

June 8th, 2025 Lectionary Notes

The Readings on This Day

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Day of Pentecost

Fifty days after Passover, Jews kept the Pentecost festival, which originally celebrated the wheat harvest but had become the commemoration of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. As the fiftieth day of Easter, Christians maintained the festival, altering its focus to a celebration of the Spirit of the risen Christ in the church. In an oblique reference to Sinai, the fire of God's word is now on the foreheads of the faithful. In John's gospel, the Spirit brings the truth of God into the believing community. In current parlance, Pentecost concludes the Easter season and lasts one day; it is not an on-going season (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* pp. 14, 37).

[Acts 2:1-21](#)

The narrative of Pentecost exemplifies Luke's expert storytelling ability. The reading includes hidden references to the Hebrew Bible, a citation from the prophets, a contemporary geography lesson, an account of miracles, and the folksy detail of the accusation of drunkenness. As we await the eschatological end of all things, we are now those who prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams. Although some Christians connect glossolalia with Pentecost, Luke describes these "tongues" as other languages with which to evangelize the whole world. Christians have sought to do just this, even reducing many oral languages to writing so as to be able to create a written text of the Bible.

or

[Genesis 11:1-9](#)

The story of Babel is juxtaposed to the narrative of Pentecost because in the first story the diversity of human languages arises because of human arrogance and, in the second, all the languages of the Roman Empire proclaim the resurrection of Christ. The poignant theological tale finds contemporary resonance in some current theories about language development: that periodic migrations, which were the result of tribal ferment and scarcity of resources, led to linguistic variation. In both, language variation resulted from serious conflicts or problems.



The Psalm for the Day

In the psalm for the day, [Psalm 104:24-34, 35b](#), Christians usually translate the Hebrew of verse 30 with the term “Spirit,” rather than breath or wind. The psalm praises God the creator, whose Spirit continually creates all that lives. Verses 27-28 have become part of a common table prayer. In an example of the lectionary’s use of the Bible, the condemnation of verse 35a is omitted.

Romans 8:14-17

In Paul’s discussion of the Spirit, the imagery of adoption connects the believers with Christ, the Son of God. “Abba” fits well with this discussion of adoption, since it is a child’s form of address to the parent. Believers will receive the same relationship with God that Christ had: contrary to the first-century religious expectation, they stand before God without fear.

or

Acts 2:1-21

(see above)

John 14:8-17 [25-27]

The gospel of John is appointed for most of the primary festivals of the liturgical year because of John’s high Christology and its centrality in the development of Christian doctrine. John says theologically the narrative of Pentecost: God sends the Spirit into the gathered community so that it can know the truth of Christ’s resurrection. Christian theology subsumed John’s description of the Advocate into its understanding of the Holy Spirit, and passages such as this led to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Spirit is now the link between the believing community and God.