

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22 )

## **Pentecost – Acts 2:1-41**

### **Prepare to Wonder**

#### **Faith Word: SPIRIT**

As Christians we celebrate Pentecost as the “birthday of the church.” Pentecost originated as a Jewish festival. Pentecost was one of three pilgrimage feasts when Jews gathered in Jerusalem. Jesus had told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was a time of uncertainty for Jesus’ followers. It is likely they were anxious and scared. During this time of waiting in Jerusalem, the disciples and other followers of Jesus were celebrating Pentecost. While they were celebrating, the Spirit arrived. The Spirit arrived sounding like a violent wind and appearing like small flames of fire. Jesus promised to send the disciples a helper and now it had arrived.

The excitement surrounding the arrival of the Holy Spirit attracted a crowd. Not everyone in the crowd was immediately convinced of the Spirit’s presence. Some joked they were witnessing the effects of strong wine. Spirit-filled Peter responds to this accusation and begins to preach. About three thousand believers were baptized that day.

The Spirit did not just come to the disciples, but to each person gathered there. The Spirit empowered God’s people and gave them courage to continue to spread the good news about Jesus. We may not hear rushing wind or see flames of fire descending on one another, but God’s Spirit continues to empower us and give us the courage to do God’s work.

The concept of the Holy Spirit is sometimes a difficult one for children and adults to understand. It is okay to admit to your children that you don’t have all the answers. Mystery is a part of faith.

#### **Spiritual Practice for Adults**

Find a quiet place to sit. Place your feet on the ground and place your palms down on your knees. Take a deep breath in and let it go. This time as you breathe in, think, “Spirit, guide me.” Exhale and think, “All my days.” Repeat several times.

# Come Together

## Come Together

**Supplies:** *Class Pack, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, Wonder Box, red cloth, battery-operated candle, dove*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Set up a Wonder Table (see p. 3) with a red cloth, battery-operated candle, and a Wonder Box (see p. 3). Display the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15) and Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 22). Place the dove inside the Wonder Box.*

- Point to the Unit 1 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 22), and invite the children to wonder about what the word *Spirit* means.
- Invite the kids to join you in a circle.

**SAY:** This month we are going to hear stories about the Holy Spirit and the ways it guides the followers of Jesus.

- In this curriculum, we recommend reading stories from the *Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook*. Allow an elementary-age child to read the story, “Pentecost” (pp. 268–89) from the storybook.

**PRAY:** Dear God, thank you for the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Pentecost – Preschool

**Supplies:** *Reproducible Kids’ Book, crayons*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Photocopy “Pentecost” (Reproducible 1A) for each child.*

- Invite the preschoolers to use crayons to color the picture.

**SAY:** The followers of Jesus waited for the special gift of the Holy Spirit.

**WONDER:** What is it like to wait for a special gift?

## Hidden Letters – Younger Elementary

**Supplies:** *Reproducible Kids’ Book, crayons*

**Prepare:** *Photocopy “Hidden Letters” (Reproducible 1B) for each child.*

- Hand out a copy of “Hidden Letters” to each child.

**SAY:** Jesus told his disciples to wait for a special gift. One day, a big gust of wind filled the room they were in and small flames appeared. The gift of the Holy Spirit had arrived!

- Invite the kids to look for and circle the letters to the word *Spirit*.

## Holy Spirit Acrostic – Older Elementary

*Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, pencils or markers*

*Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Holy Spirit Acrostic" (Reproducible 1C) for each child.*

- Hand out a copy of "Holy Spirit Acrostic" to each child.

**SAY:** Jesus told his disciples to wait for a special gift. One day, a big gust of wind filled the room they were in and small flames appeared. The gift of the Holy Spirit had arrived!

- Invite the kids to wonder about what words or phrases about God begin with the letters in the words, *Holy Spirit*.
- Encourage them to write these words or phrases next to the appropriate letter.

## Dove Banner – All Ages

*Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, mural paper, crayons, scissors, markers, gluesticks*

*Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Dove" (Reproducible 1D) onto card stock for each kid in your class. Cut a long piece of mural paper. Use a marker to write the word "Pentecost" in bubble letters in the center of the paper.*

- Show the children the mural paper.

