

PREPARING AT HOME

May 14-20, 2018

Focus reading: Acts 2:1–21 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=388125188>)

Other lectionary readings: Psalm 104:24–35b; Romans 8:22–27; John 15:26–27; 16:4b–15

Theme: Alive in Love

This week we read the dramatic story of Pentecost, when the church comes to life and is “on fire” so to speak for Jesus! Lest we get caught up in the sensational “special effects” of the drama, we need to pause and reflect on what the Spirit of God is saying to the church universal through this story. First, we note that the believers “were all together in one place” (verse 1). Acts 1:15 mentions 120 people (Perhaps it is not insignificant that this number is ten times twelve!). This is not a close-knit group of friends or a community that regularly worship together. This is a diverse group of people who come from different places, who speak different languages, and bring different life experiences; but they have Jesus in common. They are a diverse group of people who, apart from Jesus, would not be together. So, the first thing we notice is that this diverse group has gathered as one community, defined by faith. Second, we note that each person hears the testimony about “God’s deeds of power” (verse 11) in his or her own language. “None had to change languages or cultures to hear the good news; none had to become a different person to experience the presence of Christ. The Spirit of God, working in and through the believers, came to people where they were in the language of home and heart. (*Seasons of the Spirit™* SeasonsFUSION Lent • Easter 2018, p. 204) In this dramatic story, God’s creative Spirit is at work, teaching us a lesson in diversity and community.

CELEBRATING PENTECOST AT HOME

Pentecost is called the “birthday of the Christian church.” Celebrate with a birthday party, perhaps after dinner. Have cupcakes. Decorate with red or fire colors. Light candles and talk about the description of the “tongues of fire” (verse 3). Sing “Happy birthday” to the church. Think about what gift you might want to offer.

WIND AND FIRE

The surprising events of Pentecost are described with the help of some very vivid metaphors. Go outside on a breezy day. Can you hear the wind? How is God’s Spirit like the wind? Light candles. Why would the flames be described as “tongues”? What colors do we see in the flames? How is God’s Spirit like fire? The sanctuary will be decorated for Pentecost. Talking about the metaphors in advance will help your child recognize the fire colors and other symbols in the sanctuary on Sunday.

PRAYER

Spirit of God,

We give thanks for the church across the world and through all ages.

Fill us with your power and love that we might tell others

The Good News of your deeds of power in ways that all might understand.

Amen.

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