

## Pentecost Sunday



### On fire!

Jesus had left his friends and gone to be with his Father. But he didn't leave his friends alone for long!

Today is Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost is the fiftieth day after the Jewish Passover and is the day when the Holy Spirit came to Jesus' disciples (his special friends). They felt the Spirit as wind and tongues of flame which changed them from a small group of followers into a big movement of people who travelled to all the known world to tell people about Jesus.

Pentecost is also thought of as the birthday of the Church because St Peter preached a special sermon and as a result more than 3,000 people became Christians.

The old English name for Pentecost is Whit Sunday which simply means White Sunday because a lot of baptisms were carried out on Whit Sunday and people wore white as a sign of purity.

### **To begin...**

Make a Flame Headband.

See Pentecost craft activities for children sheet.



Think quietly about the headbands you have made. They remind us of the Holy Spirit who appeared as flames on the heads of Jesus' special friends. It made them feel they were not alone and Jesus was very close to them.

### **As you prepare to find out more you could use this prayer:**

**Holy Spirit, you are welcome.  
Come among us like a wind,  
like a fire, like a dove.  
Come gently or come boldly.  
We are waiting for you.  
Amen.**

### **OK, so what's the story?**

You can read it in the Bible in the Acts of the Apostles chapter 2 verses 1 to 21.

The story takes place at the Jewish Festival of Shavuot or Pentecost, the festival when Jews would come from all over the world to Jerusalem to celebrate together.

What were they celebrating? It was the harvest festival – the time they would bring offerings of the first fruit of the crops to

God and decorate the houses with flowers, very much like we do in church in the autumn.

Shavuot was also the festival to celebrate the time God gave Moses the law – the ten commandments.

On this particular Shavuot or Pentecost festival, the one after Jesus had died and come back to life and gone to be with God, his disciples were together in a house in Jerusalem. Suddenly, the most amazing things started to happen.....

### **God sends the Holy Spirit**

Jesus' friends were very sad and afraid. Jesus had gone away. He had said goodbye to them and gone to be with God in heaven. Jesus had promised to send them someone to help them. But they didn't know who it would be or when they would come.

All the friends of Jesus were together in a big room, upstairs in a house. They had been talking about Jesus and the promise of special help Jesus had made to them. "What did Jesus mean?" they wondered.

Suddenly all the people in the room heard a loud noise. It sounded just like a strong gust of wind. The windy noise swept through the house, up the stairs and blew open the door of the room where they were sitting.

The wind became stronger. The friends of Jesus began to feel stronger too. They felt warm inside and braver and braver. Little lights appeared on their heads, like tiny flames. They smiled and hugged each other. They began to speak in other languages that they didn't know they could speak before! Jesus had sent his Holy Spirit to them. Everything was going to be all right! Jesus was still with them, even though they couldn't see him. He was still their special friend. They wanted to shout and dance. They were laughing and clapping and dancing for joy and singing happy songs to God.

A big crowd of people had gathered outside the house. They wondered what was going on. Peter looked out of the window and saw all the people standing there. "I'm going to tell everyone about Jesus," he said. So Peter ran down the stairs and outside. He stood in front of the big crowd of people and he told them how much Jesus loved them—and that they could be friends of Jesus too.

Peter and his friends told everyone about Jesus. They were not scared or worried any more. Something wonderful had happened to them, making them brave and very, very happy. God had sent his Holy Spirit to be with them and help them, just as Jesus had promised.

## What about having a song and some music next?

*You'll recognise the tune! Try it on the recorder or the guitar.*

At Pentecost (to the tune of Kumbayah)

### Kumbayah

Go to [www.guitarnick.com](http://www.guitarnick.com)  
lots of free guitar tabs & video lessons



TablEdited by  
Nicola Mandorino (2011)

G C G Am D7

G C G Am G D7 G

**The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost.  
In wind and fire and flame at Pentecost,  
And everybody heard at Pentecost  
How Jesus kept his word.**

**The good news came to say at Pentecost  
That Jesus lives today at Pentecost,  
And everybody heard at Pentecost,  
How Jesus kept his word.**

### **Exploring the Story activities**

**Wind:** Where else do we hear about wind in the Bible?

Talk about the breath of God or God's Spirit hovering over the waters of creation. With Pentecost, God is breathing on us and making us into his new creation.

