

The Mount Carmel Congregational Church

A United Church of Christ



(Undated, Untitled Painting)

Kim Young Gil (Korean, 1940-2008)

Pentecost Sunday
May 28th, 2023

Prelude

“Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether”

Arr. Charles Callahan

Greeting

Passing of the Peace of Christ

Call to Worship

One: Like the disciples, we gather in this space united by our relationship with the risen Christ.

All: We come ready to receive what God has to give.

One: Just as the Spirit came upon the disciples like wind and fire,

All: We receive the gift of the Spirit's power and inspiration.

One: Just as the resurrected Christ breathed the Spirit onto the disciples,

All: We receive the gift of the Spirit's peace and wisdom.

One: As the life-giving and peacemaking Holy Spirit blows and blazes through us today,

All: We receive the gift of the Spirit that unites us as the Body of Christ.

*Hymn

“I Sing the Mighty Power of God”

NCH #12

The Call to Confession

Unison Prayer of Confession

Lord of patience and persistence, we live in a broken and shattered world. All around us we see evidence of hatred and alienation. We cannot help but observe the alienation of your people from each other. We create devices to separate rather than unite; to divide rather than come together in hope. Forgive us for our sins that have caused such division and hurt. Remind us today that the disciples, too, lived in a fearful world and you came to them as they sat huddled in fear and empowered them. You gave them hearts of courage and faith. Awaken the same hearts in us that we may serve you

well, and bring peace and hope to our world. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

The First Lesson: 1 Corinthians 12: 1-13 Nancy Olson

What I want to talk about now is the various ways God's Spirit gets worked into our lives. This is complex and often misunderstood, but I want you to be informed and knowledgeable. Remember how you were when you didn't know God, led from one phony god to another, never knowing what you were doing, just doing it because everybody else did it? It's different in this life. God wants us to use our intelligence, to seek to understand as well as we can. For instance, by using your heads, you know perfectly well that the Spirit of God would never prompt anyone to say, "Jesus be damned!" Nor would anyone be inclined to say, "Jesus is Master!" without the insight of the Holy Spirit.

God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! The variety is wonderful: wise counsel, clear understanding, simple trust, healing the sick, miraculous acts, proclamation, distinguishing between spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues. All these gifts have a common origin, but are handed out one by one by the one Spirit of God. He decides who gets what, and when.

You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts—limbs, organs, cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you're still one body. It's exactly the same with Christ. By means of his one Spirit, we all said good-bye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in

which he has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain—his Spirit—where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves—labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free—are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive.

Song “Show the Way” David Wilcox

Performed by Reverend Milton Brasher-Cunningham

(Lyrics for this song have been included as an insert if you would like to follow along.)

The Second Lesson: Acts 2: 1-21

When the Feast of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Without warning there was a sound like a strong wind, gale force—no one could tell where it came from. It filled the whole building. Then, like a wildfire, the Holy Spirit spread through their ranks, and they started speaking in a number of different languages as the Spirit prompted them.

There were many Jews staying in Jerusalem just then, devout pilgrims from all over the world. When they heard the sound, they came on the run. Then when they heard, one after another, their own mother tongues being spoken, they were blown away. They couldn’t for the life of them figure out what was going on, and kept saying, “Aren’t these all Galileans? How come we’re hearing them talk in our various mother tongues?” Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; visitors from Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene; immigrants from Rome, both Jews and proselytes; even Cretans and Arabs!

“They’re speaking our languages, describing God’s mighty works!” Their heads were spinning; they couldn’t make head or tail of any of it. They talked back and forth, confused: “What’s going on here?” Others joked, “They’re drunk on cheap wine.”

