



SERMON NOTES

Pentecost 2022

Living the Spirit Empowered Life

Acts 2

Pastor Carl Toti

June 4-5, 2022

Acts 2:1–4 (ESV)

1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

—200 years before Christ, coal mining started in China.

—800 years after Christ, the first windmill was built in Iran.

—1700 A.D., the Maori people of New Zealand began to use geothermal power for cooking and heating.

—1868, the first modern solar power plant was built in (al-jeerz) Algiers.

—1859, the first oil well was drilled in Pennsylvania.

—1908, the Blackhawk Generating Station was constructed in southern Wisconsin.

**God breathes into us, into the church
so we can breathe life into others.**

Acts 2:12-13

“were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, ‘What does this mean?’ But others sneered and said, ‘They are filled with new wine’”

Acts 2:14-15

“Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose”

Acts 2:21

“everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved”

Acts 2:17

“Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,” he said, “and your young men shall see visions”

In the millennia since Christ walked with us on this Earth, we’ve often tried to box up the “wind” [of the Spirit] in manageable doctrines. We’ve exchanged the fire of the Spirit for the ice of religious pride. We’ve turned the wine back into water, and then let the water go stagnant and lukewarm. We’ve traded the gentle dove of peace for the predatory hawk or eagle of empire. When we have done so, we have ended up with just another religious system, as problematic as any other: too often petty, argumentative, judgmental, cold, hostile, bureaucratic, self-seeking, an enemy of aliveness. In a world full of big challenges, in a time like ours, we can’t settle for a heavy and fixed religion. We can’t try to contain the Spirit in a box. We need to experience the mighty rushing wind of Pentecost. We need our hearts to be made incandescent by the Spirit’s fire.

—Brian D. McLaren, We Make the Road by Walking: A Year-Long Quest for Spiritual Formation, Reorientation, and Activation (Jericho Books, 2014), 205.

O! had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, to-day, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. The feeling of the nation must be quickened; the conscience of the nation must be roused; the propriety of the nation must be startled; the hypocrisy of the nation must be exposed; and its crimes against God and man must be proclaimed and denounced.

What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim.

—Frederick Douglass, “The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro” (1852), in The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass, Volume II, Pre-Civil War Decade 1850-1860, ed. Philip S. Foner (International Publishers Co., 1950) <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2927t.html>