



Filled with the Holy Spirit

(based on Acts 2:1-4, 38-39)

Jesus' friends were waiting. Jesus had promised that the Holy Spirit would come. But when would it happen? They prayed and waited. They wondered and waited. They waited and prayed and wondered.

Soon it was time for the festival of Pentecost. People came to Jerusalem to celebrate and give thanks to God for the first harvest of grain in the season. Jesus' friends met too. They sang songs, and they said thank you to God.

Suddenly, something amazing happened. The disciples heard the sound of a mighty wind rushing through the room. The whole house was filled with the wind. It howled and roared and bellowed. The sound was deafening.

After the wind, came the fire. It touched the disciples. It looked like fire but did not burn. It was the Holy Spirit. Jesus' friends were filled to overflowing with God's love and power. It was incredible!

People in the streets heard the noise of the wind and flames.

"What's happening?" they cried.

Peter came out and told them the story of Jesus.

"What should we do?" the people asked.

"Change the way you live!" Peter told the crowd. "Follow God's way of love like Jesus did. Then the Holy Spirit will fill you as well."

It was a very exciting day. Lots of people heard the good news and became followers of Jesus too. Jesus' friends never forgot that exciting day. They told the story over and over. No one would forget the day that the Holy Spirit came.



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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- The people who were in the house on Pentecost became followers of Jesus. Ask your pastor how the Holy Spirit is speaking through your congregation.
- By faith, we are the children of those people at the first Pentecost. Draw your children's family tree, going back a few generations. Remind your children that the people in your family tree are children of God.



Responding to God's Grace

- The promise of the Holy Spirit is also for those who are far away. Name a place that is far away. Do an internet search for the word *promise* in the language of that place. Do the same for several places.
- Look at the seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Find the flames in the seal. The flames remind us that the Holy Spirit is at work in the church. Next Sunday, look for all the images of flames you can find in your church.



- Go to bit.ly/SignLanguagePromise and learn American Sign Language for *promise*. Practice this sign until you can do it easily.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Fly kites, enjoying the effects of the wind you cannot see.
- Hang lengths of red craft ribbon on a curtain rod. Hang the rod where the wind can blow, such as in front of a fan, window, air conditioning vent, porch, or patio.
- Make a red velvet cake and remember the fire that did not burn, and how people were changed that day.

- Pray:

God, help us all to be changed by the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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