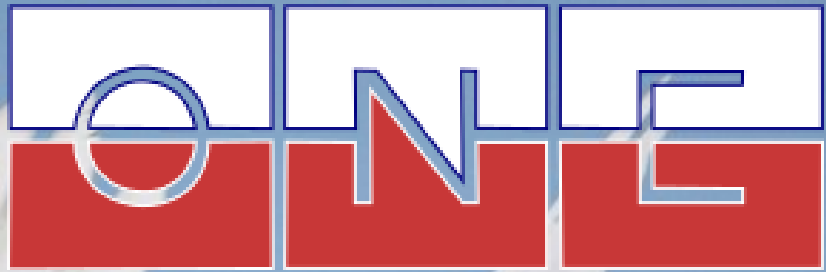
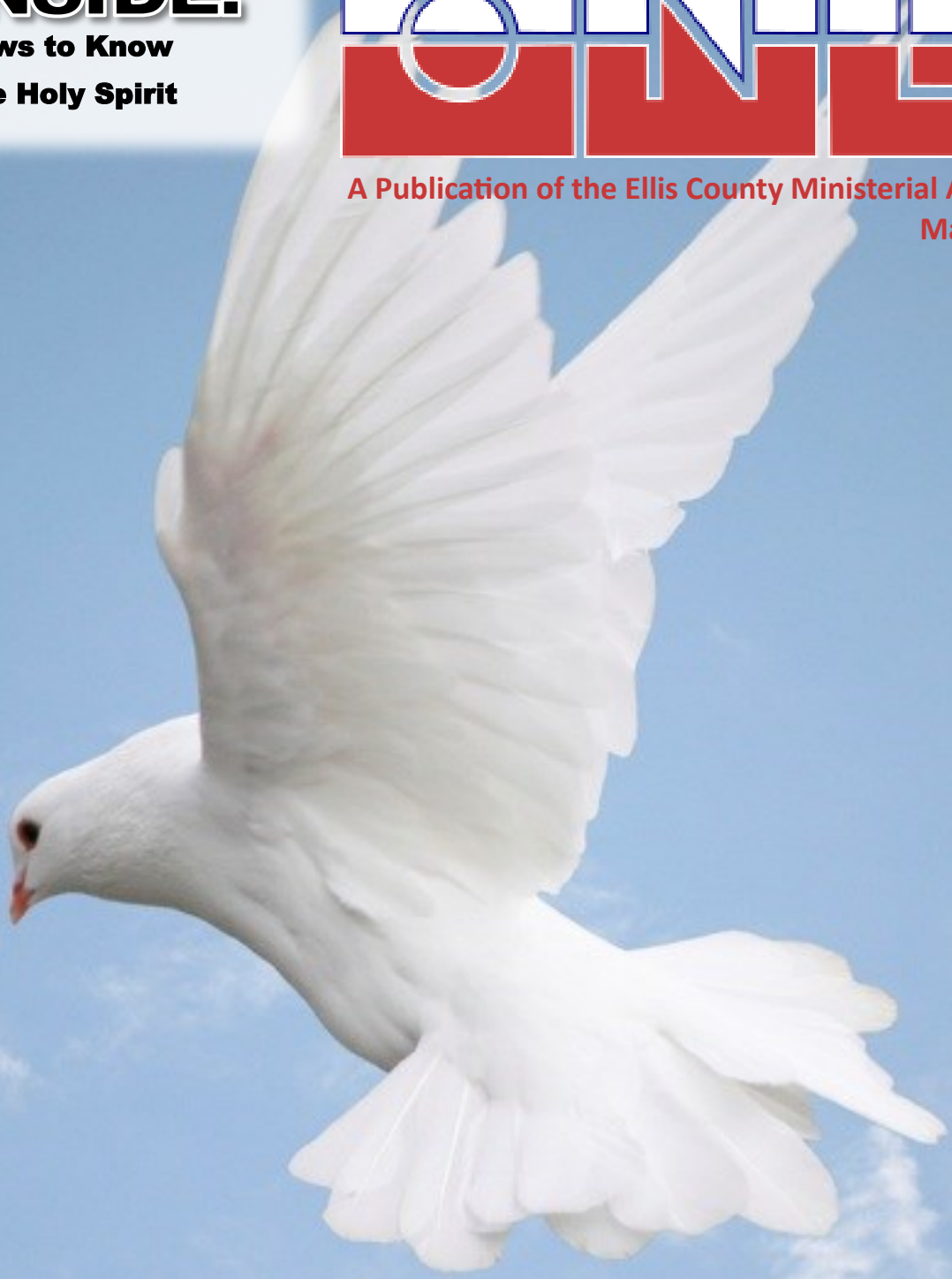


