

14. Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41)

“As for us, we can’t stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:20)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Puzzlers
Holy Spirit Simile
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversations
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Review
Wind and Flame
Cupcakes
Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: Offering basket | Pencils | Dry erase board and marker

Gather: TV/DVD player

Explore: TV/DVD player

Respond: Cake mix, ingredients, and cookware | Red and blue sprinkles or various colorful sprinkles | White frosting | Plastic knives | Tablecloth | LED candle | Gift-wrapped box

Bless: Tablecloth | LED candle | TV/DVD player | Gift-wrapped box

Before You Teach

Today, we celebrate Pentecost, the birthday of the church! Pentecost was traditionally a holiday to thank God for the grain harvest and remember God’s giving of the Law at Mount Sinai/Horeb. The holiday is still celebrated today. In our story, the apostles were all gathered together in one place to celebrate Pentecost when a sudden, fierce wind rose and filled the house they were in, and flames alighted on each of them. Wind and fire are often used in the Bible as symbols of God’s presence. The apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages. Religious Jews from all over the world, who would have all spoken different languages, had traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost. They all began to hear what the apostles were saying in their own languages.

The people in the crowd asked, “What does this mean?” Peter said it was the Holy Spirit, which Jesus received from the Father and promised to them. He also reminded them of their role in Jesus’ death. The crowd was deeply troubled by this and asked Peter and the other apostles, “What should we do?” Peter advised them to change their hearts and lives so that they could receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. About three thousand people were baptized that day.

You’ll want your children to come away knowing that Pentecost is considered the birthday of the church. You’ll also want them to start to be able to formulate in their own language what they think the Holy Spirit is or is like. This is likely to be a more challenging concept for them to grasp, and that is OK. After all, our understanding of the way the Spirit works in our lives continues to grow into adulthood. In this session, we’ll do activities to help children formulate their thoughts and language about the Holy Spirit. We’ll also do a review to help children remember the stories from the unit. We’ll also celebrate to help children remember that Pentecost is the church’s birthday.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display either attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16–17 or 15 & 18) at eye level.

- Play “Changed” (Adventure DVD), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.
- Have the children mark the “Attendance Chart” by signing their first names on week #14.

SAY: Today, we are learning a story about the Holy Spirit being given to the disciples.

A—Puzzlers (Activity Sheets)

Before class: Tear out the Session 14 Activity Sheets for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “Special Gathering” (Activity Sheets—p. 29). Let them complete the puzzle.
- Allow them to work on the “Pentecost Words” activity (Activity Sheets—p. 30).

SAY: Pentecost is considered the church’s birthday.

OR

B—Holy Spirit Simile (Discussion)

Before class: Gather a markerboard and dry erase marker. Write “The Holy Spirit is like . . .” on the markerboard.

SAY: Our Bible story today describes the Holy Spirit. The writer of Acts says the Holy Spirit arrived like the “howling of a fierce wind” and like “individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them” (Acts 2:2-3). We don’t know if there was really a howling wind or flames on their heads. What we know is that it looked and sounded like there was.

ASK: What do you think the Holy Spirit is like? How does it sound, feel, smell, taste, and look?

- Invite the children to share their answers as you write them on the markerboard.

TIP: *Share an example to help the children get started.*

Transition to Explore

- Encourage children to bring a chair or to sit on the floor in a carpeted area.
- Invite children to form a circle on the floor.

TIP: *Transitions are a helpful way for children to move easily from one activity to the next.*

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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversations

- Encourage children to join and sit in the circle.
- Demonstrate a listening position for the children.
- Ask wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- When have you attended a festival or other large community gathering?
 - What does it feel like for you to be part of a big crowd?
 - When have you been to a place where people were speaking other languages?
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Hear and See the Bible Story

- Read the Bible story together (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible—Acts 2:1-41*).
- Watch the Adventure DVD Session 14.

SAY: In our Bible story, people heard the apostles speaking in their native languages.

ASK: Do you know another language?

Interact with the Bible Story

- Assign parts and act out “Pentecost” (Bible Story Sheets—Session 14).
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Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display the “Unit 3 Bible Verse” poster (Class Kit—pp. 10 & 23).

- “As for us, we can’t stop speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).
- Invite the children to say the Bible verse with you.

SAY: In our Bible story, many languages were being spoken at once. Let’s do an activity to help us understand what that might have sounded like.

- Divide the children up into three (or more) teams. Tell them that you are going to point to each team when it’s time for them to start saying the verse. When all three teams are speaking at the same time, it should begin to sound jumbled, except for their own words.

ASK: What was it like to hear everyone speaking at once?

Transition to Respond

- Encourage children to put away their chairs and/or get back to their places.

