

**The Rev. Dr. Jan C. Heller**  
**Year A, Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:1-21**  
**4 June 2017**  
**Saint Barnabas Episcopal Church, Bainbridge Island, WA**

You can just tell that today is a special day—we had a big parade! Also, look at the front of the church. What do you see that jumps out at you as different?

- Hint: the chasuble—Red color
- If the color is red, then this must be the day of ...?

What happened on that first Day of Pentecost?

- God sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples, as Jesus promised he would, to help them to tell everybody in the whole world about Jesus
- 10 days before, Jesus went back to heaven and his disciples were worried about being left alone without him, but he promised he'd send his Spirit and he did

Now, here's the hard question: What does it all mean?

- First, some say it is the *birthday* of the church, the day the church officially began, and the Holy Spirit will help us to the work of Jesus in world, just like the first disciples
- Second, it's a signal that Jesus' new family, the church, is supposed to *include everyone* in the world, and that everyone is equal in the eyes of God
  - This is indicated by red color—the “tongues of fire”—meant all the people heard God's message in their own language
  - Red also indicates how excited and enthusiastic everyone was—like they “were on fire”
- Third, and perhaps most importantly,
  - Before Pentecost, most people worshipped God in the Temple—in one place and in a place far away from where we live;
  - But now, God is with us everywhere we live; in fact, *God lives in our hearts and, because of Pentecost, our bodies are now considered to be the Temple to God*—a temple is very holy and special place.
  - This means that we are very special to God and that we should take care of our bodies as we grow older, because God lives within us—God is that close to us, always and everywhere we go!