INSIDE:

- + **News to Know**
- + **The Holy Spirit**



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May 2020



News to Know

Mail Carrier Food Drive Canceled; Center Redoubles Funding Efforts

The Community Assistance Center, 208 E. 12th, is redoubling its fundraising efforts in order to keep its shelves stocked with food during the coronavirus pandemic.

Laurie Mortinger, the center's co-director, said the current fund drive is vital because mail carriers nationally will not be conducting their door-to-door food drive that was originally scheduled for May 9. That food would have gone to the center.

The mail carriers' next food drive is planned for October.

"All the money being raised will go for food," Mortinger said. "The more we get, the better, because we have to purchase food, and we don't know yet how much we will have to purchase." She added the summer months are normally busy ones.

The center has already received matching funds from two organizations for \$5,000 the center has raised from private donors. The Schmidt Foundation and Bank of Hays each donated \$5,000 after the matching funds were raised.

Individuals may mail in donations or bring them to the center between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Mortinger said no shopping is currently being allowed at the center, only distributions of food to those who qualify. Individuals receiving food must live in Ellis County and must meet income eligibility requirements. Anyone who has lost their job is eligible, she said.

The center is allowing one person into the center at a time and no children are allowed inside. "We're trying to get people in and out in 15 minutes," she said.

One woman came in recently to donate part of the \$1,200 stimulus check she had received from the government. "She said she wanted to help out as much as she could," Mortinger said. Other people are donating \$25 or less. "Every bit helps."

Those with questions may call Mortinger at (785) 625-9110.

'Adopt a Grandparent' Opportunity Being Offered

Tigers in Service at Fort Hays State University is offering individuals the opportunity to "Adopt a Grandparent" by befriending residents at the Brookdale assisted living facility, 1801 E. 27th St.

Participants will connect with the Brookdale residents by using FaceTime with them once a week. The project will last through the end of May, according to a news release.

Interested individuals may email their phone number and availability to service@fhsu.edu.

Hays After 5 Group Cancels May Meeting

Hays After 5 Christian women's group has canceled its May 11 dinner program.

Hays High Baccalaureate Service Canceled

The Hays High School Baccalaureate service has been canceled.

Grief Support Group to Start New Session in June

GriefShare, a worldwide non-denominational grief support ministry, is currently meeting via Zoom. The next session will begin June 11. Cost of the workbook is \$20. More information is available by emailing richardmatzke48@gmail.com.



ONE is the official publication of the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance (ECMA) which guides its mission, content, and theme. The ECMA encourage submissions from ECMA congregations. Photographs, stories, testimonies, and other submissions should be directed toward your church leaders or sent via email to one@ourecma.com.

The ECMA ONE Advisory Board will choose appropriate and timely submissions for publication. The columns in ONE represent the views of the author.

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The Holy Spirit Ignites

Becky Rogowski

Hays First Presbyterian Church

Before we used social distancing as a daily term, before we knew anything about sheltering in place, before we wore face masks in public to protect ourselves and others, before we limited the amounts of toilet paper, milk, and bread people could buy, before our churches jumped both feet first into virtual worship, I chose this topic about the Holy Spirit.

I came to ministry by way of a degree and background in education and teaching. My background is not in theology. I love God. I know some things about the Bible. I love people. What in the world was I going to say to the readers about the Holy Spirit? And then...

Just hours away from the submission deadline, I called a teacher friend to ask how I could help my church family donate money toward a program to help

provide meals to the schoolchildren of Hays in light of a food service employee testing positive for COVID-19. That quick question led to the most joy-filled afternoon I've had in months. The two of us talked for less than ten minutes. A few more calls were placed, a couple of emails were sent, a graphic was designed, and social media posts were made. Then the good people of Hays did what the good people of Hays do: they let their HEARTS do the work of GOD.

