



Communion Hymn **C.W. 310 Vs. 1-4 & 15 / TLH 315** sung by the Congregation  
after everyone has communed including the Pastor  
*Nunc Dimittis* (Song of Simeon - Liturgy pg. 24)  
Collect / Prayer (pg. 24)  
Benediction  
Closing Hymn **C.W. 185 / TLH 293** sung by the Congregation.

**May 31, 2020 – Joel 2:28-32** (NIV)

**THEME: The Lord Will Pour Out His Spirit.**

*“And afterward, I will pour out My Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophecy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on My servants both men and women, I will pour out My Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in **Jerusalem** there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the survivors whom the Lord calls.”*

“The New Normal.” How often have you heard that term since these days of COVID-19.

The New Normal is stay at home quarantine - Social Distancing of 6 feet or more – No handshakes – No large gatherings – wear face masks – wear surgical gloves – Ventilators - No visits to the hospitals – No Visits to the Elder Care facilities – Working from home – On-line classes – No world travel.

Today our Sermon Text is taken from the Old Testament Prophet Joel.

Joel was called by the Lord. (Joel = Jehovah is God)

**Joel 1:1** – “The word of the Lord that came to Joel son of Pethuel”

Based upon **verse 32** – we know that Joel was called by The Lord to proclaim the Word of the Lord to the people of Jerusalem and the area of Judah.

It is not certain when Joel lived. Guesses range from 900 B.C – 400 B.C.

His message was going to be something NEW as is indicated in **Joel 1:2**

*“Hear this you elders; listen all who live in the land. **Has anything like this ever happened in your days or in the days of your forefathers?**”*

We might say the same thing about this COVID-19 issue. *“Has anything like this ever happened in your days OR in the days of your forefathers.”*

Joel is a prophet of the Lord, proclaiming that Word to Jerusalem and the area of Judah.

What type of thing was going to happen in Jerusalem and the land of Judah during the days of Joel?

Already in verse four we hear that the news which Joel was to deliver is not something that people who need food to eat, want to hear.

**Joel 1:4** – *“What the locust swarm has left the great locusts have eaten; what the great locusts have left the young locusts have eaten; what the young locusts have left other locusts have eaten.”*

Locusts are going to come and eat all the food so that there is nothing left!

The Lord, through the prophet Joel refers to this swarm of locusts as a nation of invaders:

**Joel 1:6** – “A nation has invaded My land, powerful and without number; it has the teeth of a lion, the fangs of a lioness.”

This army of locust will devastate that land as The Lord says through the prophet Joel:  
**Joel 1:7** – *“It has laid waste MY vines and ruined My fig trees. It has stripped off their bark and thrown it away, leaving their branches white.”*

This plague of locusts will cause grief and sorrow. The severity of this sorrow is describes in the following ways: *“Mourn like a virgin in sackcloth”* (Joel 1:8) *“The priests are in mourning”* (Joel 1:9) *“Despair you farmers.”* (Joel 1:12) *“Surely the joy of mankind is withered away.”* (Joel 1:12)

God’s people in Jerusalem and the surrounding area of Judah had wandered away from the Lord God, and the Lord was going to doing something to lead the people back to HIM.

This terrible infestation of Locusts is also a preview and sign of the Last Great Judgment which is yet to come and was a call to repentance before that Great and Dreadful Day.

I have never experienced a Locust plague. But an observer in the 1960’s observed a swarm of Locusts in Sudan, Africa and described it thus:

“A hint of grayness slid along the sand, vague as a touch of smoke. Then, as we watched, it gathered into a wisp and began to spill over the dune slopes .... The wisp quickened and spread in the wind until it became a cloud of locusts three miles wide that swept straight toward us. .... Flying locusts the size of index fingers bounced off my face, tangled in my hair, and grabbed at my shirt with twitchy legs. ... All around us locusts struggled for room on the plants; they pushed, kicked, and shoved each other, semaphoring furiously with excited antennae. They ravaged the ears on top. The tugged at the leaves. They gnawed at the stems with such frenzy that we could hear the faint sound of thousands of tiny jaws grinding and chewing, as if someone were scraping a carrot.” (The people’s Bible on Joel from NPH by Pastor Eichmann)

Imagine the New Normal after a plague of Locusts? Lack of food and with it hunger and starvation.

New Normal’s is NOT something new.

When God created the heavens and the earth and Adam and Eve and placed them in the garden of Eden, there was NO Death!

There was no sin, there was no shame, there was no need for clothing, there was no need for grave diggers and gravesites.

The New Normal in the World at the time of Adam and Eve began when Satan, who was once a good angel, rebelled against God.

There was war in heaven, and Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels, but the great dragon, that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan lost their place in heaven. (Rev. 12:7-12)

There was a new normal **in heaven**. It was minus Satan and his evil horde of angels.

Satan then went to the Garden of Eden and led Adam and Eve into sin.

Now there was DEATH in the World.

There was Shame. Adam and Eve needed clothes.

And at the age of 930 year, Adam died. (Gen. 5:5)

A NEW Normal occurred.

Mankind went from No such thing as death in the world, to sin and death entering the world.

Here and now, in the year 2020, death has become such a common thing, that most people think that death is NORMAL. It is not what God intended when He created the Heavens and the Earth.

In the book of Acts 2:1-47 Something NEW Occurred.

There was a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples who were waiting in Jerusalem, just as the Lord Jesus had instructed them to do.

This special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on **that Pentecost Day** enabled the disciples to suddenly be able to speak in various different languages of the world, without having to spend month or years of studying.

The disciples were able to speak in the native tongue of:

**Acts 2:9-11** - “Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs.”

It was through the Words of the Lord which the disciples proclaimed that 3,000 were brought to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in ONE DAY! The Holy Spirit was at work through the Words of Peter’s Sermon.

During the course of Peter’s Sermon on that Pentecost Day, Peter quoted these Words of our sermon text from the Prophet Joel. (This by the way is one way in which we know that Joel belongs in the Holy Bible as part of the Canon.)

**Acts 2:17-21** (NIV) – “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

The Holy Spirit being active is not something New.

In Genesis 1:2 – “And The Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the deep.”

The Holy Spirit is God, equal with God the Father and God the Son.

Yet, the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to bring the Message of Salvation in Christ, to many people, in a spectacular way.

That Message of Salvation was presented and proclaimed clearly and plainly by Peter as he states:

**Acts 2:22-24** – “Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.”

**Acts 2:32-33** – “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

**Acts 2:38-39** – “Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Because of what the Lord Jesus has done for you and I on the cross of Calvary you we can look forward to the Day as recorded by the Apostle John in the last book of the Bible – Revelation - “He Who was seated on the throne said, I AM making everything NEW! Then He said, Write this down for these words are trustworthy and true. He said “It is done. I AM the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink WITHOUT COST from the spring of the water of life.” (Rev. 21:5-6)

In the New Normal of heaven we can look forward to our lowly bodies being transformed so that they will be like the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Philip 3:21)

So do not get to comfortable with the New Normal, here on planet earth. It will end.

The New Normal of Heaven will last forever, because of Jesus our Risen Savior.

And the reason that we know and believe this, is because the Lord God has poured out His Holy Spirit into Your heart. AMEN

