SU Scotland



# 50. Pentecost

## BIBLE STORY / REFERENCE

**Acts 2:1-47, John 14:16-17, John 14:26, Acts 1:8**

The Holy Spirit comes to the disciples

## AIMS

To help the children understand how the Holy Spirit changed the disciples and gave them power.

To reflect on how the Holy Spirit works in the lives of Christians today.

**The Holy Spirit came to the disciples and filled them with power and boldness to tell others about Jesus.**

## PREP FOR LEADERS

Read through the Bible passage for this session and reflect:

- What do the passages for today teach us about the Holy Spirit?
- Where have you seen the Holy Spirit's power at work in your life?

Take some time to pray for your group.

## GAMES / INTRO ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to introduce today's theme:

### Blow Football

*You will need: straws, ping pong balls, table (or masking tape)*

Divide the children into two teams and give each child a straw. Get one team to stand on each side of a table. Place a ping pong ball in the centre of the table and get the first child from each team to come up to play. Their challenge is to blow the ping pong ball off their opponent's side of the table. They are not allowed to hit the ball with the straw; they can only move it by blowing.

Give a point to the person who succeeds at the challenge; then let the next child in each team come up to play. Once everyone has had a turn, the team with the most points wins.

If you have a large group, you could create more teams and have the game taking place around several tables at once.

### Languages Game

*You will need: printouts from additional document: Languages Game, Blu-tack (optional)*

The first ten sheets of additional document: Languages Game contain phrases in different languages. You could stick these up around the room before the children arrive, or you could lay them out on the floor or a table when you do this activity.

Have the names of the languages (from the final two pages of the document) cut out in advance.

*(continued overleaf)*

Tell the children that their task is to match up the phrases with the correct languages.

The answers are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Louve o Senhor | Portuguese |
| Preiset den Herrn | German |
| Molaibh an tighearna | Gaelic |
| Puji tuhan | Indonesian |
| δόξα τον κύριο | Greek |
| השבח לאל | Hebrew |
| 主を称賛 | Japanese |
| Sifu Bwana | Swahili |
| chwalmy Pana | Polish |
| سبح الرب | Arabic |

Once they have done this, tell them that all the phrases mean the same thing. See if any of them know, or can guess, what the meaning is. The answer is "Praise the Lord."

### Minute To Win It Challenge

*You will need: ten paper or plastic cups, balloons, timer*

Choose a child to take part in the challenge. Lay the cups out upside down along the edge of a table. Give the child a balloon and tell them that their challenge is to blow as many of the cups as they can off the table in a minute. They have to do this by blowing into the balloon and then releasing the air from it in the direction of the cups. If you have time, you could let another child try the challenge and see who is able to get more cups off the table in a minute or who is able to blow all the cups off the quickest.

### Balloon Relay

*You will need: balloons, newspapers, buckets or hoops (optional)*

Divide the children into teams of about five people and get them to line up in their teams at one end of the hall ready for a relay race.

Give the first child in each team a newspaper and a balloon. Their aim is to roll up the newspaper and use it to flap or hit the balloon into either a bucket or a hoop that has been placed at the other end of the room opposite their team, or else over a particular line. Once they have done this, they can pick up the balloon and run back to hand the balloon and the newspaper to the next member of their team. The first team to have every member complete the challenge wins.

## EXPLORING THE BIBLE

### Recap/ Introduction

See if the children can remember what they were learning about last time.

**After Jesus had risen from the dead, he spent some time with his disciples teaching them about God's Kingdom. He gave them the job of telling other people about him and making more disciples. He promised to be with them and to help them in this, but he wasn't going to be with them in the same way as he had been up until then.**

**He went up to heaven, but he promised to send the Holy Spirit to be with them, so the disciples went back to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit to come.**

### Pentecost Story

*You will need: equipment to play music, parcel prepared for Pass the Parcel game with pictures (from additional document: Symbols for pass the parcel game) and words (from additional document: Slips for pass the parcel game) wrapped between each layer. You will need to wrap them in the reverse order of the script below so that they will be opened in the correct order. You could also put a small gift for the children to share in the centre of the parcel under the final layer they will open.*

Stick the slips with John 14:16-17, John 14:26, and Acts 1:8 to the outside of the parcel.

