



# SMALL GROUP OUTLINES



# THE HOLY SPIRIT

These Small Group Outlines are produced by the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview). They are available every month from our website.

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### SESSION ONE: EMPOWERED

Today we celebrate the birthday of the church. The day of Pentecost following Christ's Resurrection was a one-off event where the followers of Jesus received the power of the Holy Spirit. Many who witnessed this event could see, hear and feel the power of the Holy Spirit and recognised the source of that power. From that moment on, the Church was supernaturally empowered and that power is still available to every believer today.

### SESSION TWO: BEFORE AND AFTER

In Session One we witnessed the Holy Spirit descending on the followers of Jesus at Pentecost. Today we continue to explore this amazing event and look at the transformation that took place in the lives of the disciples. We'll discover how the Holy Spirit's power equipped the disciples to tell the world about Jesus.

### SESSION THREE: AND ...

In today's session we're thinking about the role that the Holy Spirit plays in developing community in the Church. Acts 2:42-27 is often used as an example of the 'perfect' church – but is it really achievable? How does our perspective of these well-known verses change when they are placed in the context of the Pentecost story? Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can live out every 'And ...' within these verses.

### SESSION FOUR: PINEAPPLE WAISTCOAT

In today's session we are going to explore what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit and look at how he guides and directs us. We'll consider the way the fruit of the Spirit grows in our lives and the part that we play in clothing ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

*Any text in italics represents notes for the leader. It gives more context around the Scripture/activity. You may choose to share verbatim, summarise or not share at all.*

## EMPOWERED

Today we celebrate the birthday of the Church. The Day of Pentecost following Christ's Resurrection was a one-off event where the followers of Jesus received the power of the Holy Spirit. Many who witnessed this event could see, hear and feel the power of the Holy Spirit and recognised the source of that power. From that moment on, the Church was supernaturally empowered, and that power is still available to every believer today.

## WELCOME

**Leader's notes:** *Decorate your meeting room with balloons, streamers and a 'Happy Birthday' banner. Explain to the group that Pentecost is a celebration of the birth of the Church. For the starter activity the group will be looking at the way 'Happy Birthday' is said in different languages. A 'Happy Birthday' handout is provided where the phrase needs to be matched with the correct language.*

*You can copy and cut out multiple sets of the handout to see which team can match the language to the phrase the quickest. Alternatively, enlarged versions of the languages and phrases could be displayed around the room for the group to write down the matching pairs.*

Happy Birthday in Different Languages

- \* French — Bon anniversaire
- \* German — Alles Gute zum Geburtstag
- \* Spanish — ¡Feliz cumpleaños!
- \* Italian — Buon compleanno
- \* Portuguese — Feliz aniversário
- \* Swedish — Grattis på födelsedagen
- \* Dutch — Gefeliciteerd
- \* Norwegian — Gratulerer med dagen
- \* Turkish — Doğum günün kutlu olsun
- \* Polish – Sto lat
- \* Danish — Tillykke med fødselsdagen
- \* Russian — С Днём рождения
- \* Japanese (casual) – お誕生日おめでとう (otanjoubi omedetou)
- \* Chinese – 生日快乐 (shēngrì kuàilè)

Source: <https://www.thortful.com/blog/how-to-say-happy-birthday-in-different-languages>

The ability to speak a range of languages plays a central part in the Pentecost story, but this ability was supernatural. The disciples were empowered by the Holy Spirit.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

*If your group would like to hear what 'Happy Birthday' sounds like in different languages, then watch the clip together.*

 **Watch: 70 People on How to Sing Happy Birthday Song in Their Country – Conde Nast Traveler (3:29)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jghYM7XQxEA>

### WORD

For the next few weeks we will be exploring the person and power of the Holy Spirit. To kick off this new set of sessions, watch and discuss the following clip which provides a brief overview of the Holy Spirit's work in the life of the Church. As you watch the clip, jot down one new fact you have discovered and one question you would like answered about the Holy Spirit by the end of the sessions.

