

Church of the Holy Spirit: Spirit Day

Acts 2:1-13 || Pastor Paul Hahn || 23 May 2021

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: Share a memory of time spent around a campfire. What made that time special?

Worship: [Psalm 33](#) (*Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?*)

Sermon Summary for [Acts 2:1-13](#) (*Read the passage aloud before reading the sermon summary.*)

Pentecost celebrates the birth of the New Testament Church as the Holy Spirit breaks out in fullness into the lives of the first Apostles. Just as the Spirit of God hovered over creation at its beginning to give it order and blessing ([Gen 1:2](#)), here too He gives power and blessing to the church at its beginning. It is the Spirit of life and love that flows between Father and Son – so rich and deep and powerful. And He is as active and alive and at work today as He was on the first day of Pentecost. But the Holy Spirit is also the most overlooked member of the Trinity, too often left in the background or ignored. As we remember Pentecost, we come back to the reality of the Spirit: the key mover in bringing salvation into our lives, and the key agent in spreading the effects of Christ's resurrection into the world. Here, the Spirit comes into fullness, and as He comes, lives are changed forever.

May the Spirit come as Fire // Throughout Scripture, whenever fire appears, it nearly always represents God's presence ([Gen 15](#), [Ex 3](#), [Ex 13](#), [1 King 18](#)). In particular, these are pictures of God's purity – that He is good and holy and powerful, able to turn that which is common into something holy and wonderful. Just as on Pentecost, where God's fire rests on the first Apostles yet they are not consumed. They were living "burning bushes," purified but not destroyed. And this is how the Holy Spirit refines us. We, who Jesus baptizes with fire and the Holy Spirit ([Matt 3:11](#)), come alive as spectacles of the Gospel: We are sinners (unworthy and unfaithful), fully and immediately forgiven and accepted, welcomed into the love of God because of Jesus. Broken lives being saved and renewed. Our world needs to see this; but so do we. And so we should ask of ourselves and pray: "*Where does the fire of the Spirit need to burn in me – to purify me – to make my life a living spectacle of the Gospel?*"

May the Spirit blow as Wind // This wind (v2) comes from Heaven where Jesus ascended, just as He had promised ([John 20:22](#)). This wind of conversion will blow through our lives, giving us freshness and joy that is not of this world. Do we see this in ourselves and in our church? It's worth asking as NT Wright once did, "*Do our churches today have enough energy – enough spirit-driven new life – to make onlookers pass any comment at all?*" Because the joy of this Wind comes from giving ourselves over to it, allowing it to wash over our lives. The Spirit is the breath of God, and its power can and will create (sometimes violent) upheaval in our lives – offering unexpected joy... but also sometimes taking away our comfort or our safety or our security. Not just so we can be renewed in the Gospel, but so that conversion can come to others and new life to the world.

May the Spirit speak through Tongues // It was a great miracle of Pentecost when God suddenly granted the Apostles the ability to speak to people from all over the Mediterranean world in their own, native languages. People from all over that world could now hear the Good News of Jesus in an understandable, personal way. This gift is really just another expression of the principle of incarnation: of bringing Jesus close to God's beloved children. This is therefore the Spirit giving us the ability and opportunity to speak the Gospel in ways that people can understand, feel, and take to heart. May God bless each of us with this... but also an understanding that this gift will always mean humility. Because the language of the Gospel is always the language of the cross, of giving life away so that others might have resurrection and hope and life.

Discussion Questions (You will not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like. Some are personal perspective and application questions for life-transforming discussions.)

May the Spirit come as Fire (v3)

- How would you describe the Holy Spirit?
 - In what ways is the Spirit distinct from God the Father and Jesus? How do they work in concert?
- Have there been times where you've seen or felt the Holy Spirit at work in your life or your community?
 - What does it mean and look like to "come alive as a spectacle of the Gospel"?
 - How can we create opportunities and space for the Spirit to work in our lives?
- As Paul asked us to consider during his sermon: "Where does the fire of the Spirit need to burn in me – to purify me – to make my life a living spectacle of the Gospel?"

May the Spirit blow as Wind (v2)

- How was the Spirit active in the lives of believers and in the story of redemption before Pentecost?
- Have you been a part of – or witness to – a community of Christians who were "so boisterous, so alive and unfettered, so full of the joy and hope of Heaven" that they could've been mistaken as being drunk?
 - What would this look like? Is this exciting and enticing to you? Why or why not?
- The idea that "the Holy Spirit may cause violent upheaval in your life" – Does this worry or frighten you? How can it encourage us and offer hope?
 - Have you experienced such upheaval? How has God been at work in and through these times?

May the Spirit speak through Tongues (v3-4)

- What does it look like for the Holy Spirit to work in and through us as we share the Good News of Jesus?
 - What is the Holy Spirit's role in evangelism? What is ours?
- How does the Holy Spirit work through us as a community? What does a Spirit-filled CG look like?
 - How can we as a community group live more deeply in the Spirit together?

Prayer Share prayer requests and pray for one another.

Engage & Experience: Generous Hospitality

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). Imagine if every Christian interpreted what Jesus said as the most important thing to do and actually did it. Imagine if every person made decisions about their schedules to make good neighboring a priority. There is so much potential. The world really could be changed.

The Art of Neighboring, page 180

Being a good neighbor is not an evangelism strategy. If evangelism is your motive, you will not be a good neighbor. We must drop the agenda of the well-meaning tendency to be friends with people for the sole purpose of converting them to our faith. It's tempting to offer friendship with this string attached. We don't love our neighbors to convert them; we love our neighbors because we are converted. However, if neighboring is done with the right posture, then people who don't know God will come to know Him. We are called to love people – without expecting anything in return. When people are in relationship with others, they naturally share what they love. If you love Jesus, He will naturally come up in your conversations.

- Discuss the tension in this statement:
"We don't love our neighbors to convert them; we love our neighbors because we are converted."
- Share something that you've done for/with a neighbor that seemed small at the time but had a large impact.
- Please share some of your neighboring stories with us! Email them to community@pacificcrossroads.org.