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RESPOND

Review (Activity)

Before class: Photocopy “First Christian Communities Review” (Leader Guide—p. 90) for each child.

SAY: Let’s do an activity to remind us of Peter knocking at the gate of Mary’s house after his escape.

- Give each child a copy of “First Christian Communities Review” (Leader Guide—p. 90). Allow the children to fill in their answers.
- Go over the following answers together: 1. The Beautiful Gate; 2. Speaking about God; 3. Angel; 4. Rhoda; 5. Didn’t like it; 6. Sight; 7. Friends; 8. Lowered in a basket; 9. In their native languages; 10. Wind and flame.

OR

Wind and Flame Cupcakes (Snack)

Before class: Gather a boxed cake mix, the ingredients, and the required cookware. Follow the directions, and make a cupcake for each child in your class. Gather white frosting, a plastic knife for each child, and red, yellow, orange, blue, green, and purple sprinkles. (You can also use just red sprinkles to represent flame and blue sprinkles to represent wind.)

SAY: Since Pentecost is the church’s birthday, let’s celebrate with cupcakes that remind us of the wind and flames at Pentecost!

- Give each child a plastic knife, and let them frost their cupcakes. Allow the children to decorate their cupcakes with red, orange, and yellow sprinkles to represent flames. Or let them decorate their cupcakes with blue, green, and purple sprinkles to represent the wind. They may also choose to do a cupcake that is decorated as half wind, half flame, or mix them together. Enjoy the cupcakes as a snack.

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Display the “Mission” poster (Class Kit—p. 2).

- Review the poster with the children.

SAY: During the last several weeks, we have been learning about and supporting the Wesley Centre. Let’s take a few moments to pray for their ministry as we close out our time of learning about their mission.

PRAY: Dear God, please send your Holy Spirit to wrap your arms of loving support around the Wesley Centre as it works to care for the children of South Africa. We pray that the needs of its ministry continue to be met in amazing ways so that those it serves can grow and thrive. Amen.

Transition to Bless

- Ring a bell to announce the transition.
- Create a worship center on a small table with a tablecloth, a gift-wrapped box, and an LED candle.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Display “Unit 3 Bible Verse Signs” poster (Class Kit—p. 31) on a wall or bulletin board.

SAY: Let’s learn to sign our Bible verse.

- Gather the children around the Bible Verse Signs poster. Have the children read the Bible verse.
- Teach the children to sign the verse.

SAY: At Pentecost, there were many people talking at once and many languages being heard. Although sign language doesn’t involve voices, it is still a language. Let’s practice signing the verse to a lot of people and imagine what Pentecost would have been like if sign language had been used.

- Have the children practice signing the verse to as many children as they can.
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Praising

Before class: Gather a TV/DVD player and the Adventure DVD.

SAY: Today, we learned about Pentecost, the church’s birthday and when the believers were changed by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Let’s celebrate by dancing to a song about being changed by God!

- Play “Changed” on the Adventure DVD.
 - Let the children dance and sing along if they would like.
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Blessing

SAY: In our Bible story, we learned about the church’s birthday, Pentecost. We also learned that on this day, the believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Let’s pray for one another as we remember what the early believers experienced on Pentecost.

- Have the children form a circle around the worship center, and light the LED candle. Take the gift-wrapped box from the worship center and hold it in your hands.

SAY: Let’s remember the gift of the Holy Spirit by passing this gift box. Give the box to a child.

- Have the children say the following line after you: “God, pour out your Holy Spirit on (insert child’s name).” Have the children say this prayer for each child holding the box. Once they seem to have memorized the prayer, you can stop having them repeat after you.

PRAY: Dear God, go with us and guide us. Change our hearts and lives. Amen.

At Home with God

SAY: What was one thing that you learned today about Pentecost? Can you share what you learned with your family?

- Send Bible Story Sheets—Session 14, and the Unit 3 Song Sheet home with each child.



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First Christian Communities Review

1. Where was the man who Peter and John healed sitting in Acts 3–4:1-22?

2. What did Peter and John say they couldn’t stop doing in Acts 3–4:1-22?

3. Who helped Peter escape prison in Acts 12:1-17?

4. Who left Peter standing at a gate in Acts 12:1-17?

5. How did Paul feel about the church before God changed him in Acts 9:1-19?

6. What sense did Paul lose in Acts 9:1-19?

7. Who helped Paul escape danger in Acts 9:20-25?

8. How did Paul get outside of the city gates in Acts 9:20-25?

9. How did the people gathered for Pentecost hear the apostles speak in Acts 2:1-41?

10. How was the Holy Spirit represented in Acts 2:1-41?