Get the children to sit in a circle. Show them the parcel you have prepared, and explain that just as sometimes they might have to wait to open a gift when it is Christmas or their birthday, the disciples had to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit that Jesus had promised.

Read out the verses on the outside of the parcel (John 14:16 -17, John 14:26 and Acts 1:8). These were some of the things Jesus had told his disciples about the Holy Spirit.

**How do you think they felt as they waited for the Holy Spirit?**

Play a game of Pass the Parcel to find out more about what happened when the Holy Spirit came.

Play some music and get the children to pass the parcel around the circle. When the music stops let the child who is holding the parcel remove one layer of paper to reveal a picture and the next part of the story.

You could give them the option to read out the part of the story they find or you could get a leader to read it. Make sure not to put anyone under pressure to read if they don't want to. The words from the slips are included in the script below.

Layer 1 – Wind

**When the day of Pentecost came all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly, there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.** (Acts 2:1-2 GNT)

Layer 2 – Flames

**Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there.** (Acts 2:3 GNT)

Layer 3 – Speech bubble

**They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak. There were Jews living in Jerusalem, religious people who had come from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a large crowd gathered. They were all excited, because all of them heard the believers talking in their own languages.** (Acts 2:4-6 GNT)

Layer 4 – Peter speaks boldly

**Peter stepped forward to speak to the crowd, telling them all about Jesus and how he had been killed but raised to life again. He told them that Jesus was the Messiah and that they could be saved from the punishment for their sin by turning away from sin and putting their faith in Jesus.** (summary of Acts 2:14-39)

Layer 5 – Crowd

**Many of them believed his message and were baptized and about three thousand people were added to the group that day.** (Acts 2:41 GNT)

Layer 6 – Community

**The believers spent time together each day learning and teaching, praising God, eating together and helping one another. More and more people joined them and put their faith in Jesus.** (summary of Acts 2:42-47)

**This is the story of how the Christian church began because it was the first time there were large numbers of people following Jesus.**

### Pentecost Story Video

*You will need: equipment to play video*

This short video features children telling the story of the Holy Spirit coming to the disciples: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vuUK6REOWuE It could be used in addition to the activity above if you have time, or as an alternative.

## REFLECT & RESPOND

### Popcorn Reflection

*You will need: popcorn kernels, either a popcorn popper or some ready-to-eat popcorn (Make sure you are aware of the school's policy on snacks if you plan to give the children popcorn to eat.)*

**Before the Holy Spirit came, the disciples were scared and uncertain. Jesus had gone to heaven and they weren't sure what was going to happen next but then they were totally transformed.**

Ask the children if they can remember the different things that happened when the Holy Spirit came.

Show the children the popcorn kernels – in this state they are very small and they're not much use, but like the disciples they can be transformed into something very different.

If you have a popcorn popper, you can demonstrate this for the children to watch. If not, you can show them the ready-to-eat popcorn and talk about how it came from kernels just like the ones you showed them but it has become something very different and much better.

**After the Holy Spirit came to the disciples they became bold and brave, they were able to do things they had never been able to do before, like speaking in different languages, and they were able to tell everyone about Jesus. It was all because of the Holy Spirit's power working in them.**

**Last time we talked about how God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so no wonder it made a difference! It was God's Spirit living inside them!**

**Christians believe that when people begin to follow Jesus the Holy Spirit comes to live inside them too, helping them to know God more and helping them to live for God and tell others about him.**

### Paint blowing pictures

*You will need: watered-down paint or liquid water colours, printouts from additional document: Holy Spirit, straws, teaspoons or pipettes, cover for table, wipes for cleaning up*

Give each of the children a sheet with the words from Acts 1:8 (from additional document: Holy Spirit) in the centre.

Let them decorate the space round the verse by placing drops of paint onto their paper with a teaspoon or pipette and then using a straw to blow on the paint and spread it, creating a pattern.

You could point out that just as the patterns they create look different, the Holy Spirit's work looks different in everyone's lives, but each follower of Jesus has the Holy Spirit living in them.

Encourage the children to take a moment of quiet to bring their prayers or questions to God; then lead them in prayer to close.