

Faith at Home for families

Activity 6



The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost



Hello to you from St Mary's Church - it's lovely to be with you again.

This is a special week in the Church's year when we celebrate Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. *(Pentecost Sunday is 31st May this year.)*

This week – the Holy Spirit arrives!

Can you remember two weeks ago when our story was about Jesus promising the gift of the Holy Spirit as a comforter and helper for his disciples and friends? *(Remember the word 'disciple' means a 'follower' and not just Jesus's twelve disciples.)*

Well, this week we see that God always keeps his promises, because today we look at the story about when the Holy Spirit came!

- The word 'Pentecost' comes from the Greek word for 'fiftieth'.
- Pentecost is celebrated 50 days after Easter, when Jesus rose from the dead.
- Red is the colour of Pentecost because of the flames that appear in the story and because of the joy the Holy Spirit brings.
- If we were able to go into church, you might notice the Vicar wearing a red scarf like this one, and there would be red cloths on the pulpit and on the big brass eagle.



'Happy birthday' to the church!

Pentecost is also known as the birthday of the Church. I wonder if you've had a birthday recently...?



- Birthdays usually include some wonderful birthday gifts or presents.
- On the first Pentecost, the Church's birthday gift was from God. He gave the Church his Holy Spirit.
- Even though Jesus had died, been raised from the dead, and then had gone to heaven, his disciples were not alone. The Holy Spirit, the very power of God, was now with them.

You might like to read the Pentecost story from a Bible you have at home, or look it up online, or you can read it at the bottom of this sheet.

The reading is from Acts chapter 2 verses 1-21

The disciples were all together when they heard a sound like a really strong wind. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire; like individual candle flames. And a flame rested above each of them. What they saw and heard meant they had received the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit made them able to speak in different languages to each other.

Let's imagine...

- We are those first disciples and we're all together in a big room, perhaps somewhere like the school hall
- We hear a noise that sounds like trees blowing on a very windy day
- We see little flames hovering above everyone in the room
- We hear each other talking in different languages, even though we haven't been taught them!
- I wonder how you would feel
- I think I would be a bit scared and wonder what was going on!

It made a difference to the disciples...

Even though it's hard to imagine, we know that something strange and mysterious and powerful happened, and the disciples were not the same afterwards!

Since Jesus had died, the disciples had been hiding away because they were afraid they might be arrested like Jesus had been.

The Holy Spirit gave them the courage to leave the room where they'd been hiding and the Holy Spirit made them so full of joy, they couldn't help telling everyone they met about Jesus! The number of people who followed Jesus grew by 3000 just on that day! That's why Pentecost is called the birthday of the Church.

- Today, when we decide to follow Jesus and live the way he showed us in the Bible, we can be sure that God's gift of the Holy Spirit will help us...however young or old we are.
- God has work for us to do. I wonder what work you will do for God this week:
 - perhaps you can help with chores around the house
 - or tell a joke to make someone laugh

Prayer Treasure Box - Idea 6

We thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us do his work

Try to find something for your Prayer Treasure Box which reminds you of the Pentecost story when the Holy Spirit came



- This might be a birthday candle.
- Or you might draw a picture of the disciples with flames on their heads
- Or you could make a cardboard flame hat of your own, like this one.

A prayer you might like to say

Dear God,

Thank you for the gift of the Holy spirit.

We are sorry when we ignore the work you give us to do.

Please help us to be strong like the first followers of Jesus.

Please help us to tell other people about you.

Amen.

Other Pentecost activities!

WIND AND FIRE RELAY

- Cut a flame shape out of coloured paper, one per player
- Give each player a drinking straw (or roll up a piece of paper to make a narrow tube)
- Have a race to see who can blow their paper flame across the room and back again!

PAINT BLOWING PICTURES

- You need water-based paint, a piece of paper for your picture and a drinking straw
- Mix some water with the paint to make the paint runny
- Put a blob of paint in the middle of your paper
- Blow the paint with the straw to make a pattern



Bible Reading

Acts chapter 2 verses 1-21, 38 and 41 – the Holy spirit comes at Pentecost

Things to understand before we begin:

Anyone who follows Jesus is a disciple, but an 'apostle' was one of Jesus's 12 disciples.

Joel was a prophet in the time of the Old Testament. Prophets passed on messages from God...and they're not always easy to understand.



When the day of Pentecost came, all the disciples were in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a strong wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire and a tongue rested over each person. They were 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 had come from every country in the world. A large crowd gathered when they heard the noise. They were all surprised because each one of them heard the disciples speaking in their own language.

In amazement and wonder they said, "These people we hear talking like this are all from Galilee. But we hear them speaking our own languages and we can understand the great things they are saying about God! How is this possible? We are from all these different places: Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the areas of Libya near the city of Cyrene, Rome, Crete and Arabia. Some of us were born Jews, but others have changed their religion to worship God."

The people were amazed but confused too. They asked each other, "What is happening?"

Others made fun of the disciples and said, "They are drunk."

Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles. He spoke loudly so that all the people could hear. He said, "Friends, and everyone else in Jerusalem, listen carefully to what I have to say. These people are not drunk as you think because it is only nine o'clock in the morning. But Joel the prophet wrote about what you see happening here today. This is what he wrote:

'God says: In the last days I will give my Spirit freely to all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will have special dreams. At that time I will give my Spirit even to my servants, both men and women. And they will prophesy. I will show miracles in the sky and on the earth: there will be blood, fire, and thick smoke. The sun will become dark. The moon will become as red as blood. And then the great and glorious day of the Lord will come. Then anyone who asks the Lord for help will be saved.'

Verses 38 and 41

Peter said to them, "Change your hearts and lives and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Then God will forgive your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Then those who accepted what Peter said were baptised. On that day about 3000 people believed Peter's message and were baptised.