the nature of same-sex attraction, the authority and sufficiency of scripture. If the Bible is wrong, I'm wrong in how I relate to money, how I honor my body, how I use my time. I'm wrong over and over, again and again, through and through. I'm poor, pathetic, pitiable, delusional, and blind.

But I've made my choice. I've examined the evidence and have chosen to believe it's not wrong, but right. I've chosen to believe it's good and pure and true, infallible and inerrant and sufficient. I've chosen to take it on its own terms, to believe it all the way, to live by its every word. I've chosen to be in—all-in.

Excerpts from Challies daily Christian blog

REFRESHMENT SERVERS:**JUNE**

2:	Graduate Reception
9, Pentecost Sunday:	Picnic Fare Luncheon
16, Trinity Sunday:	Ken Vickers
23:	Allen Dubberley & Gene Hines
30 :	Donny & Samantha Muth

JULY

7:	John Davis & John Hughes
14:	Rich Woolard & Rebecca Billard
21:	Andy Hoover
28:	Pat Dunnivant & Kelly Hallmark

AUGUST

4:	Ken Vickers
11:	Allen Dubberley & Gene Hines
18:	Donny & Samantha Muth
25:	John Davis & John Hughes

ALTAR FLOWERS:**JUNE**

2:	Solon Holt & Bennita Rouleau
9, Pentecost Sunday:	Bob & Patsy Bryant
16, Trinity Sunday:	Joann Bryant
23:	Joann Bryant
30:	Grace Meier

JULY

7:	Solon & Liz Holt
14:	Joe & Patti Stagner
21:	Charly Wood
28:	Fr. Jess Reeves

AUGUST

4:	John Davis
11:	Kathey Herrington
18:	Joe & Patti Stagner & Family
25:	Bennita Rouleau