



## **St. Luke's East Hampton Reflections from Fr. Ben**

May 21, 2026

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

At that moment, Christianity went global and moved beyond being a small Jewish reform movement to a world-wide religion. In many ways, Pentecost was the birth of the church.

I grew up in the suburbs of Chicago and with deep roots there on both sides of my family. When I was very little, I learned about “the Chicago melting pot,” the idea that people from all over the world had come there and bonded together to make it a great city, second (perhaps) only to New York. I have since been told that a melting pot isn't the best metaphor and that rather than an amalgam or “puree” a better image might be a stew in which individual pieces maintain their identity while flavors are blended together. That's fine with me. There's nothing I enjoy more than a hearty stew.

The founders of our country chose “e pluribus unum” (out of many, one) as the motto in the national seal. (“One Nation Under God” was adopted in 1956 in response to the Cold War.) Though the founders were more Deist than Christian, they would have understood that e pluribus unum embodied both Christian and Enlightenment ideals. From a Pentecost perspective, they would have understood that “e pluribus unum” and “In God we trust” actually meant the same thing. The Feast of Pentecost challenges us to ask what our church – and our nation – would look like if we understood that as well.

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