

“Tongues of Flame?!”

The Day of Pentecost

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By Rebecca Enney

You know, when you are in second grade, like Barabas is, you often know a teenager that you really like. Ken has always been that teenager for Barabas. Not that he has needed a babysitter very often, because Barabas usually just walks over to Mrs. Potato Head’s apartment at the Retirement Home. Once in awhile, Ken is the babysitter.

But if you heard the story the past few weeks, you know that Ken isn’t the kind of person you want as a hired babysitter for a second grader. Ken has been unkind and worse, he has cajoled and threatened Barabas.

Ken is 16 now. He thinks he is pretty grown up. He does have his driver’s license after all! It was just a few years ago he was sitting in this room with a white robe on, just like the Confirmands are today.

There are a lot of choices in this big, interesting world! One of the choices that Ken made, after he was confirmed, was to stop coming to church. His parents didn’t come, so why should he? At least, that is what Ken thought. And he made some bad choices in the friends he made.

The Confirmands today will have choices. See, one of the amazing things about God is that He allows us to make our own choices, even when they are bad ones. And yet, on the other hand, God has promised us His Spirit. That Spirit will stay with us in the midst of our good choices and our bad choices.

In the lesson today, in the book of Acts, is a story about the first time the Spirit was poured out on the disciples. The Spirit looked like a tongue, like a tongue of flame over the head of each of the disciples. (Isn’t THAT curious?!) The Spirit places God’s Word in our mouth, when we don’t know the words. That Spirit places God’s actions in our bodies, when we don’t know the actions. That Spirit places God’s love in our hearts when we can’t remember the love. We can choose to ignore that Spirit, or we can let the Spirit carry us to do the better thing.

And so, here is Barabas in his back yard. He is sitting on the swing, not swinging, but just sitting there thinking. And Jeter is lying on the ground beside the swing. And Ken came around the corner from the alley. Hmmm .



Now, if we had the eyes of God, we might see the Spirit with Ken. We might see something that looked like a tongue of flame coming from Ken's head, something like this! (I actually considered making one of these for each of the Confirmands today, but I didn't think they would wear them!)



This time, Ken did not ignore the Spirit. Ken quietly sat on the swing next to Barabas and Barabas did NOT feel threatened. After a moment, Ken said "Hey kid. I know that Jeter is not stupid. I'm sorry I said that last week." Jeter cocked his ears when he heard his name and opened one eye to look at Ken.

"Thanks." said Barabas. "But why did you want Uncle Floyd's keys?"

"Forget that. I should not have asked." said Ken.

They started to swing back and forth a little, and then they started to swing a little higher and soon they were swinging up as high as the swing would go. The bars even lifted up a little out of the ground when they would get to the highest point. (Uncle Floyd has it anchored down really good, so it can't tip over!)

Barabas was having fun. In fact, so was Ken. After all, 16 is not so very grown up! And they just goofed around, swinging and kind of wrestling a bit, until Uncle Floyd called Barabas in to wash his hands for supper.

“Bye” said Barabas, as he ran up through the back yard to the house. Jeter stretched and yawned and got to his feet. As he lumbered up the back yard, Jeter looked over his shoulder at Ken and suddenly barked. Jeter thought he saw a tongue of flame on Ken’s head! Imagine that! THE END