

## Inviting the Holy Spirit

At times, the Spirit fell sovereignly and spontaneously (Ac 2:2; 10:44)  
But at other times, the disciples prayed for the Holy Spirit (Ac 4:31)

So we may proceed to do this with confidence because:

- 1) Scripture teaches that we can ask for the Holy Spirit (Lk 11:13)
- 2) The church was first empowered through the falling of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples (Ac 1:8; 2:4) and the church STILL needs power!
- 3) In the book of Acts, church growth was often triggered with a manifestation of God's power through signs and wonders (Ac 5:12, 14)
- 4) St. Paul rated demonstrations of God's power more highly than brilliant reasoning when preaching the gospel (1 Cor 2:4)
- 5) Miracles, signs, wonders were wrought by the power of God to confirm the preaching of the gospel (Mk 16:20; Ac 14:3; Heb 2:3-4)
- 6) The anointing of power through the Holy Spirit accomplishes the release of the gifts of the Spirit and allows God to initiate specific ministry in a specific place at a specific time (1 Cor 12:11)
- 7) Such anointing blesses those who receive the Holy Spirit and those being ministered to by them. The gospel is confirmed, the Kingdom of God is extended, and the name of Jesus is glorified.

Also, it's part of our Lutheran tradition!

- 1) Invocation at the beginning of worship services—the difference between what we see in the scriptures and what we experience in practice is in the level of expectation! (Too often we don't expect God to do anything and the principle of "according to your faith be it done onto you" holds true. And if God did manifest Himself in most of our worship services, we would be cranky because "that" wasn't on the agenda!
- 2) LSB 497 "Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord" LSB 498 "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" LSB 501 "Come Down, O Love Divine" LSB 681 "Send, O Lord, Your Holy Spirit"

How do we do it?

We aren't locked into any specified track, but there are some things we have learned...

- 1) Sit, stand, lay down, whatever...
- 2) Have an invocation.
- 3) Sing a hymn/worship song

- 4) Welcome the Holy Spirit—thank Him for coming.
- 5) Allow time for the Holy Spirit to do His work. Do not give in to temptation to rush. Be prepared to wait in silence. Be assured that He is active.
- 6) If you are ministering...
  - a. Keep your eyes open! Observe what God is doing.
  - b. Bless and honor what God is doing in the moment.
  - c. Ask the Lord for words of knowledge or other gifts of the Spirit to show what more God wants to do. Through a word of knowledge God may reveal a problem in the person's life He wants to heal/restore at this time, etc.

Some signs of the anointing/working/presence of the Holy Spirit:

- 1) Fluttering of the eyelids
- 2) Feeling of heat
- 3) Shaking or trembling
- 4) Change of breathing pattern
- 5) Weeping or laughing or both combined!
- 6) Failing, unable to stand

How do we close down a time of ministry?

- 1) The leadership must always be open to the amazing variety of alternatives which the Holy Spirit suggests. There is no set way this happens. When the leader senses that this phase of the ministry is complete, he/she may suggest that everyone sits down.
- 2) A song or hymn of thanksgiving may be offered.
- 3) While the group ministry may be completed, there may be a few people who feel "power" or "tingling" or "heat" in their hands, which could indicate the presence of someone who still needs healing (too shy to come up?). You can dismiss the group and offer to remain behind for a few minutes.

Accept the fact that:

- 1) This is an uncomfortable ministry.
- 2) God is often unpredictable and "messy."
- 3) We must let God be God.