

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David



June 04, 2017 Pentecost

Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for God to act. Ps.37: 7
(Silent meditation)

Lord, help me to relax. Take from me the tension that makes peace impossible. Take from me the fears that do not allow me to venture. Take from me the worries that blind my sight. Take from me the distress that hides your joy. Silence

Help me to know that I am with you, that I am in your care, that I am in your love, that you and I are one.

Hymn: Spirit of the Living God 400

God of wind and fire, when you send your Spirit, we are created anew. God of mighty oceans and still waters, when we receive your baptism, we are born anew. God of bread and wine, when we eat at your table, we are nourished anew. So pour out your Spirit. Let sacred waters flow. Fill us with holy food. May our hearts and our hands be open wide to receive your gifts of life. Amen.

A time of Confession: *In my words and in my silence in my prayers and in my meditation in my joy and in my sorrow in my despair and in my hope,*

may I know your glory may I sing to you, to your glory. May we rejoice with you this day! And may the peace that surpasses all understanding, the peace that calms my troubled heart, the peace that soothes my fears, the peace that you give. For the peace that you give, may we rejoice with you this day
Assurance: We thank God for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Holy Spirit, enlighten our thinking, strengthen our will, guide us and give us courage that we may serve God by living faithfully where we are, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: Spirit of God (1-3)

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Introduction to reading:

Language marks transitions and makes things happen for all of us, and this includes the faith journey. Language for some is easy, while for others difficult. Nonetheless, one way or another, speaking 'spirit-language' is a large slice of our Christian heritage...
Covenant Corner

Acts 2:1-21 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? All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

Hymn: Spirit of God (4-5)

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Each of us has heard the Acts story of Pentecost many times. Each year it is the First Pentecost Reading in the Revised Common Lectionary. Consequently, we exegete few texts more than Acts 2. We know that a major influence of Acts 2 is a Pentecostal faith-language highlighted by, "As they were all together in one place, divided by nationality and race, suddenly they were all able to understand numerous other languages." God's spirit made Pentecost happen. This Holy Spirit not only appeared to the eyes as tongues as of flames of fire, but the spirit also sounded like the rush of a mighty wind to the ears. The many "known" languages undid Babel's tower story (see Genesis 11).

Imagine what it would have been like to be gathered with people who spoke so many different languages—to be in a room with a bunch of people you couldn't understand for worship.

- 1. What might it feel like to suddenly understand one another?**
- 2. Sometimes it is hard to understand even when we speak the same language! Is there anything you have a hard time understanding during worship?**
- 3. Tell a story about a time you finally understood something.**

The task of learning the whole language of faith, both in its joy and in its sorrow, is difficult. There should be no argument about this difficulty! The day of Pentecost, however, reminds us that it is God who sends the spirit upon the people. Speaking faith language is not dependent upon our own strength or wisdom, but rather our faith-language God offers as a precious gift—given, received, and used by people in the community of faith—for the whole people of God. (David Mosser)

“This is the promise of Pentecost: now we no longer depend solely on Jesus to be the one who understands. Now we, too, understand. And now we, too, can speak and our voices can spread the Spirit of understanding.” Nancy Rockwell, *A Bite in the Apple*

Focus Questions:

- 1. What are the different kinds of "languages" spoken in church today?*
- 2. In what ways do you share Peter's experience, of interpreting the present moment in your life through the lens of Scripture?*
- 3. How do our differences enrich our experience of unity?*
- 4. What is the greatest obstacle to good communication?*
- 5. How much does the Pentecost story relate to the life of your church today?*

Invitation:

*Come now and see the wonder of life and love poured out for us. **May the Gifts of the Holy Spirit bring fire to the earth so that the presence of God may be seen in a new light, in new places, in new ways.***

Hymn: Break now the bread of life (verses 1-2)

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Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. **God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise.*** (Prayer continues) *Holy Spirit, we pray you that you would fill our hearts with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. **Renew us and kindle the fire of faith brightly within us. Make us bold witnesses to the truth of the Holy Scriptures which you inspired.***

Hymn: Break now the bread of life (verses 3)

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Communion

Prayer after Holy Communion

*Spirit of God our wise counsellor, our constant companion. **May our own hearts burst into flame so that no obstacle, no matter how great, ever obstructs the message of the God within each of us.***

Hymn: May the Lord bless you

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Holy God, for all of the ways you speak to us – in rushing wind, in dancing flames, in words we understand, and in all that transcends language, we give thanks. Give us courage to speak your love, everywhere we go, to everyone we meet. Amen.