 **Watch: Understand How the Holy Spirit Works in the Bible (stop at 3:50)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNNZO9i1Gjc>




Share the facts and questions the group have written down. Encourage the group to take their pieces of paper home and search for the answer to their question.

Although the Holy Spirit has been at work throughout history, our story for today starts in the Gospel of John where we find Jesus comforting his disciples. They were confused and unsure about what the future held.

 **Read:**

**<sup>15</sup> 'If you love me, keep my commands. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you for ever – <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.'**

— (JOHN 14:16-17)

-  What promise did Jesus give the disciples?
-  How had they experienced the Holy Spirit up to that point?
-  How did Jesus promise this would change in the future?

In verse 17, Jesus says, 'You know him, for he lives **with** you and will be **in** you.'

Just like the many examples of Holy Spirit empowerment we saw in the Old Testament; the disciples had experienced the Holy Spirit **WITH** them.

In the future, Jesus promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit would be **IN** them.


Fast forward to John 20 and the disciples were huddled together fearing for their lives. Jesus had died on the cross. They were alone, afraid and felt powerless. Whatever this amazing adventure had been, they thought it was all over.

 **Read:**

**<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.**

**<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' <sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'**

— (JOHN 20:19-22)

-  Think back to John 14:16-17. What promise had Jesus made to the disciples?

When Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit,' his promise was fulfilled. When we believe in Jesus Christ and what he did for us on the cross, we also receive the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

At Pentecost, another piece of the jigsaw fell into place.

The disciples had experienced the work of the Holy Spirit **WITH** them.

As Jesus breathed on the disciples, they had received the Holy Spirit **IN** them.

Pentecost was the moment that the power of the Holy Spirit descended **UPON** them.


Their lives would never be the same again.

 **Read:**

**<sup>1</sup> When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.**

— (ACTS 2:1-3)

 How did the followers of Jesus experience the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?


 How did it change them?

The Holy Spirit dwells in everyone who believes in Jesus.

What happened on that day of Pentecost was a one-off event where the followers of Jesus received the power of the Holy Spirit. Many who witnessed this event could see, hear and feel the power of the Holy Spirit and recognised the source of that power. For the Jews witnessing this event, there were clear links to the prophecies they knew so well. From that moment on the Church was supernaturally empowered, and that power is still available to every believer today.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

*If your group would like to discover more about the history of Pentecost, then watch and discuss the following clip together.*

 **Watch: History of Pentecost – Drive Thru History (stop at 1:15)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vwz4Dqtj69w>


## WITNESS

The disciples received the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed upon them. At Pentecost they were empowered by the Holy Spirit. This fulfilled a promise made by Jesus before he ascended to Heaven.

 **Read:**

**<sup>8</sup> ‘But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’**


— (ACTS 1:8)


 What was the next step once the disciples had received the power of the Holy Spirit?


The disciples were called to be witnesses to the death and resurrection of Jesus and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, were able to share it with everyone gathered in Jerusalem.

 **Watch: What Happened at Pentecost and Why It’s Important (stop at 2:14)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQhkWmFJKnA&t=17s>

 What different senses did the witnesses of the coming of the Holy Spirit experience?

 As the followers of Jesus spoke in different languages, how did the people respond? What did they think had happened?


 Look at Acts 2:9-11. What were the followers of Jesus saying?

In Acts 2:11, the eyewitnesses of the event reported that they heard the followers of Jesus 'declaring the wonders of God'.

**Leader's notes:** For the Witness activity, the young people will have an opportunity to 'declare the wonders of God' together. The aim is for them to collate words and phrases of praise either from Scripture or their own experience. How these are presented can be decided by your group. They may want to work individually and create their own praise declarations, or share them on a large piece of paper. Encourage the group to dive into Scripture to add to their words of praise.