Generosity took off like a wildfire.

My friend and I took more calls than we imagined possible. We knew people wanted to help. We knew people wanted to do something. But this generosity was not based on myself or my friend; it was based on something much deeper. We used our connections and put the word out so that

people could do their thing. Did they ever!

I am proud to call Hays my hometown. I grew up here. I moved away for school and started my family. Circumstances and family brought me back. This is a wonderful place to live and an even better place to bring up children! Midwest values are real. Our faith community is strong. I truly believe that most people are living good, honest, respectable lives.

The Holy Spirit worked through the people of Hays today. In a matter of a few hours, enough money was given to cover the costs of feeding the children - and as of the time I'm writing this, it looks like money will exceed what is needed. The extra money will go to other agencies in town who are helping to make sure everyone has enough to eat through this crisis.

My heart is full tonight. My soul has been fed. The children will be fed. Thank you, Hays. Thank you, Holy Spirit.



Without the Spirit of God we can do nothing. We are as ships without wind or chariots without steeds. Like branches without sap, we are withered. Like coals without fire, we are useless. As an offering without the sacrificial flame, we are unaccepted. - Charles Spurgeon

The Vital Need For the Holy Spirit

Pastor Sabian Chaney

New Life Center

In many respects the third person of the Trinity is a bit of an enigma to many. We can understand the idea of the Father and the Son because we have tactile representations of them within traditional families. The Holy Spirit is someone different, a little harder to wrap our arms around. The Holy Spirit is not an "it," He is not "electricity," but equal in deity with both God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The person and work of the Holy Spirit was vital in the eyes of Jesus and the first century believers (Mark 1:8). The New Testament church was wholly dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus didn't even want them leaving Jerusalem without the baptism in the Holy Spirit! Simply read through the book of Acts to see for yourself. I would submit to you that today we are in just

as much need, if not more, of the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible teaches us that if you've put your faith in Jesus you have the Holy Spirit within you (1 Cor 12:12-13). The Bible also teaches us that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a distinct and subsequent gift to that of our initial experience with Jesus (Acts 8:12-17).

Before we go forward, I want to express my heart. The ground is level at the foot of the cross, and there is no room for pride with the work of the Holy Spirit. The love of God is at the heart of the work of the Holy Spirit. In the middle of Paul's teaching on the charismatic aspects of the Holy Spirit we find the "love chapter," (1 Cor 13) this is not by accident. So, hear me clearly, being Pentecostal doesn't make one more, or less, loved by God. I count as dear brothers, individuals

of deep faith, that do not have a Pentecostal experience.

The vital work of the Holy Spirit is simply; "power [that] when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses... to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:1-8). If we're going to reach our world for Christ, we need the Holy Spirit working in our hearts. He also gifts us with an overflowing fullness of His Spirit (John 7:37-39). A communion with God that has no adequate words to express the emotion, and in this a deepened reverence, or awe, for God (Acts 2:43). It is an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42). And additionally, a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for those that do not know Jesus (Mark 16:20). This is but a small sample of what He can do in us!

My friends, Jesus desires that you would have this

Personal Pursuit of the Spirit

Brandon Nimz

Unite Ministries

Though I continually grow in my understanding of God and Jesus, I feel that my

understanding of the Holy Spirit has both grown the most and still has the most room for growth. In part, this is because my understanding of the Holy

Spirit is based more on experiences with Him and feelings related to those experiences than it is on intellectual knowledge. Considering what scripture says about His role in our lives, this is not surprising.

In John 14-16, we see that the Holy Spirit will take up part of Christ's role with the disciples. He will lead them into all truth, comfort them, and advocate for them. Ephesians 4 says that the Holy Spirit is also a marker of our salvation, "living within us, insuring our salvation on the day of judgment." Eventually, walking with Him yields fruit of the Spirit, and the overall process transforms us to where we become more and more like Christ, who is the head of His body, the Church. New Testament authors show the Holy Spirit has a linking role, and they encourage believers to stay united in Him. Further, scripture shows the Holy Spirit empowering believers in a variety of ways—including tongues, prophecy, and healing.

