

**New Testament:** Listen for words of faith in the Acts of the Apostles, 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? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs--in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."

All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Women and 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, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning.

No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your daughters and your sons shall prophesy; and your young shall see visions, and your old shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both women and men, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of Yahweh's great and glorious day.

Then everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh shall be saved.'

pause

For the witness of the early church,

**Thanks be to God!**

**Gospel:** Listen for words of faith from the Gospels John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Temple authorities, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

Having said this, the saviour showed them the marks of crucifixion. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw Jesus who said to them again, "Peace be with you. As Abba God has sent me, so I send you."

When Jesus had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

pause

For the stories of Jesus and his friends.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Contemporary Reading:** Listen for words of wisdom in our time in a Blessing from Jan Richardson "What the Fire Gives Us"

You had thought that fire  
only consumed,  
only devoured,  
only took for itself,  
leaving merely ash  
and memory  
of something  
you had believed,  
if not permanent,  
would be long enough,  
enduring enough,  
to be nearly  
eternal.

So when you felt  
the scorch on your lips,  
the searing in your heart,  
you could not  
at first believe  
that flame could be

so generous,  
that when it came to you—  
you, in your sackcloth  
and sorrow—  
it did not come  
to consume,  
to take still more  
than everything.

What surprised you most  
were not the syllables  
that spilled from  
your scalded,  
astonished mouth—  
though that was miracle  
enough,  
to have words  
burn through  
what had been numb,  
to find your tongue  
afame with a language  
you did not know  
you knew—

no, what came  
as greatest gift  
was to be so heard  
in the place  
of your deepest  
silence,  
to be so seen  
within the blazing,  
to be met  
with such completeness  
by what the fire gives.

For the Word of God in scripture and story,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us.

**We give thanks.**