



## A Pentecost Reflection

June 10, 2016

Written By: Rev. Liz Hoy

I have read that Hildegard of Bingen wrote that The Holy Spirit was the greening power of God. The Holy Spirit is this strange and mystical being that weaves in and out of our lives. At times she is nothing more than a waiting hope, lying quietly in our dreams until the time is right. At other times she is a gentle whisper that calls to us in the dark of night, gently guiding us towards something new. And then at times she is a force to be reckoned with, blowing doors of churches, breaking down walls, flipping our lives upside down and pushing us towards something big and wonderful and sometimes even scary. When I imagine the Holy Spirit as the greening power of God, I can't help but wonder if Hildegard had this thought while looking at trees in spring time, right as the signs of life begin to take over the barren branches. This greening power of God, this wonderful life giving, life affirming Holy Spirit, moves through our lives with a rhythm just like we find in nature. Sometimes it is dormant and hidden from our sight, and at other times, an undeniable, visible force of life. To me it is no wonder that as a church we celebrate Pentecost in the season of spring. We, the church, like the earth, get to shake off the weight of winter, making room for new life to spring forth, opening our senses and spirits to new possibilities.

The greening power of God is more than springtime; it is more than leaves and trees, it is God's ability to bring life, to renew us, to renew the church, to renew the world. It is easy to say "we were moved by the Holy Spirit". It takes some of the responsibility off of us in some ways and it makes us feel like we aren't taking the risk. But in the same way we are partners with God, the same way we help to spread God's message, we are also called to be

partners with the Holy Spirit. We will continue to dream in new ways, just like the trees will always produce leaves, plants will continue to grow every spring, new life will burst forth, with a rhythm that has happened for ages. But sometimes nature needs our help. Sometimes we need to help add water, or weed, or give a little extra care to what nature has started. The dreams and visions that the Holy Spirit pushes us toward need us too, we have to feed them, help them to grow, help them change, help them become something bigger and better.

The real challenge I think is to never stop growing and changing, because the work is never finished. Each dream, each goal we have, should push us towards another, push us farther. Each dream should call us to go deeper in than we have before. The Holy Spirit, the leaves of the tree, both represent the greening power of God, the bringing of new life, they are part of a rhythm that doesn't really stop. The Holy Spirit never stops whispering, never stops calling to us. What are you dreaming about now? What comes next? And what comes after that? The world would be such a brown and ugly place if the trees only turned green once. The church really is the same way. One dream, one vision should never be enough. The whisperings of the Holy Spirit should leave us hungry for more, not satisfied with just once.



Liz Hoy grew up in Billings Montana; she spent her childhood attending Mayflower Congregational UCC, and spent her summers at Camp Mimanagish located outside Big Timber, Montana. It was at Camp that Liz heard the call from the Holy Spirit. Throughout high school, college and after Liz was overjoyed to participate not just in the local church but the conference as well. After graduating from the University of Montana in 2006 Liz began working as an activity director in a retirement community. During the summer of 2011, Liz was presented with an interesting opportunity as close friends were moving across the country to Massachusetts and invited her to come along. Even though the idea seemed absurd at first, the Holy Spirit and God had other plans, within weeks she quit her job and then applied to the Masters of Divinity program at Andover Newton. The next three years were a whirlwind of study and growth. Liz has just finished up her first year at First Congregational in Manistee Mi. When not

working in the office, she is continuing her quest to find the perfect bottle of cherry wine, knitting, or walking her 9 year old shih 'Tzu Barley.