

SERMON – Sunday, May 25, 2008
The Very Reverend Dr. Philip C. Linder

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be always acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer. Amen.

“Summertime is finally here, that old ballpark man is back in gear,” sings country music star Kenney Chesney! Perhaps not officially by the calendar date, but certainly symbolically by Memorial Day Weekend and the Trinity Summer worship schedule. And we must pause amongst this weekend’s events to give great thanks for the men and women throughout our history who have given their lives for the freedom and democracy that we enjoy this day as Americans. We especially remember the more than 4,000 men and women who have given their lives in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There are significant events that happen to us in life that have the possibility of determining the course of the rest of our lives. These events are defining moments whose implications we may carry with us throughout life. Although we cannot consciously remember it, our birth, is just such an event. Along with our birth, is the way that we were held, cared for, loved, spoken to, and all of what we were exposed to in those early days and months, that have significantly shaped us.

Apart from our birth, these significant events happen in different periods of our life from early childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, all the way through to our senior years. And these events of significance are unique and different for each of us. What they all share in common is their power over shaping who we are in this present day.

I know that personally within this last year and a half, being present with my mother during her final days battling cancer, and my most recent mission trip to Uganda have deepened my faith in Jesus Christ, and will be shaping my life and ministry for the rest of my days. Yesterday we had lunch with our daughter Gabrielle who has just returned from a ten-day Christian medical mission trip to South Africa, and she spoke as well of how that event has not only changed her, but will continue to shape her future.

We are now in the season of Pentecost, and the birth of the Church on Pentecost was without question a

as well. (Matthew 6) As I prepared this sermon, I heard these words differently now in light of my days with the children of Uganda who have empty stomachs every day.

It was the great philosopher Plato who said, *The life which is unexamined is not worth living.* What significant events have shaped and defined your life? And are the acceptance of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit in your life one of them? The significant events of our lives are not all matters of the Church, but they are all matters of our faith in God and Jesus Christ, and how we choose to lead our lives. What significant events and challenges have shaped your life? Have you responded to those significant events in a way that has helped define your faith in Jesus Christ and the way in which you lead your life today? Do you lead your life in an anxious state, worrying about what you have and what others think or say about you? Jesus calls us to a greater life, a life that strives for the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness.

The great Christian, Albert Schweitzer, once remarked, *Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.* The power and presence of the Holy Spirit gives you the potential to take the significant events and challenges of your life and have them make a difference in the way that you live your life in Jesus Christ and serve God and God's people—reflect upon those events this day. God gave the early Christians the Holy Spirit, the same Holy Spirit that God gives us, so that they and we might lead lives in a way that would serve to bring others to Jesus Christ. Examine your life and consider whether or not you are doing the same? Today, in this service of Eucharist on our first Summer Sunday schedule in the season of Pentecost, invite the Holy Spirit to fill your heart and soul, bring others to Jesus Christ and serve only him. +***Amen.***