

What Is Pentecost?

A Teaching Guide for the Booklet

by Marcia Stoner

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Designer: Keitha Vincent

ISBN 978-1-426-74627-7
PACP01036605-01

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Before the class arrives:

- Decide if you will cover this material in one or two sessions.

Arrival activity (5 minutes)

- Call each student by name and check in with them. How are things going? (This is the most important part of your lesson.)
- Write these “clues” on sheets of paper, one clue per paper. Post them around the room. Explain that if they read the clues, they should be able to figure out what you will be talking about today.

CLUES: It is a day in the church year.

The color used on this day is red.

One of the symbols for this special day is a descending dove.

This day comes fifty days after Easter.

If they still have not guessed the day, tell them that it is the birthday of the church.

What Is Pentecost? (5 minutes)

- Pass out the booklets.
- Together read “What Is?” on page 5 and “Why?” on page 6.

Use Your Bibles (20 minutes)

- Give each student a Bible.
- Divide students into five pairs or teams. Divide up the Puzzles on Pentecost as follows:
 - Team One: “After the Resurrection” on page 10.
 - Team Two: “Jesus’ Last Words to His Disciples” on pages 12 & 13.
 - Team Three: “Waiting in Jerusalem” on pages 14 & 15.
 - Team Four: “A New Disciple” on pages 16 & 17.
 - Team Five: “What Happened on the Day of Pentecost?” on pages 18 & 19.
- Have each team use their Bibles to complete their puzzle.
- Bring everyone back together and, in the order listed above, ask a spokesperson from each group to read any information (NOT the puzzle instructions) and the answer to their puzzles.
- When finished, together read “The First Converts” on pages 22 & 23.

Explain that they have just read the story of Pentecost.

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Christian Step Forward (5 minutes)

- Play a game similar to “Mother May I?” without the question.
- Have students line up side by side along one wall with everyone facing you.
- Explain that you will read a list of things that early Christians may have done. If they think early Christians did this, they are to step forward; if not, they are to stay where they are.
- Anyone who gets it wrong will be given instructions to take two steps backwards. The challenge is to be as far across the room as possible when done.
- Read the statements one at a time from “Life Among the First Believers” on page 24.

TIP: Many will step forward when you say “Read the New Testament every day.” Take time to explain that the New Testament was not written this soon after Pentecost. The early Christian converts learned directly from the apostles themselves.

** If you are going to do two sessions, this is a good stopping point. Close both sessions by saying the Lord’s Prayer together.

If you do two sessions, begin the second session by doing “Life Among Believers” on page 24 before doing *Christian Activities*.

Christian Activities (10 minutes)

- Divide students into groups of two to five, depending upon the number of tweens.
- Give each group a piece of paper and a pencil.
- Ask each group to choose one person to be the recorder for the group.
- Tell them that each group will have five minutes to come up with a list of things that modern Christians do. Explain the scoring system before they start:
 - One point for each item if it’s truly Christian.
 - Five bonus points for each Christian activity not on another team’s list.
- Give them the signal to begin.
- Go over their lists and help the teams figure their scores.

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Decorate Pentecost Symbols (15 minutes)

- Set out as many different types of craft materials as you can easily find.
- Have students look at “The Flame” and “The Dove” on pages 25 and 26.
- Ask students to work individually or in pairs.
- Have each student or pair choose to make either a flame or a dove.
- Challenge them to use the materials to make their symbol as unique as possible.
- Display the symbols. Together look at the differences.
- Talk about how it is important for symbols of important things to also have personal meaning.

What Was the Promise? (5 minutes)

- Ask students to color the puzzle on page 11 to discover the promise of Pentecost.
- Explain that the Holy Spirit is who gives us the power to do God’s will even when it’s difficult and to live our lives with hope even when bad things happen and life seems hopeless. The Holy Spirit is a precious gift from God.

Encourage the students to read and do the rest of the activities in their booklet at home.

For more information, see the following resources:

Seasons of Faith, by Marcia Stoner (Abingdon Press, 2004). Provides information, activities, and reproducible patterns for all seasons of the church year. For intergenerational use, but most appropriate for eight- to twelve-year-olds. *Paperback, \$17.00; ISBN-13: 978-0-687-03736-0*

Symbols of Faith, by Marcia Stoner (Abingdon Press, 2001). Provides information, activities, and reproducible patterns for Christian symbols. For intergenerational use, but most appropriate for eight- to twelve-year-olds. *Paperback, \$18.00; ISBN-13: 978-0-687-09475-2*