



Pentecost

MEETING AIM

To explore the coming of the Holy Spirit.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Acts 2:1-41

KEY VERSE

"Peter replied: 'Repent and be baptised, everyone one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" Acts 2:38.

10 PRAYER AND WORSHIP

OPTION 1

You will need: flames cut out of red, orange and yellow paper; pens; pinboards (or similar); pins or Blu Tack

As everyone arrives, give them some flame shapes and a pen. Encourage them to write down something God has done for them. This could be something practical, such as healing or provision of work, or something more general (and eternal), such as sending Jesus or forgiving them. They should write or draw this on their flame shape and then stick it on one of the boards. People can do more than one flame if they wish.

Encourage the congregation to share what they have written with the others who are near their board. Invite them to pray about the things written on the flames, thanking God for them.

OPTION 2

You will need: copies of John 14:15-17, 25-26 and 16:8-15 printed on paper or card; highlighter pens

Give copies of the Bible passages and pens out to people as they arrive. Ask them to work in small groups (mixed-aged if possible), highlighting what Jesus said the Holy Spirit would do and be for his friends. Encourage the groups to think about what the Holy Spirit does for them today. If you have lots of people who aren't from a church background, make sure you include one or two longer-term members of the congregation in each group to help the conversation along.

Once everyone has finished, invite volunteers up to the front to share what their group discovered.

10 STORY

You will need: a chair

Before the session, ask a volunteer to be Peter and to learn his speech in the script below. Make sure everyone in the congregation has a paper flame (if you didn't do 'Prayer and worship' option 2, give out paper flames now). Then tell the following story.

It was the day of Pentecost, an annual harvest festival that took place 50 days after Passover. All of Jesus' friends were gathered together in one room, about 120 of them in total. It was a bit like us gathered together here. Jesus' friends were still trying to come to terms with what was happening. Seven weeks earlier, Jesus had been put to death by the authorities, but had come alive again three days later. He had appeared to them again and again for 40 days and then, ten days before Pentecost, he had been taken up to heaven. It was like a whirlwind!

And things were not about to slow down now. Jesus' friends were sitting together, like we are now, when they heard a sound like a hurricane. *Play your wind sound effect.*

They looked up and saw what looked like tongues of fire swirling around them. The fire rested on each of their heads. *Ask the congregation to put their paper flames on their heads.*

Suddenly, they were able to speak in different languages. *Ask the congregation to shout out any words they know in different languages.*

They all burst out into the street and a crowd gathered around them. People from different countries could understand what they were saying. Everyone was amazed! But one or two people were suspicious. They thought Jesus' friends were drunk.

Surrounded by the other eleven disciples, Peter spoke to the crowd. *'Peter' stands at the front and delivers his speech.*

"Listen to me! The prophets told us this day would come; that God's Holy Spirit would be given to everyone. You had Jesus of Nazareth killed, but God raised him back to life again. Jesus could not be held by death! God has made him Lord! Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

When he finished speaking, the crowd couldn't stop themselves. *Encourage the congregation to stand and cheer.*

By the end of day, 3,000 people had been baptised and joined the group of Jesus' friends. What a day!

10 REFLECTIVE RESPONSE

OPTION 1

You will need: bowls of warm water; towels; volunteers to supervise each station

Set out bowls of warm water and towels at various points around your meeting space. Invite the congregation to visit one of the water stations and wash their hands as a sign that they want to stay committed to following Jesus.

As they are washing their hands, encourage everyone to say sorry to God for following their own way. As they dry their hands, encourage them to thank God for his forgiveness and ask the Holy Spirit to be with them, guiding them and helping them to be more like Jesus.

OPTION 2

You will need: upbeat songs about the Holy Spirit

Have a time of sung worship thanking God for the Holy Spirit. Make it a time of celebration, thinking about the impact of the Spirit on Jesus' friends and the fact that thousands of people joined the group the day the Holy Spirit came!

10 GROUP DISCUSSION

Divide into mixed-age groups and discuss these questions:

- If you had been there with Jesus' friends, how would you have felt?
- What is the most important part of this story?
- Does any part of this story relate to your own experience?
- What difference does the presence of the Holy Spirit make to you?

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