When they have had time to complete the activity, read the declarations of praise together. Ask them to imagine what it would feel like to be empowered to suddenly make these declarations in languages they had never spoken before.

 How would that experience impact their faith?

 Do they believe that same power is available to them today? If so, why? If not, is there anything in Scripture that backs up their viewpoint?

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

The following clip tells the story of Pentecost in many different languages. It gives us just a glimpse of what it might have been like to hear the many different declarations of the mighty works of God at Pentecost.

 **Watch: Voices at Pentecost – Acts 2:1-12 in Many Languages (2:06)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E432AjKydik>

## WORSHIP

After the empowerment of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the followers of Jesus responded with declarations of praise. Their first response was to worship.

**Leader's notes:** For the Worship section today, give the group the opportunity to reflect on all they have shared and discussed in the session. The following clip is a version of 'Revelation Song' sung in many different languages. As the clip plays, encourage the group to pray for the countries represented by each language. Remind the group that the body of Christ extends throughout the world, and we are all part of the same Spirit-filled Church.

At the end of the clip encourage the group to share prayers together. There may be members of the group who feel comfortable praying in another language. Bring the session to a close in prayer.

 **Watch: Multilingual Revelation Song (6:38)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpcvT7K6U3g>

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

What one thing have you discovered today that has deepened your understanding of the Holy Spirit?

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

French	Bon anniversaire
German	Alles Gute zum Geburtstag
Spanish	¡Feliz cumpleaños!
Italian	Buon compleanno
Portuguese	Feliz aniversário
Swedish	Grattis på födelsedagen
Dutch	Gefeliciteerd
Norwegian	Gratulerer med dagen
Turkish	Doğum günün kutlu olsun
Polish	Sto lat
Danish	Tillykke med fødselsdagen
Russian	С Днём рождения
Japanese (casual)	お誕生日おめでとう (otanjoubi omedetou)
Chinese	生日快乐 (shēngrì kuàilè)

Source: <https://www.thortful.com/blog/how-to-say-happy-birthday-in-different-languages>

## BEFORE AND AFTER

In Session One we witnessed the Holy Spirit descending on the followers of Jesus at Pentecost. Today we continue to explore this amazing event and look at the transformation that took place in the lives of the disciples. We'll discover how the Holy Spirit's power equipped the disciples to tell the world about Jesus.

### WELCOME

TV channels are full of transformation programmes. Ask the group to name as many as they can and write them all down.

Here are some examples to get you started:

*Sort Your Life Out*

*Extreme Makeover*

*Interior Design Masters*

*Grand Designs*

*George Clarke's Remarkable Renovations*

*Your Home Made Perfect*


*Changing Rooms*

*The Repair Shop*



Discuss the different shows on the list. What is their appeal? Which one would the group most like to be on and why? What do they think it feels like to experience the dramatic 'before and after' moments shown in these programmes?

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

In the world of makeover shows things don't always go to plan.

 **Watch: When home decoration shows go horribly, horribly wrong/Your Home In Their Hands – BBC (3:00)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SicKleA9kqY>

-  How do you react when things don't turn out the way you expected?
-  Have you ever had a 'before and after' transformation and been disappointed with the results? Share it with the group.

### WORD

In Session One we witnessed the Holy Spirit descending on the followers of Jesus at Pentecost. Today we look at the transformation that took place in the lives of the disciples and how the Holy Spirit's power equipped them to tell the world about Jesus. There was a clear 'before and after' moment in the lives of the disciples.

Before he ascended to Heaven, Jesus made the disciples a promise.

 **Read:**

<sup>4</sup> On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.


<sup>5</sup> For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'



**<sup>6</sup> Then they gathered round him and asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’**

**<sup>7</sup> He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’**

— (ACTS 1:4-8)

 What promise and purpose did Jesus give the disciples before he ascended to Heaven?

