



FROM THE PASTOR

Acts 2:1-21

¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." ¹² And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine."

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;

²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

If your photo album is like mine, not all the pictures are the same size. Snapshots are usually about 3.5 inches square. But some are bigger, 5 by 7's or 8 by 10's. Often these are pictures of special events like weddings, graduations or formal portraits. Today, our picture from Acts is one of the big ones. It started out as a holy day for Israel and became a holy day for Christians, Jew or Gentile, everywhere throughout the world. The new thing that the Prophet Joel proclaimed at least 350 years before Jesus was born was taking place. All of the events around Jesus—His earthly birth, His death, His resurrection and His ascension to His heavenly throne—are culminating in the event in our picture. Not too long before this happened Jesus promised that it would happen. Jesus said in John 10:25-26: ***"These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in***



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my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. In fact, John the Baptist told the world to expect this even before Jesus was publically known (Matthew 3:11): ***"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."***

We call this event the 'Day of Pentecost' because Pentecost is the holiday on which the event happened, but it is what happened on that one particular Pentecost that gives our picture its meaning. The record of the Holy Spirit touching humanity in many individual and small group settings is seen throughout scripture. What happened in our picture was different. The Holy Spirit was coming through the proclaimed Word of God and the proclaimed Word of God was coming through the Holy Spirit. It was coming from the Apostles—the church—and it was available to all who heard to believe and to accept or reject.

Now, I'm preaching from St. Paul's via YouTube on their website this Sunday. So, I don't want to steal my own thunder or, perhaps more accurately, my own mumbling, in what I write here. I just want to point out how vivid and poignant this picture is. It gives meaning to all the pictures that will come after, all the way through the amazing pictures of the book of Revelation, especially the glorious pictures in chapters 21 and the first part of 22 in that book of Revelation. So let me end with the amazingly beautiful words of Revelation 21:5-7: ***And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.***

In Christ's service,
Pastor Brian Shirey

Post Scripts:

- † This Pentecost Sunday will be the last service we will share with St. Paul's. On June 7th we will be gathering in Centennial Hall at St. Luke's. More information is forthcoming.
- † Our lessons for Sunday, June 7 (The Holy Trinity) are:
 - First Lesson: Genesis 1:1—2:4a
 - Psalm: Psalm 8
 - Second Lesson: Acts 2:14a, 22-36
 - Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20.
- † As we look to restoring worship at St. Luke's I want to continue to express my thanks to Pastor Shawn Smith and the good folks of St. Paul's for sharing their service time and their expertise with us. Their kind sharing with us kept us going through this difficult time and I will appreciate their friendly welcome for the rest of my life.
- † Keep praying for one another and pray for our President, Governor and other leaders especially as we begin to reopen our economy and our lives. Pray for health care workers and others on the front line of this contagion. And pray for our farmers and food processors who keep us fed.