

Sunday, May 20, 2018 – Pentecost Sunday/Full of Faith VIII/New Member Sunday
“Disciples of Jesus”

John 15: 26-27; 16: 4-15a

Rev. Derek S. Klemm, Mountain View Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV
Central Image – Single Focus

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

I'm by no means an avid hiker but I like to get out every once in awhile, on a day off, to hike. Often, I'm by myself. Around here, Mt. Charleston is my favorite. Since I'm by myself, I don't do anything too crazy and I tend to stay in relatively well traveled areas, all part of the preparation.

When I first moved here I didn't bring much with me, really. A hat, some sunglasses, a water bottle. Then I realized, "Hey, I'm pretty far up a slot canyon and no one else is here. What would I do if..." Now even on easy little trails I carry first aid, a pocket knife, a straw to filter pathogens from my water, iodine drops, emergency Mylar sheets in case I get stuck out overnight, a magnesium fire starter, a flashlight, batteries, a compass, emergency ration food bars, sunscreen, trail maps, a survival guide book for dummies, extra layers, extra socks, and a few other sundry things... not enough to be heavy, and unlikely to be used, but I feel an awful lot better having it all on hand in case I need it. Going out prepared is important.

You could understand how Jesus' words to His disciples about Him leaving, going to Him who sent Him, would be distressing. Perhaps a little like being caught in the wilderness with no survival gear. Jesus calls it out – "you are filled with sorrow." But Jesus doesn't leave His disciples and abandon them to the elements fomenting all around them. He sends Someone. Some translations say Helper, some say Comforter, some say Counselor. The Greek term is *ov para,klhtoj* – the Paraclete – that is, the Helper or Counselor. Not Jesus' Helper, mind you – our Helper, our Counselor. He is a Comforter for you and me, Jesus' disciples, those for whom Jesus died and rose. Jesus calls Him the Spirit of truth who goes out, or proceeds from the Father. He takes what Jesus did for us and makes it known to us. On this day, the Spirit of Truth came and the Church as we know it, that the Spirit uses to take what Jesus did on the cross and the empty tomb and make it known to us, began.

Yes, on Pentecost we celebrate exactly that – the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, taking all that Jesus did for us and making it known to us. Jesus said, "If I go, I will

send Him to you.” You disciples of Jesus, people Full of Faith in this new resurrected life are not left to your own devices to be good disciples of Jesus. Jesus does not leave us to fend for ourselves and He does not leave us unprepared. He sends us the Helper to show us the things of Jesus. He does this to prepare you for every circumstance, every emergency, every moment.

Better yet, He offers all the supplies for the journey. He pours into you through this Word preached to you now. Through baptismal water. Through Jesus’ body and blood. Through doing life together with other disciples – what a joy to celebrate today with our graduates, our staff, our new members, exactly that – life together as disciples in Jesus Christ. He fills you up full of faith to live a life of boldness, adventure, risk and joy in every circumstance. When you know that you may get marooned and spend a night in the cold, it’s good to know that He has prepared you and He’s here to Help, to Comfort, to Counsel. When you stretch your comfort zone to talk to someone very different from you, to work on your weaknesses, to have a tough conversation, to show compassion to someone you’d normally avoid or be weary of, to recklessly trust His help in His being first priority in your relationships and finances and His mission to seek and save the lost, all bound in love for your neighbor supplants and when He takes over your own agenda and priority, He doesn’t leave you without resources to do it all alone! Every emergency is covered by the Paraclete, one way or another. Even when your reckless love sets you up for rejection, for danger, for hunger, for comfort or even leads to your death, He is prepared to Comfort you and welcome you to a blessed end. Every contingency is covered for the disciples of Jesus. In Jesus’ name, Amen.