 Where did he ask them to stay? Why do you think he needed them to wait?

The disciples had a clear purpose – to be witnesses of Jesus – but they didn’t have the power needed to do this effectively. They had to wait until the gift of the Spirit arrived.

*Ask the group to recap what happened at Pentecost. What did the followers of Jesus experience? What was the reaction of those who witnessed the coming of the Holy Spirit?*

Pentecost was a one-off event that fulfilled Jesus’ promise of the Holy Spirit. It was witnessed by thousands of Jews who were in the city of Jerusalem. Some of those watching blamed the spectacle on too much wine, but Peter was about to set them straight.

Before we discover what Peter had to say, let’s look at the ‘before’ picture. As you watch the clip, focus on Peter and the disciples’ reaction to what happened to Jesus.

 **Watch: Life Of Jesus (Gospel of John) The Arrest of Jesus and Peter’s Denial (5:45)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L28lxnUUuPQ>

 How would you describe Peter and the disciples before they were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit?

We have taken time to consider Peter’s frame of mind prior to the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Now fast-forward to Pentecost. Peter stood in front of a crowd of committed Jews who knew the Scripture. The stakes were just as high as when Peter denied Jesus, if not higher. Professing Jesus as the Messiah was still a reckless and dangerous thing to do. Instead of denying Jesus, Peter preached a sermon that pulled no punches.

 **Read:**

**Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ‘Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.**

**<sup>15</sup> These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! <sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:**

**<sup>17</sup> “In the last days, God says,**

**I will pour out my Spirit on all people.**

**Your sons and daughters will prophesy,**

**your young men will see visions,**

**your old men will dream dreams.**

**<sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women,**

**I will pour out my Spirit in those days,**

**and they will prophesy.**

**<sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in the heavens above**

**and signs on the earth below,**

**blood and fire and billows of smoke.**

**<sup>20</sup> The sun will be turned to darkness**

**and the moon to blood**

**before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.**

**<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls**

**on the name of the Lord will be saved.”**

— (ACTS 2:14-21 MSG)

- 🗣️ What was Peter trying to communicate to his Jewish listeners about Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit?
- 🗣️ Why do you think he referred back to the Old Testament?
- 🗣️ Why were the words 'And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved' challenging for the Jewish audience to hear?

In today's culture, it is difficult for us to understand the power of Peter's words. As the people saw the tongues of fire and heard declarations of praise in their own languages, Peter referred back to an Old Testament prophecy. He told those listening that, rather than watching a drunken mob, they were witnessing the pouring out of the Spirit mentioned by Joel.

### Read:

<sup>22</sup> **'Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. <sup>23</sup> This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. <sup>24</sup> But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.'**  
— (ACTS 2:22-24 MSG)

- 🗣️ What did Peter accuse the crowd of in his sermon?

### Read:

<sup>36</sup> **'Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.'**  
<sup>37</sup> **When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'**  
<sup>38</sup> **Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.'**  
<sup>40</sup> **With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.'** <sup>41</sup> **Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.**  
— (ACTS 2:36-41)

- 🗣️ What happened after Peter finished his sermon?
- 🗣️ What would it be like to witness 3,000 people giving their lives to Jesus and receiving the Holy Spirit?
- 🗣️ How would you describe Peter and the disciples before and after Pentecost? How did the Holy Spirit change them?

Peter's Pentecost sermon was extremely controversial. Those listening could have turned against Peter and violently removed him from the city, or worse; but that's not what happened.

Instead of being fearful, Peter was fearless. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter was equipped to witness for Christ.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

- 🗣️ What is your response to the following quote?

“Trying to do the Lord's work in your own strength is the most confusing, exhausting, and tedious of all work. But when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the ministry of Jesus just flows out of you.”

— CORRIE TEN BOOM

### WITNESS

The Holy Spirit transformed Peter and he was able to witness for Jesus in a new and powerful way. After Pentecost the disciples were able to access the Holy Spirit's power whenever they needed it.

