

Pentecost – Acts 2:1-12

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: SPIRIT

As Christians today, 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 the wind and appearing like fire.

This was a great mystery. Everyone was able to understand and speak in other languages and knew God was working in their lives in mysterious ways. 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. Many people were shocked, surprised, and confused. Like many of us, they wondered what this might all mean.

The Spirit did not just come to the disciples, but to each person gathered there. The Spirit empowered God’s people and gave them the courage to continue to spread the good news about Jesus. We may not hear rushing wind or see licks 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:

This week, take time to stop, pay attention, and notice God’s Spirit working in your daily life. Set a clock to remind you. When your reminder goes off, spend a few minutes in prayer, reading the Pentecost scripture lesson, or sitting silently to feel God’s Holy Spirit. Like the people who gathered for Pentecost, wonder, “What does this mean?”

Come Together

Supplies: Paper, writing utensils, Wonder Box

Before Class: Write today's Wonder Word, "Spirit" on a whiteboard or large sheet of paper. Prepare a place for each child to write or draw their answer. Consider placing items in this area that might represent the Holy Spirit, such as a red cloth, images of doves, candles, and so forth.

- Play music (Celebrate Wonder Annual Music CD) as children arrive.
- Greet each child and show the children where to mark their attendance.
- Invite children to wonder about the word spirit. On a piece of paper, encourage them to write or draw about the word "Spirit". Let them place their ideas in the Wonder Box.
- Give each child this week's Activity Sheet to do while waiting for everyone to arrive. (This will be a puzzle, life connection article, journaling prompt, or easy craft.)

Tip: Children do not have to place their papers in the Wonder Box. Remind children that some of the ideas placed in the box will be shared during the story time.

Share a Story

Supplies: Wonder Mat, Class Kit p. x., a Bible, Celebrate Wonder DVD, TV, and a DVD player

- Invite the children to join you in a circle on the floor.
- Lay out the wonder mat on the floor. Move the wonder figure.
- Read the Bible story, Acts 2:1-12.
- Watch the video. (The video will be a 10-14-year-old child helping the children in your classroom process the story through wonder.)

Wonder Time

Wonder with Me:

- What is your favorite part of the Bible story?
- What do you think the people looked like with flames over their heads?
- What do you think the Holy Spirit feels like?
- What do you think it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

- Open the Wonder Box. Share ideas the children had about the faith word, “Spirit”.
- Share the definition.

SAY: The Spirit is God’s presence that guides, comforts, and strengthens our faith.

- Wonder together about the word Spirit.

Experience Wonder

Wind Chimes (Art)

Supplies: plastic cups, permanent markers, yarn, beads, bells, hole punch

- Distribute supplies and let children decorate the cup with permanent markers.
- Direct children to thread beads and bells on yarn.
- Encourage the children to punch holes in their cups around the mouth and one hole through the bottom center.
- Invite the children to tie their pieces of beaded yarn through the holes around their cups.
- Encourage the children to string yarn through the bottom hole and tie a knot in the end inside the cup to create a hanger.

Wonder with Me:

- Where will you put your wind chime?
- What does the wind sound like?

Many Languages (Logical)

Supplies: writing utensils

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy p. x., one for each child, (reproducible)

- Distribute “Many Languages.”
- Invite children to match the English words for “worship” to the word in other languages.
- Let volunteers share their answers.

Wonder with Me:

- What language(s) do you speak?
- Do you know someone who speaks another language?

My Words (Creative Writing)

Supplies: writing utensils and paper

- Invite each child to come up with their very own word. Encourage the children to write a definition and to draw a picture of the word.
- Invite willing volunteers to share their word with the group.

Wonder with Me:

- How did you come up with your word?
- Was it hard or easy to make up your own word?
- Was it difficult?

Peaceful Place

Supplies: Suggested books; dolls with different skin tones, flashlights or glow sticks, dollhouse

- Books:

One Family by, George Shannon

Images of God by, Marie-Helene Deval

- Quiet toys:

The quiet toys are simple and quiet things for children to play with that relate to the Bible story. The quiet space option will be in every lesson with different suggestions of toys.

Tip: All of the supplies/activities suggested for the Quiet Space are optional. You may pick and choose what you like. Allow the children who may want or need a quieter activity on this particular day to choose to visit the Quiet Area.

Go In Peace

Wonder with Me:

- What is the Holy Spirit?
- Guide children through a spiritual practice.

SAY: The Holy Spirit is like your breath. You can feel it but you cannot see it. The Holy Spirit is one way we can feel God's love. This is a wonderful mystery.

Spiritual Practice:

- Hold your hand up and blow on it.
- Feel the warmth and the air on your skin.
- Blow on your hand gently, several times.

SAY: Anytime you need to remember God is with you, you can do this practice. The Holy Spirit is always present and wraps each of you in warmth and love.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, we feel your presence all around. Help us to know you are always with us. Amen.

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