

WORSHIP GUIDE: WEDNESDAY, 03 JUNE 2020

WELCOME/GATHERING

Elder Vel

PRAISE SONGS

~There's A Welcome Here
~Give Me Oil In My Lamp
~As We Gather

OPENING PRAYER

Elder Vel

LITANY OF PRAISE

Elder Janny & Sis Vicky

Leader: I will exalt You, my God the King; I will praise Your name for ever and ever.

Church: **Everyday I will praise You and extol Your name forever and ever.**

Leader: Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; His greatness no one can fathom.

Church: **They will tell of the glory of Your kingdom and speak of Your might.**

ALL: **Your kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and Your dominion endures through all generations.**

OPENING HYMN

"O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing"

TEH # 18

*O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!*

*My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim
To spread thro' all the earth abroad,
The glories of His name.*

*He speaks, and listen--ning to His voice.
New life the dead receive;
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice
The humble poor believe.*

*Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise ye dumb,
Your loosened tongue employ;
Ye blind, behold Your Savior come;
And leap, ye lame for joy. AMEN*

GREETINGS and CHURCH NEWS

Ptr Glo

GREET EACH OTHER (Wave Your Hand)

FELLOWSHIP SONG

Halle-halle-luia

SHARING OF PRAISES/THANKSGIVING

Ptr Leng

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Ptr Leng

Response

"Give Thanks"

SCRIPTURE READING

Sis Marilyn

ANTHEM

Look To The World

EMC Composite Choir
with Ellinwood Chamber Orchestra

MEDITATION

GHOST STORIES

Elder Bernard Supetran

COMMUNITY AT PRAYER

Ptr Bob

Response

Be Still My Soul

ECO

SCRIPTURE VERSE To Go

Elder Goulds

Philippians 4:13

"I can do everything through Him who gives me strength."

CLOSING HYMN

"We Are One In The Spirit"

TEH#380

*(We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord,) 2x
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.*

REFRAIN

*And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love.
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.*

*(We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,) 2x
And together we'll spread the news
that God is in our land. (REFRAIN)*

*(We will work with each other, we will work side by side,) 2x
And we'll guard each one's dignity
and save each one's pride. (REFRAIN)*

*All praise to the Father, from whom all things come.
And all praise to Christ Jesus, His only Son.
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one. (REFRAIN)*

CLOSING PRAYER/BENEDICTION

Ptr Cesar

Response

Fellowship



**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES
ELLINWOOD-MALATE CHURCH**



03 June 2020



**Midweek Prayer
Meeting Liturgy**

1660 Dr. A. Vasquez Street, Malate, Manila, Philippines
Tel. 8523.6564; 8536.2970; 8400.9972
website: www.ellinwood-malate.com

Ghost Stories

Acts 2:37-47

Through the centuries, one of the most exciting and intriguing, but scary to topics to talk about is about ghosts or what many people consider as restless spirits of the dead. Filipinos, in particular, have been talking about ghosts since time immemorial, and have been immortalized in novels, *komiks*, movies, TV series, and on the Internet. It only goes to show that ghost stories are part of the people's way of life.

In the year 33 AD, there was a historic and earth-shaking ghost story worth retelling which took place, and led to a series of events that would “turn the world upside down”, as the Bible described. It was not the typical restless spirit which we get to hear, but a very special ghost—the Holy Ghost or the Holy Spirit, which descended upon the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ who ascended into heaven the week before.

The event, recorded in Acts chapter 2, is known as the Pentecost which marked the arrival of the third and final expression or *persona* of the Triune God. Described as “parakletos” in the original Greek text, it broadly meant helper, instant succour, comforter, companion, advocate or sustainer, which was promised by Christ to his disciples to give the apostles divine knowledge and strength as they continue the task of kingdom building.

