

Watch this week's service on YouTube by clicking: [May 23 Worship Service Video](#)

- Join **HeBrews eCafé on Zoom** Sunday at 10am:
<https://zoom.us/j/4639675160?pwd=V090UmV0VFpMVGJLTWhueGpSekkwZz09>
Meeting ID: 463 967 5160
Passcode: 4F7iE2
Phone option: 1 204 272 7920
- A New Cool School video has been posted for children: [CUC Cool School Summer Video](#)
- Our music staff and online choir present the cantata **Love Divine**. View it here: https://youtu.be/wA1oaqizj_w
- **Offering Information at:** www.charleswoodunited.org/donate Thank you for your generous support.

Dear Friends

Welcome to worship for Sunday, May 23, 2021.

Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamia, Judaea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Romans, Cretans, and Arabs. This is the list given in Acts of all the manner of people who heard and understood one another on the day that the Holy Spirit descended to earth with a message of divine unity. They didn't speak an odd, mysterious language. They spoke one another's language. In one of the most understated but memorable lines in scripture, Luke (author of Acts) says, "Some were amazed and some were perplexed".

The list is not meant to be exhaustive or even prescriptive. It is an effective way of drawing attention to *all the world* as our biblical ancestors knew it. If we wanted to speak of the language of the Holy Spirit today we would add French and Spanish, Mandarin and Swahili, Russian and the dialects of Baltic States, Dakota, Lakota, Nakota, of Paraguay and Samoa, of New Guinea and Angola, Celtic and Cree, and on and on and on. The intent of Acts is clearly to establish that where Jesus could be known by a particular group of people in a particular time and a particular place, the Holy Spirit will be present to all people in every time and in every place. The word for this inspired revelation is Unity.

Of course, the biggest problem with unity is that not everyone is into it, if you know what I mean. You have to embrace unity for it to become real. Even on the day of Pentecost, among those who were present and witnessed *all the world* speaking to each other, there were those who looked at unity with contempt and dismissed the followers of Jesus saying "They have been drinking" (REB). There are always those who despise unity for reasons that can only be described as fear and loathing. These are the ones who need to be different, to stand apart, to be contrarian, to disagree, to live in anger, to dis-integrate that which longs to be made whole.

As I have said at other times, the conflict in Israel and Palestine is extremely complicated and we are not likely in a position to judge. But when deadly violence erupted there last week there were protests at the Manitoba Legislature. Some waved the flag of Palestine. Others waved the flag of Israel. In between stood a long and firm row of police officers to keep the two apart. Unity was all but abandoned. Forgotten. Despised. When a ceasefire was announced both sides claimed victory. But what has anyone won in a downward spiralling path of death and destruction?

Unity is peaceful. Unity is cooperative. Unity is sacrificial. Unity is acceptance. Unity is the promise and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

And the only way God sees humankind.

Grace and peace

Michael

- Please enjoy our online worship and feel free to share with others. The link for sharing is: <https://youtu.be/qe1QLR5D-zo>
- For news and events please have a look at **Life & Work**: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>
- Read the scripture lesson for today by clicking here: [Acts 2:1-21](#)