

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Recently, I was visiting with Judy, and our conversation turned to peonies. I told her that my mother had some beautiful peony bushes in the backyard of our family home. She planted them shortly after my parents moved into the house, and we enjoyed them year-after-year when they bloomed. We often brought some inside to set on our kitchen table. I can still remember their beauty and lovely fragrance!

I showed Judy a picture of Hidden Springs Flower Farm which I visited a little over a week ago with my cousins and aunt. It is in Caledonia, Minnesota. As you can see from the attached photo, none of the plants were yet in bloom. But we will soon see them blossoming in our local gardens. When we do, I hope one or more of our gardeners will bring some to church, so we can all enjoy their beauty and fragrance during worship.

Judy mentioned that Lois had told her that a peony can also be called a "Pentecost Rose." I was intrigued by this connection to Pentecost, so I looked for more information online, and found this story--

Called *pfingstrose* in German, peony literally means "Pentecost Rose." Pentecost should be such a time for us- exploding with love for God in thanksgiving for the gift of the Holy Spirit [the Advocate]...God sent us a part of himself to remain with us, even until the end of days.... ("Peony as the Pentecost Rose," Behold Publications, LLC., online, May 30, 2017.)

This Sunday is Pentecost. The color of the day is red, and symbols you will see include flames and doves descending. While we probably won't have any peonies on the back altar during worship, we can still remember the Germanic roots of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and God's gift to us of the Pentecost Rose. Thanks be to God.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy