

## **Beliefs: What is the relevance of Pentecost today?**

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During the time of Jesus' ministry, and during the 40 days of his resurrection life on earth, he was limited by time and space – only those who lived in his country and in his time could meet him. On the day of his Ascension (the last day when he was seen on earth) he told his followers: 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem...and to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

Ten days later it was the Day of Pentecost, which was a Harvest Festival day in the Jewish calendar, so many of Jerusalem's Jews, of many different nationalities and speaking many different languages, had gathered at The Temple. There was a sound like the wind, and something that seemed like a fire appeared in the sky, with tongues of flame, and touched each of Jesus' followers. They found they could understand the languages of the people in the crowd and began to speak about Jesus with greater confidence and clarity, using all the languages present, so that everyone could hear and understand. Many people came to Christian faith.

Why is this relevant today?

1. Christians believe that the disciples had been filled with the Holy Spirit, the very Spirit of Jesus. And that same spirit is given to Christians today – to enable them to experience the presence of Jesus with them, in every place and time, and to give them courage and boldness in speaking about their faith and seeking to live out the Christian faith in their lives.
2. Pentecost is sometimes described as the birthday of the Church. Christians were empowered to spread the Christian Gospel to the ends of the earth and enable other people to become Christians and join them in a life of faith in Jesus Christ.
3. There is a very important message about unity amidst diversity on the Day of Pentecost. It was a very diverse crowd of people that had gathered, from different countries, and speaking different languages. The disciples were given the gift of being able to communicate across these barriers and to bring people together. Pentecost urges Christians to work towards reconciliation and mutual understanding amongst all people groups today.