

ACTS 2: 1-4

We Understand God's Word in Many Languages

Verse -- Acts 2: 1

Michael (English):

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

Betty (French):

Quand le jour de la Pentecôte était arrivé, ils étaient ensemble au même endroit.

Millie (Japanese):

Pentekosute no hi ga kita toki, karera wa subete ichi-kasho ni atsumarimashita.

Verse – Acts 2: 2

Michael (English):

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.

Adrian (Romanian):

Și brusc din cer se auzi un sunet cum ar fi vântul unui vânt violent și umplea întreaga casă în care se aflau.

Rose (Spanish):

Y repentinamente, desde el cielo, llegó un sonido como el de un viento violento, y llenó toda la casa donde estaban sentados.

Lynn (Hungarian):

A tűznek tűnő szétszórt nyelvek tűntek köztük, és mindegyikükre egy nyelv pihent.

Verse – Acts 2: 3

(English):

Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.

Paulo (Portuguese):

Línguas divididas, como de fogo, apareceram entre elas, e uma língua descansou em cada uma delas.

Verse – Acts 2: 4

Pat (English):

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Ruth (German):

Sie alle waren mit dem Heiligen Geist erfüllt und begannen in anderen Sprachen zu sprechen, als der Geist ihnen die Fähigkeit gab.

Phuong (Vietnamese):

Tất cả đều được đầy đầy Đức Thánh Linh và bắt đầu nói bằng những thứ tiếng khác, vì Thánh Linh ban cho họ khả năng.

ACTS 2: 34 -- Unison: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit!" This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!

"Meditation for the Day of Pentecost"

Pentecost Sunday, May 20, 2018

First Christian Church of Decatur (Disciples of Christ), Georgia

James L. Brewer-Calvert, Senior Pastor

Yanny or Laurel?

The internet has been thrown into a frenzy.

An audio clip has proved as divisive as the blue and black/white and gold dress of 2015.

The audio clip has left some people convinced

they are hearing the word "yanny",

while others are adamant the word they hear is "laurel".

Social media has been awash with baffled listeners

who hear one or the other,

and the argument has split people down the middle...

Each sound has a similar timing and energy content.

The reason different people hear a different sound

is explained by frequency.

"If you remove all the low frequencies,

you hear yanny.

If you remove the high frequencies,

you hear laurel.

If your... ears emphasize both the higher and lower frequencies,

you can toggle between the two sounds." [\[1\]](#)

The musician/composer Yanni tweeted, "I only hear Yanni."

Listen again to the opening of Acts, chapter 2.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

² *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.

³ *Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them,*

and a tongue rested on each of them.

⁴ *All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages,
as the Spirit gave them ability.*

The early Church needed the Holy Spirit then,
and the Church needs the Holy Spirit today.

“The [Christian] community without the spirit is dead.

The church cannot speak the truth but for the Spirit of God.

[However] with God’s Spirit we are alive and united in Christ.”

(New Proclamation, Page 76.)

Thanks to God’s gift of the Holy Spirit,

we receive the ability to have empathy, compassion, and concern.

We receive the capability of making connections
where seemingly none had existed.

We do more than simply care for one another;

we seek to go deeper, to reach farther,

to bond and connect with whomever

the Spirit places before and alongside us.

The gift of understanding is a blessing of God.

When we seek to understand,

when we listen and learn from one another,

then we are forming the Beloved Community.

Yanny or Laurel is a fun game to play with friends on social media.

The real challenges are overcoming the divides that we create,

the walls we build, the chasms we dig.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to overcome divisive words, behavior, and attitudes,

and to build bridges of understanding.

The Spirit is a unifier force and source.

“The Spirit does not speak a different message

for each spiritual seeker – *you find your truth and I’ll find mine.*

A quest for spiritual truth that would isolate us from our neighbors

is flawed at the outset.

The miraculous gift of Pentecost resides in our discovering our commonality.”

(New Proclamation, Page 77)

Have you ever noticed that when we think we disagree with someone,

often what have is a misunderstanding?

To reach true disagreement is a spiritual blessing
because it means both sides cared enough to listen to each other.
In true Christian community we can gracefully agree to differ,
and still break bread together.

One of the many gifts of the Spirit of God is the gift of understanding,
which fosters and builds community.
The more we work and play at building community, at *Koinonia*, at fellowship,
the more we discover what we share in common.
And at the same time, the less we fear one another, the less we fear the other.
Thanks to the Spirit at work in Christian community,
we can and shall release our fear of being honest and authentic and real
because we seek to be a Christ-like community that understands.
We can release our fear of bringing into the light
that which lies hidden in the dark recesses of our souls.
Thanks to the Spirit of God we can finally let go
of the perceived need to project images of perfection.
We can let go being right all the time,
and instead seek to be reconciled.
We can lay down at the Table of the Lord our selfishness and greed,
and chose to pick up a morsel of bread that reminds us to serve and share.
Elvis Costello said, "*What's so funny about peace, love, and understanding?*"
At Doc Chey restaurant their motto is "Peace Love Noodles."
It's all good.

What would happen if we took a risk
and let the miracle of understanding come alive again,
letting the Holy Spirit take over,
open our ears and hearts and doors,
and then see what happens.

Regardless of whether you hear Yanny or Laurel,
can you imagine that maybe, just maybe the Holy Spirit
will help us to listen as well as to speak the truth in love
amid diversity and division and Decatur?
Can you imagine the world around us being born again, from above,
grateful for this gift of grace?

The Spirit of God is given to the whole people of God.

Come, Holy Spirit, enter into us, your people.

Come, people of God, to the Table of the Lord.
Here your gifts will be received and multiplied by the power of generosity.

Take a piece of Bread and dip it into the Cup.
Gluten-free Bread and Water are available.
If you chose to be served where you are, we will bring Communion to you.

Come, taste and see and know that God is good.

All power be to the Creator, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen!