

Sermon Title: "Divine Disruptions"

Biblical Passage: Acts 2:1-21

Passage Background and Summary

On this Pentecost Sunday, the passage of focus is that pertaining to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The scripture begins "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place" (v. 1). Pastor Warnock shares that they would have gathered as Jews from across the diaspora and every nation coming together to celebrate the Feast of Wheats or the Day of the First Fruits in the holy city of Jerusalem. While these Jews, who are followers of "the way" or followers of Jesus, are gathered, "suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting" (v. 2). They are filled with the Holy Spirit and begin to speak in different languages. Some are amazed to hear their language being spoken, and others assume they are drunk. Peter shares that they are not drunk but the words of the prophet Joel are being fulfilled.

Sermon Points

Today is Pentecost Sunday which in some ways is the spiritual birthday of the church. Yet, Pentecost didn't begin with the church. It was a divine disruption. God has an amazing way of doing a new thing in an old place and in an old space. For Pentecost, they were gathered like they typically do to celebrate the Feast of Wheat and be reminded of the tradition of their ancestors. Yet, this time, there came a different sound in a familiar place. God sends a different sound in a familiar place and sometimes we miss it because we expect to hear a familiar sound in a familiar place. Often, we miss what God is up to because we already know what we want the move of God to look like.

Still, sometimes God sends a divine disruption. The scripture says there came the sound of a violent wind. It felt like an assault shifting the atmosphere of the familiar. When you're accustomed to privilege, equity feels like oppression. Pentecost makes us hear things we may not want to hear from people we may not want to hear from. Your young people shall see visions and your old people shall dream dreams. The slaves, those who don't often have a voice, shall speak and prophesy. God is saying, I'm about to do a new thing in an old place. Can you perceive it? The wind filled the house, but it did not kill the house. You may be going through a violent shift in your life where God is killing the old you so the new you can emerge. Are you ready for God's new chapter in your life or are you stuck waiting for a familiar sound because you're sitting in a familiar place?

Thank God for Pentecostal moments and divine disruptions in the church and in the world. We must not reduce Pentecost to praise. It's not about a shaking of the hands but a shaking in the world. If you have the Spirit, someone other than you ought to know it. If the church is filled with the Spirit, then the entire world ought to know it. The Civil Rights Movement was a Pentecostal movement. The world likes to think of it as a social movement but you're not going to face down dogs and water hoses because you read a theory in graduate school. You've got to

know a God who can stand with you as you fight spiritual wickedness of this world, the spiritual wickedness that doesn't want to act when babies are slaughtered in a classroom. We need the spirit of God to shake this place.

When Pentecost comes, old structures are made new. When Pentecost comes the voiceless find their voice. There were a lot of religious folks gathered in Jerusalem on Pentecost, but they didn't all experience Pentecost. Many missed what God was doing in that moment as God was doing a new thing in an old, familiar place. The Spirit was moving on the margins and marginalized among followers of Jesus. The Spirit might show up as the March for Our Lives or in a #MeToo movement or young people standing in the street saying the George Floyd killing was wrong and we won't tolerate that kind of police brutality anymore.

We need God to send a revival. It is God's power that evades the powers of this world. God's Spirit shows up in ways that may feel disruptive, disturbing, and dissonant to the ear, but if you listen closely, you may see that God is composing a new song. You may have made what feels like a mistake, but I know a God who can surround our misplayed notes with some new music. I know a God who can take the discordant sounds of a broken and divided nation and lift them up to a new harmony. God can turn sickness into health and can cause the weak to say I am strong and the poor, I am rich. I know a God who knows how to make a way out of no way. Come Holy Spirit Come and breathe on these dry bones.

Reflection Questions

1. Have you ever experienced a divine disruption in your life? If so, would you like to share?
2. Are there any places in your life where you have become comfortable with the familiar that God needs to shake up?
3. Pastor Warnock names the Civil Rights Movement, the March for Our Lives, the #MeToo movement, and the movement for Black lives as ways the Spirit has shown up. Are there other movements that you would name? Are there people who exemplify the movement of the Spirit?
4. What is God doing in the earth in this moment? How is the Spirit moving? What is God calling you to do?