

Acts 2:1-21
"Proclaim the Good News"
Pentecost

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Our Redeemer Lutheran
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Grace, mercy and peace to you from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

[Intro]

They were bewildered.

Many of us have traveled across the United States.

As you are traveling – many if not all of us – look at the license plates of other cars to see where they are from. We may do this while driving or when you pull over to eat or fill the tank full of gas.

Just a couple weeks ago, I was enjoying “Taco Tuesday” at Casa Azul in Coralville. And, lone and behold, as I walked back to my car, I spotted a car with an Indiana license plate. My senses perked up! Then with laser-like precision my eyes zoomed in at the bottom right of the plate and spotted a ‘34’. That’s Howard County – that car was from Kokomo, my home town! I thought for a second if I wanted to go back in to the restaurant to search out who had that car, but then I thought against it.

Have you ever been bewildered?

You may have been bewildered in a far-away place. You are in, for example, New Mexico and you hear someone talking about the University of Iowa. Or, you hear strangers speaking about Kalona. Or, you hear strangers speaking about the Amanas. Or, you possibly hear strangers talking about the Hoover Presidential Museum.

What do you do? Your ears perk up! You hear them speaking your language. You know what they are talking about!

Have you lived through a situation similar to that? Have you had that bewildered, huh, feeling?

[Bewilderment]

Well, ‘huh’ were the thoughts that those Jews visiting Jerusalem had. Earlier in the day, Jesus’ disciples were filled with the promised Holy Spirit – and they began to speak in other languages.

Those visiting Jews were bewildered. They were perplexed.

They were hearing words that they were accustomed to. They were in awe that these words were coming from people from Galilee, because they would not be familiar with these languages.

“Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?” (Acts 2:6)

With this amazement, the many visiting Jews were curious for the words being spoken were not Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek words at all, but belonged to the local languages of Egypt, Asia Minor and Italy – from three different continents. The words spoken had no Galilean dialect. Their words were not babbling, but were coherent and intelligible words of foreign languages. The disciples sounded like native speakers.

These travelers are from all around the world – and they are hearing and understanding what is being said so very far from their home!

The utterances of the disciples had achieved a useful purpose in attracting a large crowd around them.

Some from the large crowd said, ***“We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.”*** (Acts 2:11b)

This was not a miracle of hearing, but of speaking. The disciples were declaring God’s wonders in the native languages of the visiting Jews.

Through the Holy Spirit, the disciples were proclaiming the works of God and everyone understood!

There was no longer any confusion – as there was in Babel – after the Lord confused the languages of all the earth. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit moved these men to glorify God in languages that were understood by all who heard. This was a “reversal of Babel.” Now, everyone is able to proclaim the Word of God!

[Proclaim the Word]

Do you proclaim the Word of God to others in your own tongue?

Do you proclaim the Word of God so others understand?

Through the Holy Spirit’s guiding, the disciples proclaimed the good news of the Father’s saving work through His Son Jesus Christ in languages that everyone understood!

So, do you proclaim the Word of God – or, do you sit silent?

When you are silent, you are not offending anyone you get into contact with. However, you are offending your Creator.

God commands us to fear and love Him and to call upon His name in prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

Do you call upon God in prayer on a regular basis?

Do you praise God for all of the positive things in your life?

Do you thank God for all of your friendships and possessions?

Is the Lord's Word evident in your daily speech and conduct, or do you curse, speak carelessly, or misuse God's name?

As Christians, we should gladly proclaim the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

Like the disciples – we too – have been filled with the Holy Spirit! We were filled with the Holy Spirit at our baptism! We were filled using God's command with the water and the Word!

The disciples proclaimed the good news, as we should today.

[The Holy Spirit]

The Holy Spirit was certainly at work on that Pentecost Day.

The Holy Spirit was certainly at work during that era.

You see, the Holy Spirit used the Roman Empire to spread the Word.

As Martin Luther wrote, "For just when God wanted to spread the gospel throughout the world by means of the apostles, he gave the tongues for that purpose. Even before that, by means of the Roman Empire, the Holy Spirit had spread the Latin and Greek languages widely in every land in order that His gospel might the more speedily bear fruit far and wide." (AE 45:358-359)

The Holy Spirit is at work today inside each and every one of us.

The Holy Spirit has inspired the Bible to be translated into hundreds, if not thousands, of languages across the world.

The Holy Spirit leads missionaries to proclaim the saving work of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

You see, because of the work of the Holy Spirit, we have faith in Jesus Christ – Our Redeemer.

(Jesus said:) “*The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*” (John 14:26)

You see, the Holy Spirit is our teacher.

We cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called us by the Gospel, enlightened us with His gifts, sanctified and kept us in the true faith.

The Holy Spirit keeps us in the one true faith.

We are strengthened in our faith through the true body and true blood of Christ in, with, and under the bread and the wine. The eating and drinking of Christ’s body and blood restores us, builds us up, and strengthens our weak faith. Through Holy Communion, we are forgiven our sins and declared righteous with God.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we know that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

So, let not your hearts be troubled, we have eternal peace through Jesus Christ – and we know this from the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

We are no longer bewildered like those traveling Jews. For we know what Christ has done for us – we believe thanks to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now, let us make a joyful noise to the Lord! Amen!