

Today is a special day! It's special not primarily because of the fact we are dedicating our building this afternoon (though that in-itself would make it special!).

It's special because it's the Day of Pentecost. We decided to dedicate a building today because it's Pentecost – we're not celebrating Pentecost because we're dedicating a building!

We have to be careful not to mix the two up. I'm guessing that the event Luke describes – the Spirit lighting on the disciples, and the birth of a new community – is not about building buildings, it's about building faith communities.

Or, perhaps, it's the other way around: allowing faith communities to be built – not trying to control or manipulate the outcomes of Spirit-led actions but rather getting out of the way of the work of the Spirit.

“The Spirit”, Jesus told Nicodemus, “blows where it will”. Not only do we not know where the wind comes from or goes to, but we can't control it, either. So it is with the Spirit, he says..

And so it will be with this building. We all may have views on what we should do with it, but the truth is that we'd be much better off if we stepped to one side and let the Spirit have room to do Her work!

But perhaps that's not the best metaphor either. Perhaps it's more that we should get on the bus, even if we're sitting at the back and not in the driver's seat, because the other choice might be to be that we'd be run over by it!

There is active participation on our part, but we need to be guided by the Spirit. Life – so the saying goes – is what happens when you're making other plans!

Pentecost, therefore, isn't about watching others do the work but being empowered to do that work as partners with God in the great enterprise of our lives: to proclaim – by word and example, the Good News about God, in Jesus.

Later today We will lay another 'corner stone' in the history of this community of faith – of our community of faith. We should enjoy the moment! We should take a while to relax and recognize the herculean effort that went into getting here.

But then we should remember the words of the two white-robed messengers to the gathered friends of Jesus, which I paraphrase like this: “Enough naval-gazing already! There's work to be done!”
Amen.