

Pentecost Sunday, May 28, 2023

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1-21

Bethlehem was God with us, Calvary was God for us, and Pentecost is God in us.
—Robert Baer

After Jesus' death and resurrection, he appeared to his disciples a number of times. Just before he left them, he gathered them together and gave them some final instructions and reminders, much like a parent might give to the children prior to leaving on a trip. His last words on this occasion were: "Stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). They did. And the power arrived on the day of Pentecost, which we refer to as the birthday of the church.

Think of the different forms of power: atomic, electrical, petroleum-based, wind, solar, hydrogen, water — and more. Power, whatever the type, can be used in at least two ways: it can be *unleashed*, or it can be *harnessed*. The energy in 10 gallons of gasoline, for instance, can be released explosively by dropping a lighted match into the can. Or it can be channeled through the engine of a 2023 car in a controlled burn and used to transport a person 450 miles.

Explosions are spectacular, but controlled burns have a lasting effect, staying power.

The Holy Spirit works both ways.

Today is Pentecost. The colors are red and perhaps orange and yellow. The symbol is a flame of fire. Today is when we say, "Happy Birthday, Church!" On this day, many years ago, the tank was filled, and the engine was started.

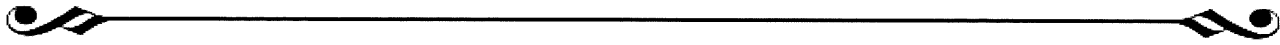
At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit exploded on the scene; his presence was like "tongues of fire" (Acts 2:3). Thousands were affected by one burst of God's power.

But the Holy Spirit also works through the church, the institution God used to tap the Holy Spirit's power for the long haul. Through worship, fellowship and service, Christians are provided with staying power.

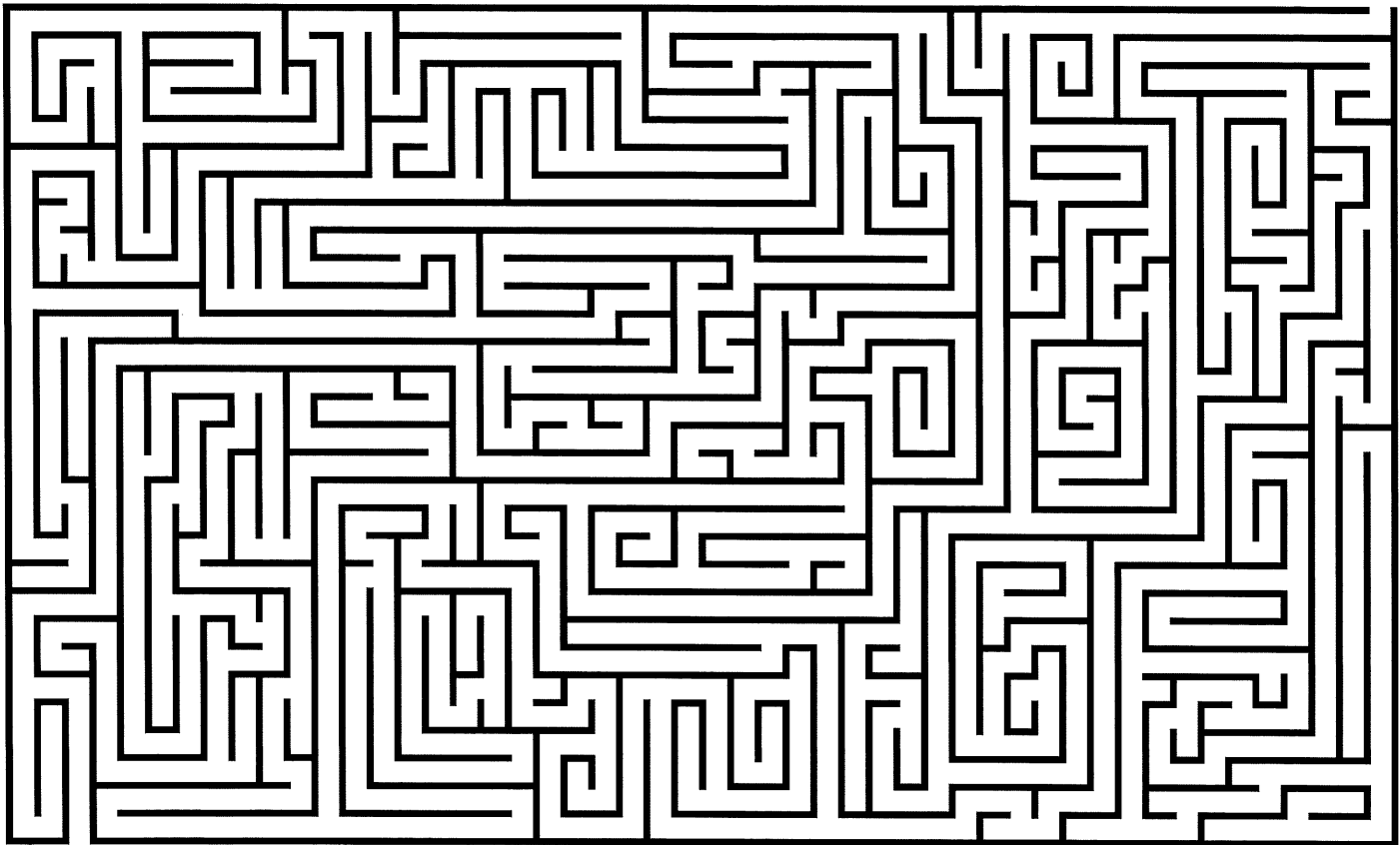
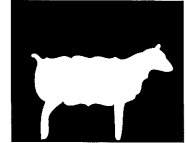
—Timothy Merrill, with various internet sources

Prayer: Holy Spirit, we celebrate this day as a reminder of how God is with us daily. Amen.

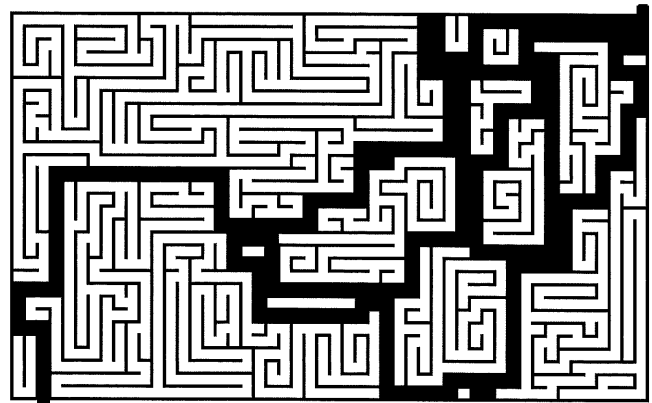
*Happy Birthday to the Christian Church
on this Sunday of Pentecost!
Lisa & Pastor Ben Motz*



The Lost Sheep. Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). He also said, “For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). Help this sheep find her way through the maze. *Solution below.*



PENTECOST
SUNDAY



Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: John 7-10

Monday: 2 Kings 11–14:20

Tuesday: Joel 1-3

Wednesday: 2 Kings 14:21-25; Jonah 1-4

Thursday: 2 Kings 14:26-29; Amos 1-3

Friday: Amos 4-6

Saturday: Psalms 58-60