#### *Can you see it?*

As you explore together, take any opportunity to talk about how we can't see God but we know that he is there, because of everything he does, in the same way as we cannot see air or wind, but we see what it does.

#### Blowing

Hold your hands up a little way from your face and blow gently. What can you feel? Watch each other do this. Can you see anything coming out of your mouths? We can feel the air but we can't see it.

#### Wind

Look out of the window. Is it a windy day? How do you know from what you can see? Imagine it is very windy and try to walk across the room. What happens? Does your hair blow or your hat come off? Are you cold? Are the leaves blowing on the trees? Can we see the wind blowing? We can see what it does but we can't see the wind itself. You could use a hair drier to illustrate the wind if you wish.

#### Bubbles

You will need some bubble mix and bubble sticks. You might want to protect your surfaces. Put the bubble mix in large

bowls so that several children can play at once. Set bowls on a firm surface and provide plenty of bubble sticks or show children how to touch thumb and index finger together to make a circle, dip your hand into the liquid and then blow bubbles from the film across your hand.



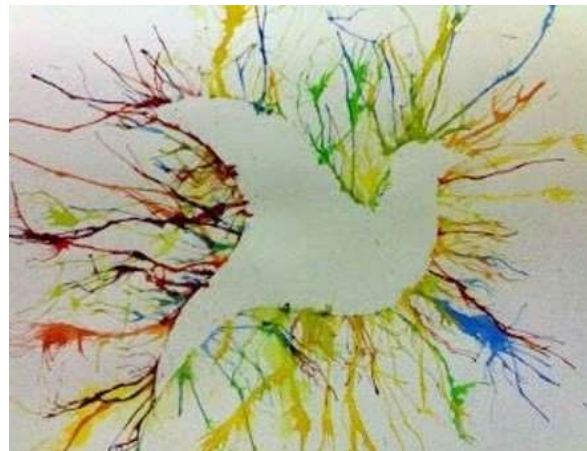
Blow, chase and catch bubble. What happens when the bubble pops? What do they feel on their skin? The bubble has gone but there is something that can still be felt on the skin.

**Fire:** Where else do we read of fire in the Bible?

Talk about the fiery pillar of God that guided the Hebrews across the desert. That guiding light is put into our hearts so we know which way God wants us to go.

*Can you make it?*

**Blow painting**



You will need: paper suitable for painting on. Red, orange and yellow paint. Drinking straws. Dove shape (see outline in Pentecost craft activities for children). Aprons for the children. Wipes You may like to protect your surfaces

Use straws to blow the paint across paper in flame patterns.

Place the dove shape in the centre of the page and then blow

paint across it and the page. When painting complete, remove the dove shape to reveal a dove outline and flames of fire!

### Fire streamer balloon

(see Pentecost craft activities for children sheet for materials.)



Prepare dove and flame shapes from card. Cut streamers from tissue paper. Inflate balloon. Stick shapes onto balloon and tie streamers with string around the neck of the balloon. Tie on a bamboo cane if static balloon is required or a long length of string to run around with.

**Celebration:** think of other situations or people in the Bible where there was a celebration.

### Flame cookies



You will need: digestive biscuits; individual cupcakes, icing (red, yellow, white as required), birthday cake candles, jelly sweets.

Make or buy cupcakes. Encourage the children to ice their biscuits or cakes with the icing and then add either strips of coloured icing or the jelly sweets to look like flames, or a birthday cake candle to celebrate Pentecost as the birthday of the church.

### **Other activities** (separate attachments)

There's several other things you could do:

- Make a Breeze Ball;
- Enjoy doing the colouring sheet (1 sheet).
- Explore the activity sheet (1 sheet).

### **To end...**

You could finish this activity time with this prayer:

#### **Father God**

**thank you for your awesome power  
which is also so gentle like breath on our cheeks.  
Jesus, thank you for loving us so much and for  
keeping your promise that you would never leave us.  
Holy Spirit, God's love energy flowing through Jesus,  
wild wind, tongues of fire,  
words of inspiration,  
fill us with your confidence and energy,  
and make us a blessing to the world. Amen.**

Acknowledgements

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*Messy Church at Home* produced by Messy Church, part of the Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF)

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