

DAY OF PENTECOST - MAY 31

Describe a time when something completely unexpected happened, and you were surprised (ideally, in a good way). *Note: If you are with a group, have each person take a turn sharing.*

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1-12

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.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

Reflection

Today we celebrate Pentecost, the day when the Holy Spirit burst into the church with mighty gusts of wind and tongues of fire! Take a look at the illustration. These tongues of fire sat above everyone's heads and gave people the power to speak in other languages. Suddenly, everyone from different nations could hear the good news about Jesus in their own language. Before he ascended to heaven, Jesus told his followers God would send the Spirit to be with them after he was gone. This was probably not what they expected.

Stories throughout the Bible are especially full of surprises. God surprised Moses when God spoke to him through a burning bush. When God's people were wandering in the desert, God provided manna, food to keep them nourished when there wasn't anything else around. Jesus did all sorts of miraculous signs and wonders during his time on earth; he walked on water, healed people, and rose from the dead! Pentecost is another amazing story that demonstrates how God surprises and delights us.

Discussion Questions

1. What kind of surprises can you think of? What face do you make when you're surprised? What does it feel like?
2. Have you ever gotten a big surprise? What was it?
3. Does God ever surprise you? How?

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for sending your Holy Spirit among us in surprising and delightful ways. Help us look for how your surprising presence in our lives and the world can help us share the gospel with one another. **Amen.**