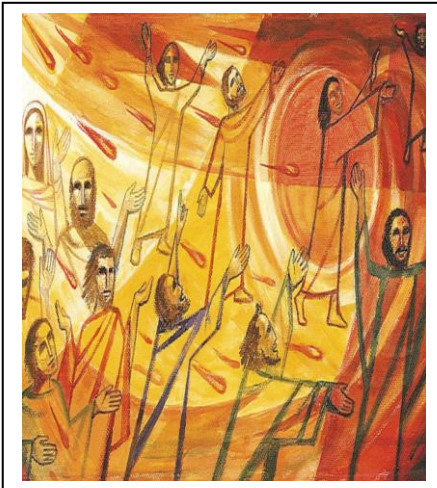


Series: **Come Holy Spirit!**(3) **Pentecost – Wind, Fire, and Speech**

Let us start in Prayer: *Creator God, who formed humanity from dust, breathe in us again. Revive us and sanctify us by the power of your Spirit. Set our heart on fire with the good news of your Gospel.*

Read Acts 2:1-11

The celebration of Pentecost is directly connected to Easter and Ascension, and it might be helpful to spend some time considering these connections, and others, where the Holy Spirit is recorded having dramatic impact. From our passage, *pause to consider just how dramatic this must have been for those 'gathered all together.'* Were they able to even stand being pushed by a violent **wind**? Unlike the gentle and exclusive giving of the Spirit to the disciples directly by Jesus (**read John 20:19-23**), this outpouring of the Holy Spirit was for all Jesus' followers; and there was no possibility of misunderstanding what they were experiencing. Note, all those gathered were together both before and after (v. 42-47) this happening; the Holy Spirit unites and does not divide.

The religious authorities of the day thought that the execution of Jesus would put out the **fire** of the revolution he was promoting, but **Easter** was intended and given to set the world ablaze, a **fire** never to be extinguished. Was this why those present could best describe what happened as 'tongues of **fire**' that set them alight? *We know that fire can both blaze and smoulder, yet still be hot. I wonder how many of us are happy just to smoulder and let others blaze. Is this what was intended for me and you? If not, why is that? Is there a condition between smouldering and blazing?* Paraphrasing Tom Wright, whilst it's important that someone is tracking the hurricane, it is far more important that we're out in the **wind**, letting it sweep through our life, our heart, our imagination; someone whose heart is on **fire** with the love of God.

At **Ascension** Jesus moves back into heaven, taking with him, in part, an earthly life. At **Pentecost**, the Holy Spirit brings, in part, heaven down to earth, to do heaven's work right here. It seems that this is not to make God's people just 'spiritual', but to provide the power and guidance to continue Jesus' revolutionary work with the sheer energy of heaven. *Is that how you feel? If not, what more does Jesus need to do?*

The gift of tongues features in our passage, using **speech** from a different communication system. God moves mysteriously among his people, dealing with each individual in a different and unique way. Also, that God longs to give the Holy Spirit to people of faith who ask (Luke 11:13), and the gifts of the Spirit are given at God's discretion. Some are given the gift of communicating in tongues, and some are not. This has nothing to do with honour or reward, but everything to do with equipping us to serve our Lord as he intends. *Have you experienced any disunity between those with the ability to use and understand tongues, and those without this gifting?*

*"What the Spirit will do when he comes is anybody's guess. Be prepared for **wind** and **fire**, for some fairly drastic spring-cleaning of the dusty and cold rooms of one's life ... the form and direction that any particular spirit-led life will take will be (ultimately, and assuming obedience and faith) the one that will enable that person, uniquely, to bring glory to God."* (Tom Wright)