Pentecost is regarded as the birthday of the Church because of the conversion of some 3,000 people into faith in Yeshua (Jesus) as the Risen Lord and the Messiah, thanks to the single sermon by the Apostle Peter empowered by the Holy Ghost. The period following this milestone event were the most exciting times for the newly-born movement because where the fruits of the Gospel were being harvested as seeds were being sown. Here are some insights which will make Ghost stories enlightening and worth sharing to other people we know, and for the succeeding generations.

1. The Holy Ghost empowers us to speak and act boldly. Our recent lectionary expounded how the disciples were given the power and the conviction to speak boldly that Yeshua is the risen Messiah. That message was radical at that time because of it is not accepted by some Jewish religious sects and people within the Roman Empire. The disciples were the “bold stars” of the Gospel, so to speak, as they spoke fearlessly about the life and work of Christ, repentance from sins, the imminent return of Jesus, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. They boldly preached the Good News in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

We, as the current generation of disciples, are heirs to the task of kingdom building and we can find comfort that the Holy Ghost is with us as we continue Christ's mission in these critical times. Every Sunday, we recite the articles of UCCP Statement of Faith to remind us of our sense for being as a church. This beautifully and powerfully-worded Statement is our “enhanced and modified general community” declaration based on the Nicene Creed crafted by the early church in 325 AD.

In the context of the events unfolding both here and abroad, we will draw strength from the Holy Ghost as we deliver a relevant empowered message and action to the nation and to the world.

2. God's timing is perfect. The timing of the descent of the Holy Ghost couldn't have been more perfect than on a major Hebrew observance called the Shavuot, or 50 days after the Passover. This is an important pilgrimage where Jews from all over the Roman Empire troop to Jerusalem to celebrate the harvest festival, to recognize that Yahweh is the Lord of the harvest. Also known as the Feast of Weeks, the event also commemorates God's giving of the Torah or the Law to Moses.

Fifty days might have been a long wait for the Holy Ghost to come, but for God it was the perfect timing because of its symbolic significance to the Jewish people. The Shavuot was a festival for agricultural harvest, and the Pentecost

is a harvest of people who will sow the seeds and harvest more people for the Kingdom of God. The prolonged quarantine has been a long time waiting for most of us, but I am sure God made this period special to some people who kept the faith in him.

3. The Holy Ghost empowers us with gifts and fruits. To carry out Christ's mission, we are empowered with charisms or very special gifts written in I Corinthians 12:7-11. These are wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, ability to prophesy, the ability to tell the spirits apart, speaking in foreign languages, and explaining what was said in those languages. All the gifts come from one and the same Spirit, given to each person just as he decides, all for the glory of God alone.

The Holy Ghost also manifests through its "fruits" as seen in the lives of people. Galatians 5:22-23 says these are love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. As the Apostles Paul enumeration of the fruits of the Spirit, he encourages us to keeping in step with the Spirit, do not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

4. The Church is a community of faith and love. During its early stage, the church was a mere underground movement from mainstream Judaism, which met secretly at caves and unlikely places to avoid both Jewish and Roman authorities. Hebrews and Gentiles alike were drawn by this fledging group because of unique traits which were perhaps absent in the faith they grew up with.

In Acts 2:37-47, the early church devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer to strengthen their spiritual bond. They expressed genuine love for one another, to the point of selling their possessions and sharing them with the needy. As people did their share in the community of faith, the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

The 1960s song, "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love", popularly known by its opening line "we are one in the Spirit" is a powerful reminder. This song by American priest Fr. Peter Scholtes is inspired by John 13:35 and originated from a popular phrase used by pagans in describing believers of the early Church: "Behold, how they love one another; and how they are ready to die for each other."

The true mark of Christ's followers isn't magnificent buildings and facilities, big budgets, nor beautiful programs, but love for our brothers and sisters, and the last, the least and the lost. During the pandemic, many churches and members expressed this love by looking out for the welfare of its flock by bringing moral and spiritual comfort, and responding to their material needs of the vulnerable ones. Beyond this crisis, the church, as guided by the Holy Ghost, should continue to express the love of Christ and reach out to the needy person in its totality.

Do you have a Ghost story to share? We love to hear it.