

## *Invite Others*

Acts 2:1-21 (June 5, 2022)

### *Acts 2:1-21*

<sup>2</sup>When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

<sup>5</sup>Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup>And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. <sup>7</sup>Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” <sup>8</sup>And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? <sup>9</sup>Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup>Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup>Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” <sup>12</sup>All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” <sup>13</sup>But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

<sup>14</sup>But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. <sup>15</sup>Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. <sup>16</sup>No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: <sup>17</sup>‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. <sup>18</sup>Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. <sup>19</sup>And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. <sup>20</sup>The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. <sup>21</sup>Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

### *Historical Context*

The coming of the Spirit is joined by two manifestations — “a noise from the sky, like a strong blowing wind (2:2) and divided tongues (that looked) like fire” (2:3). In describing the event as accompanied by these natural phenomena, Luke is echoing the theophany scenes of the OT, in which God’s presence is accompanied by similar signs (Exodus 19:16; Judges 5:4–5; cf. Psalms 18:7–15; 29:3–9).

### *Theme: Invite Others*

This gift of the Holy Spirit that marks the birth of the church is a gift expressly for those *outside the Jesus movement*, those who had lived displaced in a language-world not their own. It is a spiritual gift given not for the disciples themselves, but *for the outsiders* listening. God’s gift reaches outward to those outside of this immediate circle of Jesus followers. It seems that one mark of the Holy Spirit’s gifting is that it empowers us to connect to others.

And this gift given for the sake of others can sound crazy, ridiculous, so that “others sneer” (verse 13). Peter responds to the sneer-ers by calling on the ancient prophetic tradition. He doesn’t hesitate to claim this Pentecost experience as the fulfillment of Joel’s inspiring vision of

what it looks like for God's Spirit to be poured out "on all flesh" (verses 17-21). "All flesh" means young and old, women and men, slave and free. All will prophesy, which means speaking God's word into reality. Peter says, "it's happening now!" The Jesus community, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, challenges existing religious norms just as Joel did. These dreams and visions turn the Jesus community outward; proclamation through outsiders' mother tongues.

Pentecost was the Jewish celebration 50 days after Passover that marked the giving of the Torah and was also the time of giving first fruits at the temple. The gathered disciples would already be celebrating God's gifts, unaware that another gift was coming. This new gift of mother tongues turned them outward, toward those outside their movement.

The church birthed at Pentecost carries this deep DNA, to make a home in God's life and invite others, in a way they can understand, to make a home in God's life, too.