**SAY:** Today is Pentecost, and we are celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- Encourage each child to use crayons or markers to cover the mural paper with red, yellow, and orange designs and the dove paper with designs in shades of blue.

**SAY:** When the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit, they saw flames above each other's heads and heard the sound of a rushing wind.

- Invite each child cut out the doves and glue them to the banner.
- Invite the children to color in the letters on the banner.
- Hang the banner up in your room.

# Wonder Time

## Interactive Bible Story

*Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book*

*Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Pentecost" (Reproducible 1F) for each child.*

- Invite several readers to take turns reading the story.

**WONDER:** Why do you think the Holy Spirit came with licks of fire and wind? What else could the Holy Spirit come with?

## Share a Story

*Supplies: Celebrate Wonder DVD, TV, DVD player*

- Invite the children to join you and to sit in a circle on the floor.
- Watch the Session 1 video (Celebrate Wonder DVD).

## Wonder with Me

*Supplies: Class Pack, Wonder Box, scissors*

*Prepare Ahead: Lay out the Wonder Story Mat for Unit 1 (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14). Cut out the Bible story figures (Class Pack—p. 6).*

- Place the Wonder Box on the Unit 1 Wonder Story Mat.
- Show the children the Unit 1 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 22).

**SAY:** Today's faith word is *Spirit*. The word *Spirit* means the feeling that God is with you.

- Show the children this week's figure—the symbols of Pentecost.

**WONDER** together:

- What is your favorite part of this week's story?
  - What does it feel like when God is with you?
  - What symbol would you make for this week's story?
- Place the figure on the Wonder Story Mat.
  - Open the Wonder Box to reveal the dove.

**WONDER:** Why do you think a dove is in the Wonder Box this week?

# Experience Wonder

## Wind Painting

*Supplies: paper, paint (blue and white), art smocks, paper or plastic table covering, straws*

*Prepare Ahead: If your paint is thick, use water to thin it so that it will be easier to blow across the paper. Cover the table with paper or plastic.*

- Have the children wear smocks to protect clothing.

**SAY:** Today we will hear the story of Jesus' disciples receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit arrived amid the sound of wind and the appearance of flames.

**ASK:** What is wind? (*moving air*)

**SAY:** Today you will use your air to paint a picture.

- Give each child a piece of paper and a straw.

**SAY:** I am going to put some paint on your paper. Use the straw I have given you to blow the paint around on the paper to make it look like fire.

- Put some blue paint on each child's paper.
- Encourage the children to use the straws to gently blow the paint around on the paper.
- Add a bit of white paint to each child's paper.
- Encourage children to keep blowing the paint around on the paper.
- Set the paintings aside to dry.

## Examine the Bible Verse

**SAY:** Our Unit 1 Bible verse is Galatians 5:22. Find it in your Bibles.

**ASK:** Is Galatians in the Old or New Testament? (*New*) Where is the Letter to the Galatians located in the New Testament? (*ninth book*) In what chapter of Galatians is our verse located? (*5*) What is the verse number? (*22*)

**SAY:** Our Bible verse tells us what a life of faith following the Spirit looks like.

- Gather the kids around the Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15).  
Read it together.

## Peaceful Place

**Supplies:** *Leader Guide*—p. 113, *Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook*, book: *The Day When God Made Church: A Child's First Book About Pentecost*, by Rebekah McLeod Hutto; paper; crayons or markers

**Prepare Ahead:** *Photocopy the Unit 1 Faith Word coloring sheet (Leader Guide—p. 113) for each child.*

- Assist the children, as needed, as they interact with the items provided.
- Invite the children to make birthday cards that will be given away to the other children on their birthdays.
- Have each child color the Faith Word coloring sheet.

**Tip:** *All of the supplies/activities suggested for the Peaceful Place are optional.*

## Go in Peace

### Spiritual Practice – Exploring the Spirit Through Guidance

**SAY:** A spiritual practice is something we do to help us be present with God. A spiritual practice can be anything because you can be with God any time, anywhere, and any way! This month we are going to do a guided prayer to connect with God.