*Share out the following Scripture references among the group members. Ask them to read the verse, place it in the context of the wider story, and then feed back on what they discovered about the Holy Spirit. The full Scripture verses are shown below for reference.*

**<sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: 'Rulers and elders of the people! <sup>9</sup> If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, <sup>10</sup> then know this, you and all the people of Israel: it is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. <sup>11</sup> Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone."**

— (ACTS 4:8-11)

**<sup>31</sup> After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.**

— (ACTS 4:31)

**<sup>9</sup> Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, <sup>10</sup> 'You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?'**


— (ACTS 13:9-10)

**<sup>52</sup> And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.**

— (ACTS 13:52)

Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, the disciples spoke confidently about their faith in Jesus.

 What impact does the Holy Spirit have in our lives?

 Have you ever felt empowered and equipped by the Holy Spirit? If so, what was your experience?

*Give each member of the group a 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit' handout which outlines teaching from 'The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine'. Read through the text together and share thoughts about the content. The aim of the discussion is to help the young people understand what they believe about the Holy Spirit. It will also challenge the young people to think about whether they have received the Holy Spirit in their lives and how that impacts the way they live out their Christian faith. Encourage the group to share their experience of the Holy Spirit.*

### BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The holiness experience is sometimes described as the 'baptism of the Holy Spirit'. Baptism is a symbol of dying to ourselves and emerging as new persons in Christ which was used by the early Church to describe the reception of the Holy Spirit at regeneration. 'We were all baptised by one Spirit into one body' (1 Corinthians 12:13). The 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' may therefore be considered as distinct from being 'filled with the Holy Spirit'. Baptism happens once at the beginning of Christian experience, while infilling happens repeatedly throughout the Christian life.

— (THE SALVATION ARMY HANDBOOK OF DOCTRINE 2010/2013 P203)

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

*If the group would like to discover more about this topic, then watch and discuss the clip.*

-  **Watch: When & How we Receive the Holy Spirit (2:36)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDRos6ZXSSk>

### WORSHIP

*The young people have spent much of this session thinking about their own experience of the Holy Spirit. This section of the session has been rewritten a number of times to try and provide you with an activity or set of reflection questions. Our overwhelming sense is that the remainder of the session should be given over to the Spirit to work in the lives of your young people. Pray with them, sing with them, challenge them about the power that is available to embolden their witness for Jesus. The only resource we are providing is a song that invites the Holy Spirit to work within your group.*

-  **Watch: Jesus Culture – ‘Holy Spirit’ (Official Lyric Video) (8:09)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNwnOfZ5N8A>

*Be assured that the writers and editors of this session have spent time praying for your young people that the Holy Spirit would move in their lives and fill them with his almighty power.*

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

*Use the lyrics of the song as a benediction to bring your time of prayer and reflection to a close.*

**‘Holy Spirit, you are welcome here  
Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere  
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long for  
To be overcome by your presence, Lord.’  
— BY KATIE TORWALT, BRYAN TORWALT**

## AND ...

In today's session we're thinking about the role that the Holy Spirit plays in developing community in the church. Acts 2:42-27 is often used as an example of the 'perfect' church – but is it really achievable? How does our perspective of these well-known verses change when they are placed in the context of the Pentecost story? Through the power of the Holy Spirit we can live out every 'And ...' within these verses.

