



Pentecost - Happy Birthday, Church!

June 2019

Hard to think of a church, or church as a concept, being born.....and why at Pentecost and what is it all about? I guess it is all back to mystery again and our Christian faith is full of mystery - things hard to explain rationally. In my cynical moments, and yes, alas, I still have them; I think "it's a mystery" is just an excuse for some of the weird things we are expected to believe! Sometimes, possibly, that is true....but don't tell Des I said that! However, the mystery of faith, my faith, both irks and delights me. I love the wonder and beauty of it all. Pentecost is one of these such occasions.

The believers were gathered together and what a bunch they were. They had been given this enormous charge by Jesus to "Go and make disciples...more followers of me..." and then he went off to heaven to let them get on with it! If you really look at some of this motley crew, you would find this a mystery too. Why would Jesus leave such a responsibility to them...a doubter, a denier, hot headed twins and so on.....? But what he also said was "Wait, and I will send you a helper," and he did, on that Pentecost day. Because they were together and the wind blew and the flames landed on each individually the power of God came to them all, individually filling and gifting them but empowering them as a group...and off they went in this power telling others the good news of Jesus.

So, the church was born that day, but of course with all births there is a gestation period. We see that in the calling of the disparate men, the teaching of Jesus, his death, resurrection and ascension into heaven. (And for centuries the people of God had been waiting for this, even from before Jesus was born!) Then comes the Holy Spirit - the part of God, the part of Jesus they so freely gave that day and carry on freely giving to any of us that ask.

I think the Holy Spirit is 'Jesus with me/you', every moment of every day, helping us to grow and helping us to live out our faith wherever we happen to be. It is in the way we talk to everyone we meet, the way we drive, the way we think and care about our children, our planet and ourselves. It is also in our workplaces and schools. For me it is the way I prepare for Messy Church and Munchkins and all the others things I do...pulling out passionate creativity that surprises me, helping me to see things God's way rather than through my selfish world view. The Holy Spirit is breath - breathing life into my spirit to make me the best disciple I can be and so I can in turn help others to be the best they can be. This is church.

Happy Birthday, Church!