Explore it

The Gift of Pentecost



Bible verses:

John 20:19-23; Acts 2:1-12 The coming of the Holy Spirit



Aim:

To understand God as a perfect gift giver



Today's fruit:

Goodness



In this session we celebrate the coming of God's Holy Spirit being made available to every follower of Jesus.

Before he went to be with God the Father, Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem because he was sending the Holy Spirit. This week we consider why the Holy Spirit came, and our choice to have the Holy Spirit in our lives.

At Pentecost we encounter God's goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit in us we can share God's love, joy, peace, patience and more!

Each child will need:

- Pentecost memory verse wristband

You will need:

- Research five or six greetings for 'Hello' / 'good day' see Start it
- To select a game (and resources) to learn the greetings:
 - o Cards and pens
 - o Up to five bouncy balls (all different colours) and sticky notes
 - o Bean bags, cards and pens
 - o A laptop/tablet to check pronunciation
- To download the Bible App for Kids (optional) see Share it
- To prepare a Pass the Parcel game, with a Holy Spirit Bible Verse in each layer plus music for the game
- Yellow, orange or red card cut into ten large flames, glue and pens



- Today's fruit sign: Goodness
- Quiet reflective music
- To set up exploring spaces activities see Pray it



Ask:

Can 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. There are three options to choose from.

According to the 2021 census, the top 10 languages (after English and Welsh) in England and Wales are: Polish, Romanian, Punjabi, Urdu, Portuguese, Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, Gujarati and Italian. Alternatively, you may wish to select languages that are widely spoken in your area.

Use these websites to help you:

- translate.google.co.uk
- 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 the children to arrange the 'Hello's on the ground, spaced out and at least a metre away from the group. Each person 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.





Say:

Jesus promised to send the disciples a special helper to be with them for ever (John 14:16).

Here are two songs to choose from - or use them both!

'Holy Spirit Fire' (Kingdomcity Kids) by Kingdomcity (2:56)

Or

'Holy Spirit' lyrics:motions (City Kids Worship) (4 minutes 4 seconds)



Say

Today we are going to discover more about the wonderful day that the Church was born.

Say:

In today's Bible story the disciples were given power by the Holy Spirit, and because of this they were able to speak in many different languages to spread the good news of Jesus.

Say:

Our story starts in the book of John in the New Testament, when Jesus had risen from the dead.

Read John 20:19-23 (ICB)

'It was the first day of the week. That evening Jesus' followers were together. The doors were locked, because they were afraid of the Jews. Then Jesus came and stood among them. He said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. His followers were very happy when they saw the Lord.

'Then Jesus said again, "Peace be with you! As the Father sent me, I now send you." After he said this, he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven. If you don't forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Say:

As Jesus breathed, he told the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit, a special gift from God.

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's Wonderful Gift by The Bible App for Kids (1:52)

Alternatively, you could download this app and use the story in an interactive way using a tablet/iPad.

Read Acts 2:1-12 (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.

'There were some religious Jews staying in Jerusalem who were from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a crowd came together. They were all surprised, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were completely amazed at this. They said, "Look! Aren't all these men that we hear speaking from Galilee? But each of us hears them in his own language. How is this possible? We are from different places: Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the areas of Libya near Cyrene, Rome (both Jews and those who had become Jews), Crete and Arabia. But we hear these men telling in our own languages about the great things God has done!' They were all amazed and confused. They asked each other, 'What does this mean?'"

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? (Look up v41.)
- 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 us today. And that's pretty spectacular!



=□ Action it

Play *Pass the Parcel*, and in each layer include a different Bible verse about the Holy Spirit. As you play the game, ask the children to read aloud their verses. After the game, ask the children to stick their Bible verse on a flame shape. 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, and a paper 'bonfire'.

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.



Say:

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

Display the Goodness sign.

Say:

At Pentecost we encounter God's goodness. We know from thinking about the fruit of the Spirit that when the Holy Spirit works in our lives, we can show other fruit such as joy, love, peace and patience. The Holy Spirit still helps, guides and empowers people today. If we want to, we can ask the Holy Spirit to be with us, to help us, and to give us power to do special things for God.

Say:

We are going to put some quiet music on, and you can spend time with the Holy Spirit by using the spaces around the room. You can ask questions and explore.



Explain each of the 'Exploring Spaces' you have set up, and how much time there is available. This is a time for the children to freely explore with the support of the leaders. You may also wish to engage with the spaces, to help lead by example.

Exploring Space Ideas:

- **Lego** Provide a range for creative play.
- Big Questions Put out a big sheet of paper and pens. Allow the children to write their big questions about the Holy Spirit.
- Holy Space Lay out some material or create a quiet corner. Tell the children this can be a special/holy place. To help acknowledge the special place, they could take their shoes off.
 This is a space for just them and the Holy Spirit they don't need to chat to anyone else in this space.
- Creative Put out a small selection of creative items: paper / pens / other items you may already have. The children can create anything they want to help them think about the Holy Spirit. You could also give each child a flame-shaped gift tag (Pentecost Sunday 2025 Salvationist)
- **Chatting** Have a leader in another space who can facilitate discussions. Allow them to explore questions, but don't worry about giving definitive answers. It's about exploration!

Ask the children to regroup and ask if anyone has anything they'd like to share. Alternatively, you could say you'd like to share your own response.

Memory verse

Share a Bible verse with the group and give each child a memory verse wristband.

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

(Romans 8:14 ICB)

Finish with a time of prayer.



Explore It is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview)

