

Junior Soldiers

Unit 4 : Lesson 4

Pentecost ‘Power to serve!’



PURPOSE : To help the children explore and understand the events of Pentecost and that the Holy Spirit is God with us. With the Holy Spirit's power we are able to help and care for others.

‘On the day of Pentecost all the Lord's followers were together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. The Holy Spirit took control of everyone.’

Acts 2: 1-4

Consider & Prepare

Read :

Acts 2:1-47

Joel 2:28-32

The celebration referred to as Pentecost was a long-established religious festival for the Jews and it was also known as the Festival of Weeks or the Feast of Harvest. It was celebrated fifty days after another Jewish festival called Passover.

When Jesus was crucified, it happened to be the time of Passover. Fifty days later, the disciples and followers of Jesus were gathered together in Jerusalem for the traditional Jewish festival of Pentecost when the events outlined in Acts 2 occurred.

Subsequently—for the Christian Church—Pentecost refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 2. So Pentecost marks two different events: one on the Jewish religious calendar (50 days after Passover) and one on the Christian calendar (the coming of the Holy Spirit).

The events leading up to and occurring on this day of Pentecost (in Acts 2) had been prophesied for centuries. In this lesson we will also attempt to help the children see that this event was an important part of God's plan for the salvation of his people.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- A small snack/ morning tea/ afternoon tea. This can be as simple as a bag of chips or a bowl of popcorn.
- Cushions or bean bags or a couple of large rugs.
- Some volunteers for outside the room or a recording in a different language.

For 'The Main Thing'

- Pencils or pens and a piece of paper for each child. (If you have people in the church who speak languages other than English you could invite them to help you with this activity.)
- Whiteboard or butchers paper and writing utensils.
- Darts and a pin board or an alternative.
- Photocopy the sheet provided which has John 16:13 printed in different languages. (*Make sure there is at least one copy of the verse for each of the children.*)
- Cut out and pin folded pieces of paper onto a pin board.
- Bibles
- Butchers paper for sticking the 'Events of Pentecost' on.
- Textas and glue sticks for each team.
- Print the attached sheet for the 'Events of Pentecost' activity (*one per team for this activity*)

For 'Tying In'

- You will need to collect pictures of athletes performing a variety of Olympic sports.

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home and Beyond cards for each child



Connecting In

Celebration Time...

- Prepare a small celebration snack/ morning tea/ afternoon tea. (*This does not have to be elaborate, it can be as simple as a bag of chips or a bowl of popcorn.*)
- Supply some cushions or beanbags to encourage a relaxed atmosphere. (*A couple of large rugs to sit on would also work.*)
- Prearrange for several people to be outside the room about ten minutes into your lesson, shouting in different languages (*you might want to consider using some of the older children for this*). Alternatively, have someone play a recording of different languages loudly outside the room or even a song in a different language.

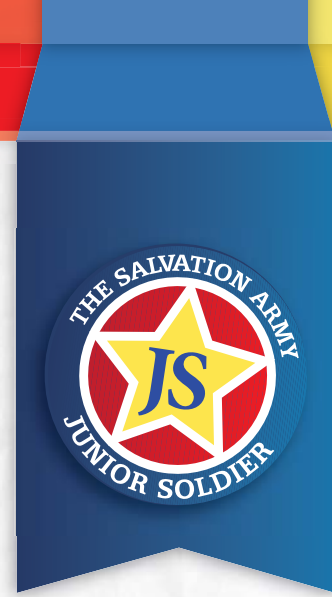
When the children have arrived, sit down on the cushions or beanbags for a relaxed celebration meal and chat together as you connect together, talk about the week and celebrate all the good things that have happened. When your prearranged disturbance occurs, allow the children to go and see what is happening and then bring them back into the cushions etc. to begin to engage with the topic for today.

Link: 'Well that was a strange occurrence, having all that noise and fuss happening. Did you understand what they were saying or what was going on? Today we are going to explore the topic of Pentecost, a time when a similar sort of occurrence happened when people were a little unsure of what was really going on.'

The celebration referred to as Pentecost was a long-established religious festival for the Jews and it was also known as the Festival of Weeks or the Feast of Harvest. It was celebrated fifty days after another Jewish festival called Passover.

When Jesus was crucified, it happened to be the time of Passover. Fifty days later, the disciples and followers of Jesus were gathered together in Jerusalem for the traditional Jewish festival of Pentecost when the events outlined in Acts 2 occurred (we are going to look at this passage throughout today's lesson).

Subsequently—for the Christian Church—Pentecost refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 2. So Pentecost marks two different events: one on the Jewish religious calendar (50 days after Passover) and one on the Christian calendar (the coming of the Holy Spirit).



