



## 39A Pentecost Bible Study Let anyone

Sunday, May 31, 2020 | Easter | Day of Pentecost  
Year A

<i>First Reading</i>	Acts 2:1–21 or Numbers 11:24–30
<i>Psalm</i>	Psalm 104:24–34, 35b
<i>New Testament</i>	1 Corinthians 12:3b–13 or Acts 2:1–21
<i>Gospel</i>	John 20:19–23 or John 7:37–39

### Acts 2:1-21

On the day of Pentecost Jesus' disciples experience being filled dramatically with God's Holy Spirit, the culmination of many centuries of waiting for the fulfilment of God's promise, made known through Old Testament prophets.

**This week's resources explore:** the unifying power of the Spirit.

### Welcome and opening prayer

#### A gathering prayer

Dear Lord, we gather in the name of Jesus  
Dear Lord,  
we gather in the name of Jesus  
and in the power of the Spirit to worship you.  
We bring gifts of speaking, of listening, of music,  
of prayerfulness, of knowledge, and of wisdom.  
May our gifts be united to honour you and may each  
of us receive from you that which we need.

#### A prayer of approach

Pour out your Spirit, loving Lord,  
that your sons and your daughters may hear your prophetic word.  
Pour out your Spirit, loving Lord,  
that your sons and your daughters may know how to live according to your ways.  
Pour out your Spirit, loving Lord,  
that your sons and your daughters may worship you  
in Spirit and in Truth.

**Amen.**

### Introduction

After Christmas and Easter, Pentecost ought to be the most holy day in the Christian year.

To be sure, we would not be here today if it were not for the manger in Bethlehem. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Who can doubt that this is the most important statement in all of literature? And of course, the cross and the empty tomb must forever remain at the centre of our faith. Without the Easter event we have no salvation and no hope.

But how would we know about the manger and how would we know about the cross and the empty tomb if it were not for Pentecost when the wind of God blew and the church was born?

## Reading

*Acts 2:1–21(NIV)*

**2** When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup> When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. <sup>7</sup> Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? <sup>8</sup> Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? <sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome <sup>11</sup> (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” <sup>12</sup> Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

<sup>13</sup> Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

<sup>14</sup> Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. <sup>15</sup> These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! <sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> “ ‘In the last days, God says,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in the heavens above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

<sup>20</sup> The sun will be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls  
on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

## Exegesis

The miraculous events of the day of Pentecost reflect the stories of long ago: Elijah and the sound of the wind, Moses and the mountain enveloped in smoke and lightning. But now these experiences have come indoors and the unapproachable has come close. The result is not fear and trembling but communication – speech in many different languages. The message shared is that God has poured out his Spirit upon all people. This includes people who would have been having a low status – such as daughters, women, and slaves. In fact, ‘slaves would include foreigners, and so people of other cultures and religions too. The use of the expression ‘all flesh’ underlines the universality and the importance of this moment. The people in Jerusalem at that time were witnessing the beginning of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel.



- Where might the water be flowing from, and to, in this image?
- Is the unifying power of the Spirit perceptible in your church life?
- ...and in your own life?

## A sending out prayer

May the power of the Spirit challenge you.

May the peace of the Spirit comfort you.

May the presence of the Spirit enable you to live in love and service in the name of Christ.

Amen.

## Live your faith

Pay particular attention to how you use water this week, and think about how you might change your habits to conserve it more. Each time you use water, pray that God’s Spirit might be like living water in your life.