

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



THE HOLY SPIRIT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Acts 2:1-15,33,38-41 The coming of the Holy Spirit

Before he was taken up into Heaven, Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem because he was sending the Holy Spirit. This week we consider why Jesus sent his Holy Spirit, and if we would welcome his Holy Spirit into our room.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper or mini flames cut from red, orange or red card
- A Bible verse wristband printed on card

You will need:

- To research five or six greetings in different languages – see Start It section
- Cards and pens (optional)
- Up to five bouncy balls (all different colours) and sticky notes (optional)
- Bean bags (optional)
- Access to a calendar and a laptop/tablet
- Yellow, orange or red card cut into ten large flames, and pens. On the back of each flame stick a verse from the Holy Spirit sheet.
- Glue or a stapler

Start It

Ask: Can any of you speak more than one language? If so, what is it and how did you learn to speak it? (Perhaps it is your first language.) How do you greet someone in that language?

Play a game based on saying 'Hello' in another language. Research five or six greetings for 'Hello' / 'good day'. According to the 2011 census, the top 12 languages (after English) in England and Wales are: Polish, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Arabic, French, Chinese, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish and Italian. But you may wish to select languages that are widely spoken in your area. Use these websites to help you. <https://translate.google.co.uk> <https://www.babelfish.com>

Option One – Matching

Create cards with the greeting and the language written on them and ask the children to match each 'Hello' to the correct language.

Option Two – Bounce

Decide on the greeting / 'Hello' the group want to learn to say. Write each 'Hello' on a sticky note and stick each on a ball. Start with one ball / one 'Hello'. Everyone stands in a circle and a ball is bounced across the circle. When someone catches the ball, they say 'Hello' in that language, then bounce it on again. Start introducing more balls and more 'Hello's. Find out how many balls / 'Hello's your group can manage!

Option Three – Bean bags

Give each pair or small group a bean bag and a set of cards, each with a different 'Hello' written on it. Ask them to arrange the 'Hello's on the ground, spaced out and at least a metre away from them. The group takes turns throwing the bean bag, aiming at a 'Hello'. If they can

cover the 'Hello' and say it correctly, the 'Hello' can be picked up. Allow access to a laptop/tablet to double check pronunciation. Too easy? Only allow pronunciation checks to be done before the throw. Or add in another set of cards, with the languages on it plus another bean bag – both must be covered before they can be said.

Sing It

● **Say:** Jesus promised to send the disciples a special helper to be with them for ever (John 14:16). Today's song tells us all about the different ways the Holy Spirit helps us.

'Holy Spirit for children' by Ayi and her friends (3 mins 29 secs)

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

Tell It

● **Say:** Today we are going to discover more about the spectacular day that the Church was born. We used the word 'spectacular' a few weeks ago when we looked at the story of Elijah. Today we're going to fast forward quite a long time and discover more about the spectacular Holy Spirit.

● **Say:** In today's Bible story the disciples were given the power of the Holy Spirit, and because of this they were able to speak in many different languages to spread the message of Jesus.

● **Say:** Our story starts in the book of Acts in the New Testament, when Jesus had risen from the dead and was spending time with the disciples. In Acts, Luke was writing to his friend Theophilus, and he shared everything that happened with Jesus.

Read Acts 1:1-9 (ICB).

'To Theophilus,

The first book I wrote was about everything that Jesus did and taught. I wrote about the whole life of Jesus, from the beginning until the day he was taken up into Heaven. Before this, Jesus talked to the apostles he had chosen. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Jesus told them what they should do. After his death, he showed himself to them and proved in many ways that he was alive. The apostles saw Jesus during the 40 days after he was raised from death. He spoke to them about the kingdom of God. Once when he was eating with them, he told them not to leave Jerusalem. He said, "The Father has made you a promise which I told you about before. Wait here to receive this promise. John baptised people with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

● **Say:** The disciples were asked to wait for a promise, a gift, but they didn't know when it would arrive.

Ask:

→ How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus told them they were getting a promise, a gift?

→ How do you feel when you are waiting for a gift?

→ Would it make it harder if you did not know when the gift would arrive? If so, how?

● **Say:** It took 50 days for the promise, the gift, to arrive.

Ask: What date do you think it will be 50 days from now?

Give the children the opportunity to guess what the date would be in 50 days, and then work it out together on a calendar.

● **Say:** In 50 days it will be (*insert date*). That may feel like a long time to wait for something, but Jesus had to wait for a special day. The surprise arrived on the festival of Pentecost, a special celebration for the Jewish people.

Ask:

- What is your favourite celebration or festival?
- Why do you love it so much?
- What surprises are there at your favourite festival?

