

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1-21

The early Celtic Christians called the Holy Spirit “the wild goose.” And the reason why is they knew that you cannot tame him. —John Eldredge

Could the Holy Spirit be dangerous? Nadia Bolz-Weber is an ordained Lutheran pastor, founder of House for All Sinners & Saints in Denver, and something of a public theologian. She tells about a Holy Spirit moment at All Sinners a few years ago. “A local Lutheran church gifted *House for All Sinners and Saints* a full set of used paraments. My church is like every other church’s little sister, so we get a lot of hand-me-downs. As a group of us went through these beautiful altar cloths, we came finally to the red set and found one with an image of a descending dove with completely crazy eyes and claws that looked like talons. Yep. It was as though the Holy Spirit was a raptor.

“Man,” someone said. “We can’t use this one. It makes the Holy Spirit look dangerous.”

Well ... immediately when the Holy Spirit began to move at Pentecost, people start to believe in Jesus. And miracles happened. And then Stephen was murdered. Others were imprisoned. Paul and Silas were flogged and thrown into jail. Others were arrested. Eventually, most of the apostles died due to unnatural causes.

So, yeah, the Holy Spirit would seem to be dangerous. Following the guidance of the Spirit might make us uncomfortable.

Yet, the *Holy Spirit is much more*. One of the Greek words used to identify the Holy Spirit is Paraclete. In the original language, it is a compound word bringing together two words meaning “beside” and “to call.”

The Holy Spirit is one who is called to “come alongside” of us and to be this guiding presence at all times.

The word is rich in its meaning with subtle variations and nuances. This is why Paraclete is sometimes translated *Comforter* (alongside to provide courage, empathy, support); *Advocate* (alongside to represent and advocate for us); *Counselor* (alongside to provide wisdom and knowledge) and *Helper* (alongside to provide assistance).

In any case, as we observe Pentecost Sunday today, let us be aware of the Holy Spirit’s presence in our lives. The Holy Spirit is here to be alongside us wherever we are as a comforter, counselor and helper.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for sending the Holy Spirit so that your presence might be real in my life. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** John 1-3
Monday: 1 Kings 1-4
Tuesday: 1 Kings 5-7
Wednesday: 1 Kings 8-10
Thursday: 1 Kings 11-13
Friday: 1 Kings 14-16
Saturday: Psalms 52-54

Verse to Remember

*“Fools say in their hearts,
 ‘There is no God.’”*

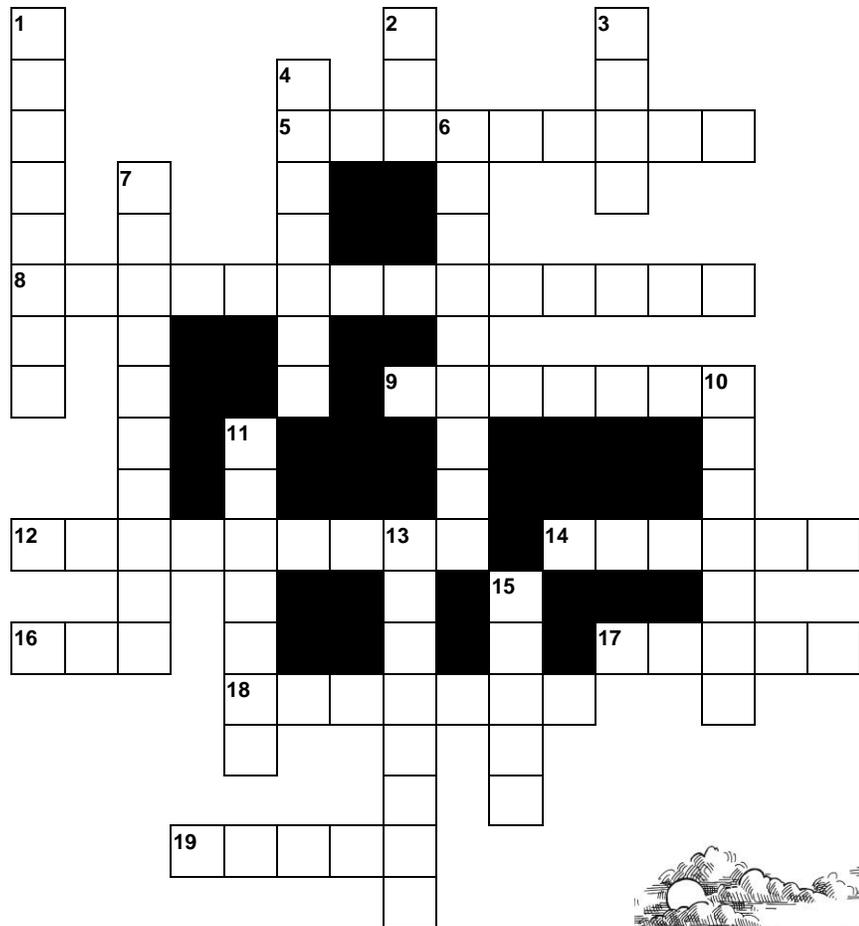
—Psalm 53:1

“The heavens are telling the
 glory of God.”

So declares the psalmist. Study the clues below and complete this crossword that emphasizes the natural phenomena of God’s created world.

Clues:

1. Violent wind and snow storm.
2. Thick, obscuring mist at or near the Earth’s surface.
3. Frozen rain that sometimes falls during rainstorms.
4. Normal weather conditions of a particular place.
5. A flash of light in the sky.
6. Violent tropical storm.
7. Shaking of the Earth’s crust.
8. Bands of light appearing in the night sky; northern lights.
9. A partial or full blockage of the sun or moon.
10. A wearing away of the soil.
11. A large mass of snow and ice.
12. A mass of snow, earth or rocks sliding down a mountain.
13. The degree of dampness or moisture in the air.
14. A spring from which boiling water and steam spews.
15. Condensed water vapor in the atmosphere.
16. Frozen water.
17. Deluge.
18. Time when the sun crosses the equator, making day and night of equal length.
19. Frozen dew or vapor.



Answers:

1. blizzard
2. fog
3. hail
4. climate
5. lightning
6. hurricane
7. earthquake
8. Aurora Borealis
9. eclipse
10. erosion
11. glacier
12. avalanche
13. humidity
14. geyser
15. cloud
16. ice
17. flood
18. equinox
19. frost