All of this, while important and true, is information that is useful in our intellectual understanding of the Holy Spirit; eventually, that has to switch over to experiential understanding as the Holy Spirit begins working in our lives, leading us into all truth. This experiential understanding should line up with the truths that scripture reveals about the Holy Spirit, but it will likely differ for each person. This makes a lot of sense when we consider how even

human relationships are very different depending on who is interacting—simply because every person we interact with is a unique person in unique circumstances. It's also therefore expected—and true for me—that my interactions with the Holy Spirit differ on different occasions.

My experiential understanding of the Holy Spirit has certainly changed with time; early on, I had trouble "sensing" Him and didn't really see a point in trying to interact with Him when I could pray to God or Christ, whom I felt I could relate to better. Eventually, after I had asked God to help me surrender my life to Him so that I could follow Him better, I started to see scripture more clearly. Suddenly, things stuck out that were so obvious and simple that I had no idea how I hadn't seen them before. This was one of my first interactions with the Holy Spirit. I also started to become aware of the Holy Spirit sometimes when I was praying. My thoughts would occasionally be guided, and I could feel that this guiding came from a place that was within me but that wasn't me.

A few times ever The Holy Spirit has been more direct and obvious. Once, I clearly knew upon stepping into a

stranger's house that she was suicidal and was going to kill herself after we left. There was no time for me to have figured that out from her face, information in the room, or even a word—I just knew it the moment I entered. I was so sure that I was compelled to speak immediately and ask her if it was true. She was shocked—she had just prepared some final goodbye letters before my group got there. Then she emotionally broke down and we had a Spirit-led discussion that ended with her in a much better place, reconnected with some people who cared for her and who would walk with her through it.

More frequently in my experience, though, the Holy Spirit is more subtle. It can often be hard for me to discern what is my heart, my head, or my conscience as opposed to what is truly from the Holy Spirit; often I have to ask Him, and it's not always clear right away. Thankfully, though, I can trust in both his demonstrated nature and in what scripture says about Him—that He stays within me, insuring my salvation on the day of judgment, and that He eventually leads all of us believers into all truth. Thank God for such a gift.

Jesus' Gift of the Holy Spirit

Mike Rose

Hays United Methodist Church

The Risen Christ had appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden by the empty tomb, and the hopelessness of the day became the celebration of all time, when Jesus instructed Mary to "go to my brothers, and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary went and announced to them, "I have seen the Lord!" and she told them what he had said to them. Later that evening, the disciples were "sheltering in place" behind locked doors for fear of the Jews, and Jesus came among them and said, "Peace be with you."

Showing his hands and side, the disciples rejoiced, and Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sends me, I send you." Then he breathed on them, saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit..." (John 20:1-23). He did this in response to the promise he made to his disciples before his crucifixion when he said, "I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will

send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all the I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (John 14:25-27).

When the Risen Christ miraculously appeared to his sheltering in place disciples, he said "Peace be with you" twice, reminding them that he had left them his "peace" twice in the upper room on the night before he died. He also promised them the coming of the Holy Spirit, and breathed it upon them as the Risen Christ, as promised. The advent of the Holy Spirit gave them the providence of his Holy presence, peace, and promise in an uncertain time.

The book of Acts of the Apostles affirms that providence, when in Acts chapter 2, on the Day of Pentecost, as the disciples were once again gathered together in one place, "suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the ruse of a violent wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Divided

tongues, as of fire, appeared among them and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability" (Acts 2: 1-4). Boldly, they went out into the streets and began to preach the good news of Jesus Christ in the native language of all who had come for the Feast of Pentecost from many lands. And many - about 3000 - were converted that day.

Today, the Holy Spirit does much the same in this uncertain time. The Spirit is present for us as the promise of the Risen Christ and provides peace regardless of our circumstance. The Spirit calls us to act boldly, sharing the good news found in following Jesus Christ, and the peace and promise that the Spirit brings. My prayer for you today is that you acknowledge the presence, peace, and power of the Holy Spirit to draw you close to God, while continuing to maintain a healthy distance from our neighbors during this time of pandemic. For a while, we must shelter in place, but one day, by God's grace, we will all be back together again, and what a day that will be!