At Pentecost many people had travelled to be together to share with family and friends in this special celebration.

Read together Acts 2:1–6

- Ask the children to imagine the scene (you might like to help paint the picture for them, it might be helpful for some to even close their eyes as they imagine the scene).
 - If you were in that room with all of Jesus' followers, I wonder what you might have experienced?
 - I wonder what you might have seen, smelt, felt, heard or tasted?
- Ask the children about family celebrations that they may have attended such as Christmas time, birthdays, weddings etc.
 - Has anyone ever traveled a long distance to be with family for a particular celebration? (*Give the children opportunity to share.*)
 - Does anyone have relatives that live overseas that have come to visit for special celebration times?
 - What's the longest distance you have traveled? (*It would be good to share your own experience with the children during this time.*)

Explain that because lots of people travelled for the celebration there were people from lots of places, different cultures and races that were gathered together.

Read together Acts 2:7–11.

- Have them count how many different countries are mentioned. (16)

The Main Thing

Instruction Frenzy...

Give each child a pencil/pen and a piece of paper.

Danish: Skriv venligst dit navn på papiret

French: Écrivez s'il vous plaît votre nom sur le papier

Italian: Scrivete il vostro nome sulla carta

Latvian: Lūdzu, rakstiet savu vārdu uz papīra

Malay: Sila tulis nama anda di atas kertas

Swahili: Tafadhali andika jina lako kwenye karatasi

(English: Please write your name on the paper)(*Do not use this until last.*)

- Tell the children that for this activity you are going to give them some instructions to follow.
- Choose one of the instructions above outlined in a different language (*or you might like to choose one of your own*). Write the instruction on a white board or some butchers paper if you are not confident in speaking it out.
- Wait for them to do it. (*Don't leave it too long before you move to the second instruction.*)
- Give them the second instruction in another of the above languages (*written or spoken.*)

- Wait again for them to do it.
- Try again in a third language.
- Wait again.
- Finally, give them the instruction in English: 'Please write your name on the paper'

Ask the children...

- Why didn't you follow the first instruction that I gave you?
- How did you feel by the time we got to the third instruction?
- What was different when I gave you the last instruction?

For centuries, people had been hearing about God's love for them, about the promised Messiah (Jesus) who would come to save all people and about the Holy Spirit, but until now many of them had not been able to fully understand because it was largely a Jewish tradition and passed on in Hebrew (their language).

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came and helped many people to learn about God by bringing them the message in a way that they could understand, in a way that became clear to them.

These people then went home to their own countries and were able to share the news with others.

The Sounds of Pentecost...

You will need darts and a pin board (*or alternative*) for this activity and photocopied verses (*see attached*) that are cut out and folded and attached to the pin board. (*You may just like to put the folded verses into a container and get the children to have a lucky dip in preparation for the activity*)

- Allow the children to take turns in throwing the darts at the prepared board. The children then take down the folded paper that their dart sticks to and waits for the others to have their turn. (*It is important that strong supervision is used in this activity and particular care is taken.*)
- When each child and leader has a folded piece of paper explain what is going to happen next.
- 'When I count to three we are all going to attempt (*to the best of our abilities*) to read the verses that we have on the paper all at the same time.' (*You may want to have some leaders or older children help those that are younger and that will struggle – they can try to read it together.*)

Have one child read John 16:13 in English.

'Wow, I think that this might have been something like what it might have sounded like on the day of Pentecost when everyone started speaking in their own language all at the same time.' Read Acts 2:4 and Acts 2: 11–13.

- If you were there with all those people, talking in so many different languages, I wonder how you would have felt? Would you have known what was going on?

There were people who were unsure about what was happening; those who thought that people had had too much to drink or were possibly going a little crazy. So Peter spoke to the crowd and explained that the events of the day had been prophesied in scripture, in the book of Joel written more than 500 years earlier (*you could read Joel's words as recorded in Acts 2:17–21 to them*), and then he told them about who Jesus was and how he had died for them all. He challenged them to accept Jesus as their Saviour.

God wants everyone to know that he sent Jesus because he loves us. He also wants everyone to know that he has sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us.

The Events of Pentecost...

How much can you remember from the verses that we read at the beginning from Acts 2? Let's have a look again at what happened on the day of Pentecost and some of the things that happened before this event.

- You will need a large sheet of butchers paper per team hung on the wall at the front of the room, a cup of textas and a glue stick for each group.



- Divide the group into at least two teams for this activity.
- Give each team a printed sheet with the list of events on it, not in order.
- Allow the children to refer back to Acts 2 if needed.
- They will need to begin by cutting up the sheet while deciding which event comes first.
- One child at a time must race forward and stick the first event at the top of the wall and then draw a quick illustration beside the statement to help explain what it means.
- The next child places the second event and adds their illustration and so on.
- The winner is the team that first correctly orders the events.



JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

JESUS IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

JESUS IS TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN

THE DISCIPLES ARE GATHERED TO CELEBRATE PENTECOST

THERE IS A SOUND LIKE A TORNADO

FLAMES APPEARED OVER THE HEADS OF THE DISCIPLES

THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPED THE DISCIPLES TO TALK IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

PEOPLE CAME OUT TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON

MANY PEOPLE LEARNT ABOUT JESUS AND GOD'S LOVE FOR THEM

Tying In

Powers to Serve...

Today we have explored what happened on the day of Pentecost and how God gave His Holy Spirit to us. Can anyone tell me why God gave the Holy Spirit to us? (*Let the children make some suggestions.*)

Show some pictures of a variety of different Olympic athletes.

- Ask the children to name the sport that they represent and the special ability they need to excel in that sport. For example, speed for sprinting, endurance for the marathon, strength for weightlifting, balance for gymnastics, sharp eyesight for archery, etc.

'The Holy Spirit gave special abilities to the disciples, who were just ordinary people. What are some of these?'

- Speaking in other languages
- Ability to communicate well
- Ability to heal people
- Ability to teach and preach
- Ability to prophesy

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit promises to give us special gifts that will help us to connect with God and help other people do the same. They're not exactly 'super powers', but they are given to you by God and they help to make you the extraordinary person that you are.

On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit showed everyone that even though Jesus had been taken up to Heaven, God was still with them. He is still with us and in us now. He is helping us to live in ways that pleases God as we love, care and serve both God and others.

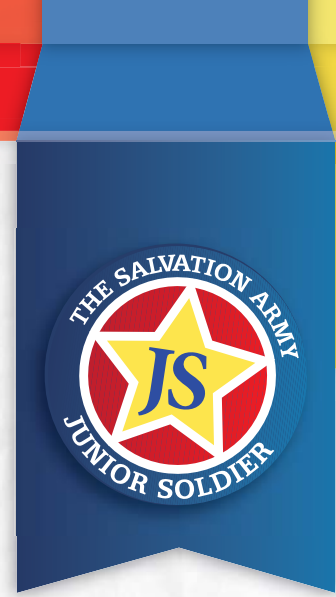
Home & Beyond

Print off the Home & Beyond cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journal or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Celebrate, pray & tell...

Remember this week that the Holy Spirit is with us and can help to give us the power that we need to love, care and serve both God and others.

- 'Celebrate' (*as they did at Pentecost*) and thank the Holy Spirit for the way he has given you power to love and serve others.
- 'Pray' and ask the Holy Spirit to help you with his power this week in loving and serving others. What are the top three things you would pray for (*share these with your family or Big Bud*)?
- 'Tell' others about the Holy Spirit and how he is always with you and what you love about this, using your language (*this might be in writing, it might be speaking, singing, drawing or making something—there are no limits*).



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John 16:13



Italian – John 16:13

Lo Spirito mostra ciò che è vero e verrà e vi guidi nella piena verità. Lo Spirito non parla di propria. Egli vi dirà solo ciò che ha udito da me, ed egli vi farà sapere che cosa sta andando accadere.

French – John 16:13

L'esprit montre ce qui est vrai et viendra et vous guide dans la pleine vérité. L'Esprit ne parle pas de son propre chef. Il vous dira que ce qu'il a entendu de moi, et il vous laissera savoir ce qui va se passer.

German – John 16:13

Der Geist zeigt, was wahr ist und kommen wird und führen sie in die volle Wahrheit. Der Geist spricht nicht über seine eigenen. Er wird ihnen nur das, was er von mir gehört hat, und er wird lassen sie sie wissen, was passieren wird.

Turkish – John 16:13

Ruh ne göstermektedir, gerçek ve gelip size, gerçeğin tam. Ruh, söz kendi. O size sadece ne duyulur, bana size neler.

Spanish – John 16:13

El Espíritu nos muestra lo que es verdadero y que vendrá y guiará a la verdad completa. El Espíritu no hablará por su propia cuenta. Él te dirá sólo lo que ha oído de mí, y él te dirá qué va a suceder.

English – John 16:13

The Spirit shows what is true and will come and guide you into the full truth. The Spirit doesn't speak on his own. He will tell you only what he has heard from me, and he will let you know what is going to happen.

Swedish – John 16:13

Anden visar vad som är sant och kommer och tar dig in i den fulla sanningen. Den anda pratar inte om hans eget. Han kommer att berätta bara vad han hört från mig och han kommer att låta dig veta vad som skall hända.