## WELCOME

*Before the group arrives, place the following quotes around the room. Ask the group to move around the room reading and discussing the quotes. When they have had time to read and discuss each quote, bring them back together and ask them to describe the 'perfect' church.*

- “Search for the perfect church if you will; when you find it, join it, and realise that on that day it becomes something less than perfect.”  
— ANDREW GREELEY
- “The Church is the Church only when it exists for others ... not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others.”  
— DIETRICH BONHOEFFER
- “The Church needs more people willing to wash feet, not just point out they're dirty or complain that they smell.”  
— MARK HART
- “Much of today's Church relies more on a book the early Church didn't have, than the Holy Spirit they did.”  
— BILL JOHNSON
- “I think the greatest weakness in the Church today is that almost no one believes that God invests his power in the Bible. Everyone is looking for power in a program, in a methodology, in a technique, in anything and everything but that in which God has placed it – his word. He alone has the power to change lives for eternity, and that power is focused on the Scriptures.”  
— RC SPROUL
- “You plant the gospel. You don't plant churches.”  
— ALAN HIRSCH
- “The glory of the gospel is that when the Church is absolutely different from the world, she invariably attracts it.”  
— MARTYN LLOYD-JONES
- “I believe that there are too many practitioners in the Church, who are not believers.”  
— CS LEWIS
- “Unity does not mean sameness. It means oneness of purpose.”  
— PRISCILLA SHIRER

“ ‘I believe that one reason why the Church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the Church.’

— CHARLES SPURGEON

“ ‘We need to stop giving people excuses not to believe in God. You’ve probably heard the expression “I believe in God, just not organised religion.” I don’t think people would say that if the Church truly lived like we are called to live.’

— FRANCIS CHAN

If we believe in Jesus Christ and have received the Holy Spirit, then we are part of the Church, the body of Christ.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

🗨️ Which statement about the Church stood out for you? Explain why.

## WORD

Earlier you had the opportunity to describe your ‘perfect’ church. Our Scripture for today is often used as an example of the Church living as God intended.

📖 Read:

**<sup>42</sup> And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.**

— (ACTS 2:42-47 ESV)

Write the word ‘And ...’ in the middle of a large sheet of paper. Ask the group to list the different aspects of the early Church and create a spider diagram. Encourage the group to read through the spider diagram and discuss the following questions.

🗨️ What do you notice about the way the early Church functioned?

🗨️ Would you have wanted to join the early Church? If so, why?

These verses are often pulled from their context to create a picture of the ‘perfect’ church, but they are part of the wider Pentecost story.

📖 Read:

**<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ <sup>38</sup> And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ <sup>40</sup> And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ <sup>41</sup> So those who received his word were baptised, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.**

— (ACTS 2:37-41 ESV)

 What had just happened before Luke described the 'perfect' church?

There were originally 12 disciples.

When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost there were around 120 followers of Jesus gathered together.

By the end of Peter's Pentecost sermon, around 3,000 people had accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and received the Holy Spirit. This was a megachurch by anyone's standards.

It is after this massive explosion of the Church that we get a description of how their spiritual community worked.

 **Read Acts 2:42-47 again. How has the wider context of these verses changed your understanding of their meaning?**

The Church was able to function this way because the people involved believed in Jesus and were empowered and equipped by the Holy Spirit. When people turned from these essential elements of church life, things didn't go smoothly.


*Divide the young people into three small groups and give each group one of the following Scripture references:*

Acts 5:1-11


Acts 6:1-7

Acts 15:22-29

*Ask the group to explore and feed back what went wrong in each situation and how the Holy Spirit was involved.*

 Does the Holy Spirit play an integral role in the way we solve issues in the Church today? If so, how does that happen?

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 How does online worship align with the Acts 2:42-47 description of the Church?

### WITNESS

*For the Witness activity today, the young people need to create a modern-day version of the church community described in Acts 2:42-47. What does it look like? How does it operate? It is up to them how they present their church. It could be a description for a home page on a website, or an artistic representation identifying the different aspects of the church. The aim of the activity is for the young people to start from scratch, using the Scripture as a blueprint. Once they have completed their representation of the church, they can share it with the rest of the group and discuss their ideas. Did they include a group of followers of Jesus who have received the Holy Spirit? If not, then pick this up as a discussion point.*

*Now encourage the group to think about their regular place of worship and compare it with the Acts 2:42-47 church. Remind them to do this with grace and not criticism. Every one of us is part of the body of Christ and plays a role in the church and how it functions. It's easy to criticise from a distance, removing ourselves from the church, but Scripture makes it clear that we are all in it together.*


*How could the group reflect the aspects of the early Church shown in Acts 2:42-47?*

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

The early Church was focused on each other. They were a community. Today we increasingly focus on ourselves or our group identity. Social media encourages us to turn inward instead of reaching out to others.