That’s when Peter stood up and, backed by the other eleven, spoke out with bold urgency: “Fellow Jews, all of you who are visiting Jerusalem,

listen carefully and get this story straight. These people aren't drunk as some of you suspect. They haven't had time to get drunk—it's only nine o'clock in the morning. This is what the prophet Joel announced would happen:"

“‘In the Last Days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit on every kind of people: Your sons will prophesy, also your daughters; your young men will see visions, your old men dream dreams. When the time comes, I’ll pour out my Spirit on those who serve me, men and women both, and they’ll prophesy. I’ll set wonders in the sky above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billowing smoke, the sun turning black and the moon blood-red, before the Day of the Lord arrives, the Day tremendous and marvelous; and whoever calls out for help to me, God, will be saved.’”

Sermon

***Hymn**

“Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”

NCH #286

The Joys and Concerns of the Parish Family

Please remember the following persons in your prayers: Robert Martin, Karl Paulette; Carmen McKee; Amos Hewitt; Rhonda Pruzinsky; Gilbert Spencer; Ron Vanacore; and Kathy Willey.

Moments of Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven: hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Call to Offering

Offertory

“Be Thou My Vision”

Arr. Violinsolos.com

Diane Scott,
Violin

***The Doxology (“For the Fruit of All Creation” NCH 425)**

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.

For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.

For the wonders that astound us,

For the truths that still confound us,

Most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Hymn**

“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”

NCH #293

***Benediction**

Postlude

“Come Down, O Love Divine”

Arr. Wilbur Held

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*As a community of faith, gathered in Christ's love,
we strive to support one another in hearing the Word,
living the Word, and sharing the Word.*



About Today's Painting

Today's painting, by Korean artist Kim Young Gil, is a fascinating interpretation on the story of Pentecost, utilizing cultural influences from his upbringing in China and Korea. Kim lived the majority of his young life in China with his Christian parents, who had fled Japanese-occupied Korea due to their strict enforcement of the Shinto religion. Following Korea's independence, Kim would return to Korea to attend university and begin his artistic career, focusing his art solely on Christian themes and stories. Kim would go on to serve as professor at a variety of institutions, including the University of Connecticut, where he was granted honorary citizenship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All are welcome to join students from Hamden Middle School and officials from the Witness Stone Project for the installation of the memorial stone for Cyrus Gibson. The installation will take place on Friday, June 2nd, at 12:15pm at the Church.

As some of you may already know, Reverend Milton will be away in Ireland during the month of June. In his absence, we will be hosting a mixture of lay preachers and Divinity School students. We ask that you help support them by attending service during those Sundays.

Keep your Ark Banks floating! Please don't forget to keep bringing in your ark banks. The monies collected go into a discretionary fund which can be used to help people in need.

We are always looking for Volunteers for Coffee Hour. If you are interested, please contact Aren in the office, or use the sign-up sheet now located near the main entrance to the Parish House.

May 28th, 2023

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**Note: Although we are now mask-optional in worship, we ask that you refrain from attending service if you are not feeling well and please wear a mask if you have been exposed to COVID. We thank you for your consideration of others.*

“Show the Way”

Song by David Wilcox

Performed by Reverend Milton Brasher-Cunningham

You say you see no hope
You say you see no reason we should dream
That the world would ever change
You say the love is foolish to believe
'Cause they'll always be some crazy
With an army or a knife
To wake you from your daydream
Put the fear back in your life

Look, if someone wrote a play
To just to glorify what's stronger than hate
Would they not arrange the stage
To look as if the hero came too late?
He's almost in defeat
It's looking like the evil side will when
So on the edge of every seat
From the moment that the whole thing begins

It is love who mixed the mortar
And it's love who stacked these stones
And it's love who made the stage here
Although it looks like we're alone
In this scene, set in shadows,
Like the night is here to stay
There is evil cast around us
But it's love that wrote the play
For in this lifetime love can show the way

Now the stage is set
You can feel your own heart beating in your chest
This life's not over yet
So we get up on our feet and do our best
We play against the fear
We play against the reasons not to try
We're playing for the tears
Burning in the happy angel's eye

For it's love who mixed the mortar
And it's love who stacked these stones
And it's love who made the stage here
Though it looks like we're alone
In this scene, set in shadows,
Like the night is here to stay
There is evil cast around us
But it's love that wrote the play
For in this lifetime love will show the way

