

PENTECOST CELEBRATION

As the church, we celebrate Pentecost, in part, as the birthday of the Christian church. We also celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit from which we are inspired to do ministry in the world. Pentecost is celebrated fifty days after Easter Sunday and honors the Holy Spirit descending on the followers of Jesus Christ after his ascension.

Worship Space: If you already have a worship space set up in your home, you can use that space. If not, you can create one. It can simply be a small table set aside. Suggested items to include are a cloth table covering (red for Pentecost if you can), a candle, a cross, a bible, flowers or a plant.

Pray: Begin your family worship service with this prayer:

Loving God, we give you thanks for this day and the blessings in our lives. We give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Be with us as we hear the story of Pentecost. Open our hearts and our minds that we might hear the story anew and learn from it and each other. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Share: Invite each person to share one of the following, depending on ages and understanding.

(For younger children) What is one thing that has brought you joy or reminded you of God today?

(For older elementary-adults) The Holy Spirit gives each of us many gifts and talents. What is one gift the holy spirit has given you and how can use that gift to share God's love with others?

(For middle school-adult) The Holy Spirit is in each of us. What is one way the Holy Spirit is working in you and in your life right now?

Read: Have someone read the scripture out loud, Acts 2:1-21. (If young children are involved, read from a children's bible or use the included children's version). Discuss or think about the following :

For younger children: Some symbols of Pentecost are the wind, the color red, fire, and a dove. What in the story helps you understand these symbols? Wind = Holy Spirit; Red= fire= the flames ; Dove = baptism symbol

For older children & adults:

- We receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptized (Acts 2:38)
- The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts. (see Acts 19:6; Hebrews 2:4)
- The Holy Spirit encourages and strengthens us. (see Acts 9:31)
- The Holy Spirit gives us joy. (see 1 Thessalonians 1:6)
- The Holy Spirit lives in us. (see 2 Tim 1:14, 1 Cor 3:16, 1 Cor 6:19)
- The Holy Spirit helps us live together. (see Acts 2:42-27)

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Feast: Your feast can include a full meal followed by the birthday cake OR just simply the birthday cake celebration. Consider including some other foods that are red, orange, and/or yellow such as berries, oranges, or bell peppers. Sing “Happy Birthday” to the church! And blow out the candles! As you eat together, discuss the following:

- How is the Holy Spirit working in Greensboro through FPC?
- The Holy Spirit came to the followers of Jesus when they were gathered together. Why do you think that is?
- What do you miss most during this time when we are not able to gather with others in our congregation?

Pray: Close your worship with this prayer:

Holy God, we give you thanks for this time to worship and feast together. We thank you for our church family and for the many gifts & talents among us. We ask that you would keep them safe and well so that we can be together again soon. We pray for people who are sick, sad, lonely, or hungry. Help them to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit around them and help us to use our gifts to serve them. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Play/Follow up: Consider re-enacting the story, drawing a picture of the story, journaling your thoughts, and/or coloring together the included **Pentecost coloring page**. If possible, go outside to blow your **bubbles** and see your **pinwheel** spin. As the wind moves the bubbles and pinwheel, remember the Holy Spirit is all around. Consider “staking” the pinwheel in your yard or flower bed so that others might see it’s movement and as a symbol that Pentecost is celebrated in your home.

*We would love to share your celebrations with our FPC family via social media!! Please consider submitting a video of your birthday song and/or pictures of your cakes, artwork, or celebrations! Submissions can be sent to lwitherspoon@fpcgreensboro.org. **Submission grants permission to FPC to post on any FPC social media channels.*