 Do you agree with this statement? If so, why? If not, why not?

 Do you feel that happening to you?

 How can the Holy Spirit help you to live out the principles of the Acts 2:42-47 Church?

### WORSHIP

During the session we have considered the integral part the Holy Spirit plays in our church community. We have looked at places where our own church may need to grow and develop. Now we are going to spend time praying for that to happen. As we pray, we need to remember that we are part of that church. Let's ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance where our spiritual community is lacking and give thanks for the places where God is working.

Lay out all the shared resources you have created during the session. These can be used as a prompt to pray for the church. If the group feels more comfortable, then give them time to write or draw their prayers. A piece of music is provided if required. Alternatively encourage the group to pray as the Spirit leads. They can pray for each other, their local church community and the whole body of Christ.

 **Watch: 'Build Your Church' – Elevation Worship & Maverick City (7:04)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wegtdmbeuh0>

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Bring the session to a close with the following Scripture prayer.

**<sup>5</sup> May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. <sup>6</sup> Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

— (ROMANS 15:5-6 NLT)



## PINEAPPLE WAISTCOAT

In today's session we are going to explore what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit and look at how he guides and directs us. We'll consider the way the fruit of the Spirit grows in our lives and the part that we play in clothing ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

### WELCOME

Give each member of the group a piece of paper and some felt-tips. Ask them to design a fruit-themed item of clothing. The more unusual the garment the better. Give them time to create their masterpiece and then share them together.


Would they ever wear their creation? And if so, where would they go while wearing it?

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Place all the fruit-themed clothing ideas in front of the group. They need to decide the best celebrity to wear each item and decide where they would wear it.

### WORD







In our previous sessions we watched Jesus breathe the Holy Spirit over the disciples. We saw the followers of Jesus receive the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and witnessed the explosion of the Church. We discovered how the Spirit enabled the early Church to live in community. Today we'll consider what it means when we are filled with the Holy Spirit and how it transforms the way we live our daily lives.

 **Watch: How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? | GotQuestions.org (stop at 5:21)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5XgVoq3n7o>

 **Read:**

**<sup>15</sup> So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. <sup>16</sup> Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. <sup>17</sup> Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. <sup>18</sup> Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, <sup>19</sup> singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

— (EPHESIANS 5:15-20 NLT)

-  How does God want us to live? How does this contrast with the way many people live their lives today?
-  How does being regularly filled with the Holy Spirit differ from the moment we were born again and received the Holy Spirit for the first time?
-  What hinders us from being filled by the Holy Spirit?
-  How does our life change when we are led by the Holy Spirit?
-  How can we submit to the Holy Spirit on a daily basis?
-  If we're honest, do we actually want to submit to the Holy Spirit? If not, then why not?



We're not the only ones who struggle to live our lives in line with the Holy Spirit. Listen to what Paul had to say in his letter to the Romans.

### Read:


<sup>15</sup> *Listen, I can't explain my actions. Here's why: I am not able to do the things I want; and at the same time, I do the things I despise.* <sup>16</sup> *If I am doing the things I have already decided not to do, I am agreeing with the law regarding what is good.* <sup>17</sup> *But now I am no longer the one acting – I've lost control – sin has taken up residence in me and is wreaking havoc.* <sup>18</sup> *I know that in me, that is, in my fallen human nature, there is nothing good. I can will myself to do something good, but that does not help me carry it out.* <sup>19</sup> *I can determine that I am going to do good, but I don't do it; instead, I end up living out the evil that I decided not to do.* <sup>20</sup> *If I end up doing the exact thing I pledged not to do, I am no longer doing it because sin has taken up residence in me.*

— (ROMANS 7:15-20 VOICE)

In these verses Paul is describing the struggle he has as he tries to live a holy life following Jesus. He sounds like he has given it a lot of thought but still doesn't understand why he does the opposite of what he knows is right.


