



From Pastor David Franks : *Following the celebration of Pentecost on May 23 we begin the long Time after Pentecost portion of the church year, a time in which we honor the work of the third person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit. How is the Holy Spirit viewed in the Lutheran tradition? Following is the second of two articles, gleaned from ELCA resources, which can help answer that question.*

The Holy Spirit as the **Giver of Life** has a central place in Christian revelation.

ELCA Lutherans confess in the words of the [Nicene Creed](#) (A.D. 325) that:

...We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets...

In the Latin-speaking (Western) Church, the phrase *and the Son* (in Latin *filioque*) was first added to the Nicene Creed at the Synod of Toledo in Spain in 447. The formula was used in a letter from Pope Leo I to the members of that synod, responding to heresies they were confronting. (Primarily, it was added to the Creed in order to oppose the Arian heresy, which taught that the Son was a creature and not God.) At the third synod of Toledo in 589, the ruling Visigoths, who had been Arian Christians, submitted to the Catholic Church. They were obliged to accept the Nicene Creed with the *filioque*.**

It is the essence of the Gospel that the new life in Christ from beginning to end is solely the work of the Spirit. The Spirit's essential work of bestowing God's grace of forgiveness is pure gift, renewing us so that Christ may dwell in us. For Christians, the Spirit makes the living and life-changing Christ a personally experienced reality. In John 14:16 we are told by Jesus that the Spirit is our Advocate, God's "face" which is given to dwell with us forever. John goes on to say, "You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you" (John 14:17). Thus the Spirit, whose intrinsic nature of vital ongoing divine activity is recognized within the early church, comes to humankind from both Father and Son.

In Church and World ELCA Lutherans concur with Martin Luther that "the Holy Spirit is among humans in a twofold way":

"First through a universal activity, by which [the Holy Spirit] preserves them as well as God's other creatures. ...' (Thus, the Spirit's activity is not limited to the sphere of faith and the church, but that all activity in which God engages with reference to the world and humankind is mediated through the Spirit.)

"Secondly, the Holy Spirit 'is gift from Christ' to believers. One can establish the principle that, for Luther, a relationship with God is possible only through the Spirit -- understood in the strict sense as a person of the Trinity. He believed that there is not a single theological doctrine in which the activity of the Spirit is not fundamental. The activities of the Spirit are personal in nature: speaking, bearing witness, and uniting believers with one another in one body. Apart from the Spirit there is no activity of God in the world or in human life, no living Word, no grace of Baptism, no real presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, no conversion or regeneration, no faith or fellowship in Christ."

"The Gospel also ascribes to the Holy Spirit the creation and preservation of the Christian community, the church. Through this 'communion of saints,' which has been entrusted with the Word and the Sacraments, the Spirit creates faith and fellowship, and thus carries out God's purpose for humankind." The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control (Galatians 5:22).*