



Wednesday Prayer

Pentecost – Caught up in the Experience

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?

Acts 2:1-8

We know the Pentecost story well. Many were gathered on this day of celebration, thinking they knew how this familiar festival would happen. And then, suddenly, came the sound of rushing wind, filling the entire house with the Holy Spirit. Each began to speak in their own native language, and they were amazed, astonished and confused. They didn't understand what was happening and may have felt overwhelmed.

Now, it may be a stretch to compare this scene with one from the recent Minneapolis Synod Assembly, where there was a new bishop to be elected. But here goes: Hundreds of attendees were gathered, waiting as ballots were counted, sometimes bewildered at the process. There was one particular time that the counting took much longer than expected and a group of musicians tried to get the crowd engaged in spirit-filled camp tunes. Two youth, sitting on the floor in the back, seemed to be filled with the Spirit as they joyfully engaged in motions, singing and laughing together. I captured a picture of this moment, with the backdrop of an adult yawning in the background. How is it that these young adults captured the Spirit in this moment? I visibly saw how God was present with them in this time of waiting.

What might we learn if we seek out the joy in young people and how they experience life? Often we may be caught up in what we see and hear from our own perspectives. The Spirit gives us the ability to come to an understanding together, to be inspired by each of our stories, and to meet people where they are at.

Come, Holy Spirit, and fill our hearts. Open us to the joy of song, dance, laughter and young people's perspectives. May our work to raise youth into safe and healthy relationships come from a place of seeking to understand and love rather than confusion and overwhelm. Bless us and all your children, Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.

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