🗨 **Say:** Pentecost is a special time for the Jewish people as it gives them a chance to say thank you for the wheat harvest and to celebrate God's gift of the Ten Commandments.

🗨 **Say:** On this special Pentecost, God had another gift to give to the people.

Video

'God sends the Holy Spirit' by Saddleback Kids (3 mins 29 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMQKy1Mx49M>

Ask the children to close their eyes and imagine that they are in the room with the disciples. Read Acts 2:1-4 and then discuss their thoughts about what happened.

Read Acts 2:1-4 (*ICB*)

'When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a noise came from Heaven. It sounded like a strong wind blowing. This noise filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw something that looked like flames of fire. The flames were separated and stood over each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak different languages. The Holy Spirit was giving them the power to speak these languages.'

Ask:

- What did the disciples do as soon as they were filled with the Holy Spirit?
- Why do you think the Holy Spirit helped the disciples to speak in different languages?
- How did this help spread the message of Jesus?
- How many people believed in Jesus after they had listened to the disciples?
- Do you think the disciples could have done what they did without the power of the Holy Spirit? Explain your answer.

🗨 **Say:** The same Holy Spirit who helped the disciples to do amazing things for God, is available for you today. And that's pretty spectacular!

Action It

Cut out ten large flames in either red, yellow or orange. On the back of each flame stick a different Holy Spirit verse. Lay these out on a table or on the floor, face down without the Scripture showing. Alternatively you could stick them up around the room for the children to collect and bring back to the whole group.

Ask the children to choose or collect a flame, and read the Scripture together. For each flame discuss what the Scripture teaches us about the Holy Spirit and write down the children's summarised response on the other side of the flame.

Depending on your group, you could divide them into pairs and ask them to collect a flame, read it and give their thoughts about it. Start to build up a 'fire' as you look at the different flames. By the end of the activity, you should have lots of words and phrases that describe the characteristics and work of the Holy Spirit.

To aid discussion, here are the notes from the *To Serve* leader's handbook that provide additional information on the work of the Holy Spirit.

'When we became followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit came to live within our lives (1 Corinthians 12:12-13) and began a process of transforming our identity into the likeness of Christ, freeing us to become the person God has created us to be. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit we are equipped with his power and gifts, and all that we need to follow love and follow God.' (p79)

Ask: As you look at all the characteristics and work of the Holy Spirit, explain why you think this was such a special gift.

Pray It

● **Say:** When Jesus went up to Heaven, the disciples must have felt like they had been left all alone. When the gift of the Holy Spirit came, they had someone to help and guide them even after Jesus had gone. Throughout the book of Acts we see lots of examples of the Holy Spirit giving the disciples the power to do amazing things.

● **Say:** Look at all the flames in front of you and think about all we have discussed about the Holy Spirit today.

Ask: What would you like to ask the Holy Spirit for?

Discuss ideas with the children from the Holy Spirit fire you have created. How do they need the Holy Spirit to help them, guide them, where do they need power?

Give each child a slip of paper, or a mini flame if you have left-over coloured paper. Ask them to finish the following prayer.

Dear Holy Spirit,

Please ...

Once the children have written their prayers, then share them together.

Bible verse

Share this month's Bible verse with the group.

'The true children of God are those who let God's Spirit lead them.'

— (Romans 8:14 *ICB*)

Give each child a Bible verse wristband. Some children may want to colour it in before wearing it. Stick or staple the ends together to make a wristband.

TIPS

- Check the sizing with the child before gluing/stapling the wristband.
- If stapling, make sure the ends of the staple are not next to the child's skin.
- For smaller wrists or highly decorated wristbands, make a loop round the child's wrist then glue/staple it leaving the two ends sticking out like a tail so the text/design is still visible.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It Ideas for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

FOR ME



Discover

The work of the Holy Spirit can be challenging to understand and we can sometimes get a little muddled about the relationship between God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

To find out more, watch the clip, and if you still have questions then get in touch with an adult who can give you more information.

What does the Holy Spirit do? by CCC Kids

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

TOGETHER



Learn

One of the ways God shows he loves us is through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The disciples were able to speak many languages through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ask a grown-up to help you find out the following (Google might help as well):

- ➔ What are the top five languages spoken in your town or city?
- ➔ How do say 'God loves you' in the top five languages?

If you want to find out how to say each of these, you could try Google Translate.



Song for the week

'Holy Spirit for children' by Ayi and her friends

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



Memory verse

'The true children of God are those who let God's Spirit lead them.'

— Romans 8:14 (ICB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

