

Pentecost

The Jewish Festival of Pentecost, also known as the Feast of Weeks occurs 50 days (penta= 50) after Passover. It is a day to thank God for grain harvest and to remember the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, He appeared to his disciples and friends in the garden tomb, in the upper room and on the road to Emmaus. In Luke's account, Jesus tells the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. 50 days after Easter the church celebrates the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples and began a movement we call Christianity.

Prepare

Breath Prayer:

Invite family members to sit in a comfortable position.

Take some slow, deep breaths and exhale slowly.

Now take another deep breath and as you inhale, say quietly to yourself "Holy Spirit."

As you exhale finish the prayer; "Come."

Do this several times to center your body and help you prepare to hear the word of God.

View

Read Acts 2:1-21.

Watch either of our videos labeled "Pentecost" on the Children's Ministry's Website.

Wonder

I wonder what it felt like to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?

I wonder how the people felt when they were baptized and received the Holy Spirit?

I wonder what the Holy Spirit wants us to do with God's gifts?

Mindfulness activity:

Breath Prayers and bubbles

On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples experienced the coming of the Holy Spirit as a “howling fierce wind” (CEB Acts 2:2). In many places in the Bible God’s presence is portrayed as wind or breath.

Ms. Anna's mindfulness activity invites you to picture your worries, then blow them into bubbles and pop them. Your Red Bag (Pentecost Bag) has bubbles you can use for this mindfulness exercise. Feel God’s love fill you and calm you as you breathe in air and exhale air. Enjoy popping the bubbles and feel the weight of worry disappear.

I wonder what the disciples might have been worried about before the Holy Spirit came that day? I wonder what you are worrying about today?

Older family members: Connecting with Scripture: John 14:15-21

In the Gospel of John, chapter 14 we read how Jesus says he will send a Companion, Comforter or Advocate (depending on which translation you read.) In Verse 18, Jesus say, “I will come to you.”

Read the passage together then invite family members to share the ways in which Jesus comes to them.

Wonder together about this scripture.

- What was Jesus’ promise to the disciples in this passage? How does this connect to what happened on Pentecost?
- Why would this promise be important to them?
- What does a helper do? (Try not to use the word “help” in your answer!)
- What does someone who comforts do?
- What does an advocate do?
- If you substituted each of these words (helper, comforter, advocate) for Holy Spirit in this passage, what would be the actions of the Holy Spirit?
- In what ways have you seen the Holy Spirit help, comfort or advocate?
- In what ways have you been empowered by the Holy Spirit to help, comfort and/or advocate?
- If you had to pick one of those three words to be your primary spiritual gift – help, comfort, advocate – which would you ask for and why?

Younger Family members: Connecting through story

Either read Dr. Seuss’ book “Horton Hears a Who” (if you have a copy at home) or watch it read on YouTube (link on website). Or watch the movie on Hulu if available and see if you can see places where the spirit may be working through Horton.

- I wonder why do you think Horton cared about the Who’s?

- I wonder what the phrase “a person’s a person no matter how small” means to you?
- I wonder who are “small persons” today who need someone to care for them as Horton did the Who’s of Whoville?
- I wonder what the Holy Spirit is asking you to do to help these people?

Food:

Make a flame-colored parfait.

Provide a clear glass or bowl for each family member. Allow each person to create their own flame parfait (it is called this because the food will have the colors of the flames used to describe the Holy Spirit.)

Suggested foods include sliced peaches, mandarin oranges, strawberries, maraschino cherries or sweet cherries with pits removed, whipped topping.

You can also use red and orange jello cut into squares with or in place of the fruit.

Show family members how to layer the colors with whipped topping between.

Before you eat, pray this prayer or your own.

O God who is three in one; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we welcome you into our home and ask that you walk with us each day, showing us how you want us to live. Help us see and hear times and places when we are called to share the Good News of your love and grace. Amen.

Go

Use the items in your Pentecost Bag to hold a family-fun birthday party for the church. If appropriate in your neighborhood use the sidewalk chalk to create a message for your neighbors on your front walk that lets them know of God’s love.