

Love each other like the members of your family. (Romans 12:10a)

Pentecost – Acts 2:1-12

Prepare to Wonder

As Christians, we celebrate Pentecost as the “birthday of the church”—the day God sent the Spirit to the followers of Jesus. Originally, Pentecost was one of three Jewish festivals when the Jewish people would gather in Jerusalem.

Before Jesus died, he promised his followers he would not leave them alone. Jesus told his friends to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Spirit. His friends did not know what to expect as they waited. It was a time of uncertainty. They were probably anxious and scared. During this time of waiting in Jerusalem, Jesus’ friends and followers were celebrating Pentecost together. They were gathered together in a home celebrating, when a sound from heaven like the howling wind filled the house. They saw flames like fire above each person’s head, and they began to speak in other languages. The Holy Spirit had arrived.

Essentially, the Spirit can be explained as God’s presence in our lives, guiding, comforting, and strengthening our faith. The Spirit is another way God shows love for us. The main thing you’ll want the children to come away with is an understanding that God is with them through the Holy Spirit.

The concept of the Holy Spirit is hard for children, as well as adults, to understand. It is okay to admit that stories in the Bible are sometimes hard to understand. The mystery of the stories will inspire awe, as well as curiosity, among children. Their natural imaginations will inspire them to wonder and discover other mysteries in the Bible. Tell the children you are also in awe and wonder about some of the stories. Let them know you will explore together the mysteries the Bible holds.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

Light a candle and watch the way the flame dances in the breeze, as if searching for the place God is calling it to be. Maybe the flame is still and reaches straight up, as if to say, *I am yours, God; do with me what you will.* At this moment, what direction is God calling you? Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to help you do God’s work in the world.

Welcome to Wonder

Prepare Ahead: As a family, create a Wonder Table. Find a small table or area in your home. On the table, place a candle, a plant or flower, and any other special items you want to include.

Tip: Use this space while engaging in the lesson.

- Gather together near your Wonder Table.

WONDER together

- What does wind feel like?
- How many languages can you name?

CONTINUE to wonder

- How would you feel if you felt a strong wind inside a house or saw flames on top of your friend's head?
- When do you feel close to God?

PRAY together

- Dear God, thank you for being present with us. Amen.

SING together

- Use your Annual Music CD or download the song, "A Strong Wind" (<https://www.cokesbury.com/Celebrate-Wonder-Annual-Music>).
- Play the song, "A Strong Wind."
- Sing and celebrate.

Wonder with Me

Supplies: CEB Bible, Wonder Cube (Digital Class Pack), optional: Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook

READ the Bible story

- Read the Bible story: Acts 2:1-12.
- Roll the Wonder Cube. Take time to answer a few of the questions.

WATCH the Bible story

- Visit <https://www.cokesbury.com/Celebrate-Wonder-Video> to download and watch today's Bible story, or watch on www.amplifymedia.com.

SHARE the Faith Word

- Faith Word: LOVE—Love means a closeness and connection we feel with God and others.

WONDER: What do you think the Day of Pentecost felt like to the people who were there? Can you name an emotion they might have felt?

Many Languages (Logical)

Supplies: eighteen note cards, marker

Prepare Ahead: On separate note cards, write the name of each language listed in the answer key (below). Then, on a new set of note cards, write the word for worship in each of the languages listed in the answer key (below). Continue this process until all the languages and their corresponding words are written on note cards.

- Work together to match each language to the word for worship in that language.
- When complete, check your answers to see how many you guessed correctly. (Answers: English—worship, Spanish—rendir culto, Latin—cultum, French—culte, Greek—latreía, German—anbetung, Dutch—aanbidden, Swahili—ibada, Armenian—yerkrpagel.)

WONDER: What language or languages do you speak? Do you know someone who speaks another language?

Spiritual Practice—Exploring Love Through Service

Supplies: Celebration Chart (Digital Class Pack), optional: Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book

- Gather near your Wonder Table.

WONDER: Who or what is the Holy Spirit?

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.

- Participate in the following spiritual practice:

SAY: Hold your hand up and blow on it.

Feel the warmth of the air on your skin.

Blow gently on your hand several more 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, help us remember you are always with us. Amen.

- Find a time to read together the *Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book*.