-  In what ways can you relate to what Paul is saying?
-  What role does the Holy Spirit play in the choices that we make and the way we live?

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

-  What is your response to the following quote?

**“If I were Satan and my ultimate goal was to thwart God's kingdom and purposes, one of my main strategies would be to get churchgoers to ignore the Holy Spirit.”**

— FRANCIS CHAN

-  How much attention do you pay to the Holy Spirit in your life?

## WITNESS

When we believe in Jesus, we are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, but we also play an active part in living out our faith. To think about these two ideas, we're going to create a pineapple waistcoat. This item of clothing will help us to remember two metaphors used by Paul to help us think about our walk with the Holy Spirit.

*For this activity you will need to divide the group into two teams: the Pineapple Team and the Waistcoat Team. They will need to follow their own set of instructions. They will also need paper and felt-tips to create their waistcoat or pineapples.*

### WAISTCOAT TEAM

*Read Colossians 3:5-14.*

*Create a large waistcoat out of paper and decorate it with the main themes of Colossians 3:5-14.*

*What is Paul trying to say in these verses?*

### PINEAPPLE TEAM

*Read Galatians 5:13-25.*

*Create individual pineapples out of paper and decorate them with the main themes of Galatians 5:13-25.*


*What is Paul trying to say in these verses?*

*When each group has completed the task they can feed back what they have discovered. Start with the Waistcoat Team. Discuss the part that we play in making an active choice to live our lives in line with the Holy Spirit.*

Then ask the Pineapple Team to feed back what they have discovered. As they do this, encourage them to place the pineapples on to the waistcoat. Discuss how the Holy Spirit naturally grows the fruit of the Spirit within us.

Our pineapple waistcoat reminds us that when we receive and are filled with the Holy Spirit, then this connection prompts the growth of fruit within us. Through the Holy Spirit's power we become more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good and faithful. Alongside this, we can actively engage in living out our faith by clothing ourselves in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 In what way, if any, does the pineapple waistcoat challenge you to change the way you are living out your faith?

### WORSHIP




In Ephesians 5:15-20 we read these words:

**<sup>15</sup> So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. <sup>16</sup> Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. <sup>17</sup> Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. <sup>18</sup> Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, <sup>19</sup> singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**



— (EPHESIANS 5:15-20 NLT)

To finish our session together, we're going to 'sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs' and make 'music to the Lord in your hearts'. The songs are silly but will hopefully remind you of all we have learned in the last four sessions, while putting a smile on your face.

A selection of very silly Holy Spirit-related songs are provided below for you to choose from. Enjoy worshipping together and then bring the session to a close in prayer.

-  **'Fruit of the Spirit' – Fun Song on VBG (3:08)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmIEiAwrKkU>
-  **'Fruit of the Spirit' (Galatians 5:22-23) SONGS – Sing the Bible Vol.4 – Slugs & Bugs (2:31)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qG9SbXG9BaY>
-  **Colossians 3:12 & 14a – 'Put on Love' (4:45)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kN5sdqms2Lg>

If you would like to have a slightly more grown-up time of sung worship, then the following songs could be used.

-  **Patrick Mayberry – 'Holy Spirit Come' (Official Lyric Video) (4:18)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoTNHiFq0p0>
-  **'Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God' (Official Lyric Video) – Keith & Kristyn Getty**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDYjn-YdnD4>

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

As you reflect on the four sessions you have shared about the Holy Spirit, what is the most important thing you have discovered?