

## Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of June 4, 2017

Acts 2:1-8

*These questions are to be used as a spring board for discussion.*

*Answers may or may not be found in the sermons.*

### **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

<sup>5</sup>Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup>And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. <sup>7</sup>Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" <sup>8</sup>And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?"

### **New Living Translation (NLT)**

*On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. <sup>2</sup>Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. <sup>4</sup>And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.*

*<sup>5</sup>At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup>When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers.*

*<sup>7</sup>They were completely amazed. "How can this be?" they exclaimed. "These people are all from Galilee, <sup>8</sup>and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages!"*

### **Connection Questions:**

1. How does today's sense of community compare with your childhood community?
2. Social scientist Rene Girard developed a thesis that said, "...human communities prior and outside the Christian revelation, develop out of an act of violence which unites all over-against one." Discuss what you think he is saying in this statement.
3. Is there something different about the community of faith formed at Pentecost that is different from how communities formed prior to this event?
4. What does the word inclusive mean to you? How can the church be inclusive in its nature? What are the obstacles of being inclusive?
5. In the book of Acts the theme of inclusiveness is replayed again and again. Is it possible in today's environment for the church to be inclusive? Why or why not?

6. The experience of Pentecost opened the eyes of all diaspora Judaism, inviting them to listen to the Christian witness in their own tongues. How did this happen?
  
7. In Acts 15, a potentially exclusive rule is abandoned and all Gentiles, even the uncircumcised, are welcomed into the bonds of this community. Discuss how leaders in the early church were able to get to the point that some Jews began to be welcoming to Gentiles.
  
8. Community building is never easy. Discuss the difficulties. Is community building even possible today? What has to happen to bring community about?
  
9. In our text it says on the day of Pentecost that all were together in one place. What do you think the writer meant? Was the writer exaggerating or were they truly one?
  
10. What can we do personally to help teach our children about the importance of a community of faith as they seek to grow in their faith?