

Pentecost Sunday
May 24, 2026
Acts 2:1-21

Because of an encounter with AI I will most likely go to this alternate story of Babel for my sermon.





“Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me./ Melt me; mold me; fill me; use me.”

The words of this simple hymn *Glory to God*, are often my prayer before I step into the pulpit to preach a prophetic word, or step into action that requires more talent than I feel like I possess. I pray this prayer like the athlete’s pre-game hype speech, sometimes even dancing around like a boxer before the fight. I need this prayer. I need this reminder that God’s got me and the Holy Spirit can make good use of me — even though my anxiety is spiking and my self-doubt threatening a takeover.

Like those first disciples on the day of Pentecost, God is constantly calling us to new and uncharted territory. Fifty days after Passover, Jews from every nation gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks, commemorating the harvest and “the first fruits of your labor” (Exodus 23:16). This festival scene in Acts 2 is transformed by the dramatic arrival of the Holy Spirit, with the sound of a violent, rushing wind and tongues of fire lapping the air. Jesus told them this would happen, saying, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my

witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). But who could really be prepared for such a miracle? Such a transformation?

The miracle of Pentecost includes the Holy Spirit giving people from “every nation under heaven” the ability to speak new languages, to hear and understand each other. Unity amidst diversity was discovered — a transformation so profound, some cast it as unbelievable, dismissing those blessed as a bunch of crazy drunks. When Peter (now there’s a transformation story) stands up to recite the words of Joel, he emphasizes how the Spirit gives ordinary people (“all flesh”) extraordinary abilities: prophesy, visions, divine dreams (Acts 2:17).

Fear and self-doubt too often hold us back from all God’s Spirit can accomplish through us.

I wonder what would change if we trusted the Spirit’s power to transform? Disillusionment is easy — mourning the church’s decline, growing frustrated over our failure to create positive change, losing hope in the face of overwhelming problems.

But what would you try if you believed the Spirit would fill you, giving you the ability you’d need for the work to which God calls? Would you speak against the harassment you’ve witnessed at work, but been too afraid to say anything about? Would you write an op-ed for your local newspaper on behalf of the poor or marginalized? Would you run for office? Volunteer at the prison? Organize and advocate for common-sense gun laws?

What would we do as the church if we trusted the Spirit to fill us, use us, and give us abilities that rise to the call of God’s work? Would we demolish that old, unused educational building to see what rises from its ashes? Would we knock on the doors of our neighbors, listen to their needs, then build community coalitions to strategically and collectively meet those needs? Would we worry less about our financial safety net, and risk investing our mission money in new ventures to solve big problems?

We think too small when we measure God's call by our human capacity. We can do more and be more through the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

The Pentecost passage is all-inclusive. The Spirit is poured out on "all flesh" and "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Acts 2:21). God's Spirit can transform ordinary people, like you and me and that guy who quietly sits in the back pew, into extraordinary servants of Christ.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us. Melt us. Mold us. Fill us. Use us. With the ability given to us by the Holy Spirit, let's dream big dreams — and step into action, trusting God for the tools.

Questions for reflection on Acts 2:1-21

1. What thoughts, ideas, dreams and memories does this Pentecost story stir in you?
2. Where has God called you, but you have been hesitant to follow? Why were you hesitant?
3. If you knew for certain the Holy Spirit would fill you with all the ability you'd need, what would you venture to do?