- Guide the children through a spiritual practice:
  - Find a quiet place to sit. Place your feet on the ground and place your hands palms down on your knees. Take a deep breath in and let it go. This time as you breathe in, think, “Spirit, guide me.” Exhale and think, “My whole life.” Repeat several times.

**SAY:** The Spirit will be with each of us for our whole lives. The Spirit will keep us connected to God and each other.

**PRAY:** Repeat after me: “God, thank you for the Holy Spirit. Help me to feel how close you always are to me. Amen.”

- Bless the children before they leave. Touch each child as you say this blessing: “May you feel God’s love all around you every day.”

### Family Spiritual Practice

**Supplies:** *Reproducible Kids’ Book; Leader Guide*—pp. 111, 112

**Prepare Ahead:** *Photocopy “Celebration Chart” (p. 111) and “Family Letter” (p. 112) for each child.*

**SAY:** Let's take a look at your Take-Home Pages (*Reproducibles 1F–1G*). Ask your family to read the Bible story and participate in this week's spiritual devotion with you. There's an extra activity for you to do sometime this week.

- Send home a copy of the Take-Home Pages, a copy of the Family Letter, and a copy of the Celebration Chart with each child.

## Supplemental Activities

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### Preschoolers – Pentecost Headbands

*Supplies:* Reproducible Kids' Book; red, orange, and yellow markers; tape; scissors

*Prepare Ahead:* Photocopy "Pentecost Headbands" for each child. Cut the pieces apart for each child

**SAY:** Today is Pentecost and we are going to make Pentecost headbands to celebrate. When the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, it appeared as if they had flames on their heads. We will use flame colors—red, yellow, and orange—to make our headbands.

- Invite each child to color and decorate the pieces of their Pentecost Headbands.
- Help each child put together their headbands using tape.
- Encourage the children to wear their headbands.

### Early Elementary – Chalk Art

*Supplies:* dark-colored construction paper (black, brown, or dark blue), chalk (red, orange, yellow, blue, and white), paper towels, newspapers or plastic table coverings

*Prepare Ahead:* Cover the work area with newspapers or plastic table coverings.

- Have each child choose a dark-colored piece of construction paper.

**SAY:** Today we are celebrating Pentecost. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit arrived appearing like flames and sounding like rushing wind.

- Encourage each child to use red, orange, and yellow chalk to draw flames on his or her paper.
- Encourage each child to use blue and white chalk to draw gusts of wind on her or his paper.
- Show the children how to use a paper towel to blend colors of chalk together.
- Let the children experiment with blending the chalk colors together.

## Older Elementary – Wind Surfer

*Supplies: paper, scissors, tape*

- Give each pair of children a piece of paper.
- Have each pair of children fold the paper in half bringing the long edges together.
- Encourage the children to fold the paper in half in the same direction again.
- Have each pair of children cut their paper along the fold lines.
- Let each child take two of the resulting paper strips.
- Encourage each child to stack his or her two pieces of paper on top of one another so the edges are even.
- Have each child lay the two pieces of paper on a table with the long edges at the top and bottom.
- Have each child slide the top piece of paper approximately one and one-fourth inches to the left and use a small piece of tape to secure the two pieces at the short edge of the top strip.
- Have each child turn his or her pieces of paper over and use a small piece of tape to secure the two pieces on the other side.
- Have each child hold the wind surfer in the center of one of the strips of paper and toss it upwards into the air. The wind surfer should open up and spin as it floats to the ground.

**ASK:** What is separating the two parts of the wind surfer and making it spin? (*wind, air currents*) How do you know that is what's happening? Can you see the wind? (*No, but you can see the effect of the wind.*)

**SAY:** Today we are celebrating Pentecost. On the first Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples and other followers of Jesus, there was a sound like the rush of a mighty wind. The Holy Spirit, like the wind, is something we cannot see.

## Intergenerational Activity – Church Birthday Party

*Supplies: party hats, cupcakes, party decorations*

*Tip: Plan a birthday party for the church.*

**SAY:** Pentecost is the birthday of the church. We're going to celebrate!

- Invite the participants to have fun celebrating the church's birthday.