



The Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist
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The Rev. Thomas M. White

Pentecost 2018

Greetings!

As I write you, it is the evening before a week of vacation: flying to Miami tomorrow morning, boarding a ship in the afternoon, and, as night falls, embarking on a cruise to Cozumel and then to Havana! That city has been on our "bucket list" for a long time. We're excited! I don't tell you all this, however, to make you feel bad, but to assure you we will very much miss you and will be thinking of you and praying for you often during our time apart. We will "be with you in Spirit!" I thought of this phrase as a way of explaining the reason for Pentecost, the third great festival of the Church, together with Christmas and Easter. This year we celebrate **Pentecost on Sunday, May 20.**

Following his resurrection, Jesus appeared many times to his followers, as witnessed by the sacred Scriptures. Then, though, the time came for the risen Christ to return to heaven and God the Father. However, in Jesus' unbounded love for his followers, he comforted them by promising them he would pour out the Holy Spirit upon his faithful people. And that's what happened on the Day of Pentecost. And down through the centuries, since the first Pentecost, Jesus is still very much "with us in Spirit." The Holy Spirit makes Jesus real and alive to us, giving us the faith to witness that Jesus is Savior of the world; comes to faucet water and makes it living water to adopt the baptized as a child of God; and comes to ordinary bread and wine to make it the extraordinary means of grace, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, heavenly food! The Holy Spirit connects us with each other, making us sisters and brothers in Christ, kin, family—the Church! We have the Holy Spirit to thank!

The liturgical color for the Festival of Pentecost is red, reminding us of the tongues of fire that appeared above the head of each disciple on the first Pentecost. With this in mind, **be sure to wear red** that day, **May 20.** Following Mass you are asked to gather at the altar for the **annual congregational photo**, our family portrait! All present that day are asked to be included in the photo.

I believe with all my heart, mind, and soul that the Holy Spirit is working busily at the Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist. Let me share only a few of the Holy Spirit's expressions. First, it is my great joy to announce that **Bp. Brown**, Bishop of Delaware, **has assigned a deacon to our parish!** Her name is **Paula Waite**. She will be **ordained to the**

diaconate at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Baltimore, Md., on Saturday, June 9 at 11 a.m. Paula has humbled me and filled me with gratitude by giving me the honor of being one of her presenters for ordination. **You are cordially invited to attend.** Let me know of your interest and we will carpool. In addition to her ministry as a chaplain at Beebe Hospital, Paula will participate at Mass once a month, will work with us on congregational growth, visit our sick and homebound members, and together we will begin a mid-week Service of Morning Prayer.

Next, at the meeting of the vestry on May 9, the vestry members received the unanimous recommendation of the Minister of Music Search Committee and called **Brenda DiMichele and Scott Kresge to be joint Ministers of Music at St. John the Baptist**, with the call renewed annually. Congratulations, Brenda and Scott!

Your **Lenten offering**, which was received Easter Sunday, **totaled \$950!** I salute you for your sacrificial giving and my heart brims with gratitude for your generosity! The funds will be divided equally between the wonderful ministries of aid by Episcopal Relief and Development and our own outreach programs for the community, such as **Sandwich Thursdays**, through which we give a bag lunch to any and all children in Milton who are hungry each Thursday that school is not in session. (That's a lot of Thursdays, so please volunteer to help.) Also, our **tremendously successful Outreach Yard Sale** on May 5—thanks to the hard and enthusiastic work of so many of you—**netted close to \$3,000** for our outreach ministries.

Tuesdays with God's Buddies will again take place over five Tuesdays during the summer, dates to be announced soon. Children ages 5-11 will gather for dinner, a fun Bible lesson, games, songs and crafts. This program is open to all: your children and grandchildren, your nieces and nephews, your neighbor's children, anyone 5 to 11! Register them with Jill Malloy or send their names and info to office@saintjohnsmilton.org.

Our **Spring Cleanup Day will be Saturday, May 19**, starting at **9:30 a.m.** Outside we will weed, mulch and plant the summer annuals in our gardens. And there will be inside jobs as well. Please do your part to keep our building and gardens looking their very best. **Everyone is needed!**

Finally, on **Thursday, June 21**, I will be participating in a **congregational growth seminar** at St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Middletown, Del., in preparation for a two-day **retreat on church growth** which I shall be attending on **Oct 19 and 20**.

May we with one voice lift to God the ancient Pentecost prayer: "Come, Holy Spirit, come! Fill the hearts of your faithful people! Kindle in us the fire of your love!" Amen!

With you in Spirit,
Fr. Tom