**JOURNEYING TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Session 1 of 4

# Pentecost

### MEETING AIM

To explore what the Holy Spirit came to do and what impact he had on Jesus’ friends

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Acts 2:1-41

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your situation.

Pentecost might have had some of its impact lost due to repeat hearing, if the young people in your group have been coming to church for a while. Ask these young people to encounter the story as if it were the first time. Encourage those with little or no church background to ask questions and so highlight the life-changing impact the events of Pentecost had on the followers of Jesus then, and us today.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Share any refreshments you have and invite the group to share what they have been doing during the past seven days.

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** resources for your chosen activities

Play some team-building games that emphasise having to rely on each other for help. For example:

In pairs, blindfold one young person and give them a pen and paper. Give their partner a picture of a house with a tree and car (or something similar). This player must describe the picture to their partner, who must draw a copy of the picture on their paper. After a time limit (say two minutes), compare the picture drawn by the blindfolded player with the original.

In teams of four, give them three sheets of A4 paper and challenge them to get the whole group from one side of the room to the other without touching the floor (only standing on the paper).

The point to be introduced is about working together and finding a ‘sweet spot’ where everybody starts to work off the same hymn sheet and the team really starts to perform effectively and with great togetherness – the disciples came together after the resurrection with a renewed sense of togetherness and significance, but at that point had no real purpose and were lacking in the power to really impact the world.

Set them a task that is effectively impossible. For example, in teams of five ask them to sort out a small bowl of skittles into separate piles according to colour, using only their lips! Now give each team a few straws and see how much easier it is (they can suck the selected colour skittle to the straw and drop it in the appropriate pile).

### BIBLE EXPLORATION – 10 mins

**You will need:** Bible; film clips (see below) and the means to play them

Perform the classic team-building activity where the whole group stands in a tight circle facing left and everyone must sit down on the knees of the person behind them at the same moment in order to create a balanced shape / seat! See if you can read the passage without falling over, taking a verse each in turn. If you fall or the circle breaks, start again. Make it harder by passing round just one Bible to read from.

Find these clips (or find similar ones). They are all about groups of friends who face an impossible challenge until their togetherness and / or a special power helps them achieve it. Warn them to watch with the Pentecost passage in the back of their minds. What’s going on in the clips? What are the similarities and what are the differences to Pentecost?

• *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001) – when Frodo offers to take the ring and the others one by one pledge to help him.

• *Jumanji* (2018) – where the characters first crash-land in the game and discover who their characters are.

• *Fantastic 4* (2015) – the trailer

• *Pitch Perfect 2* (2015) – the trailer

• *Big Hero 6* (2014) – when Fred brings the gang back to his manor house to take shelter.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Use the following questions to explore the passage and the ideas around it:

* In what ways do the film stories share an idea with the story of the Holy Spirit coming on the people (and empowering them to go and share the gospel and build the early Church)?
* Why did God send the Holy Spirit this way? And why do you think he send the Holy Spirit at all?
* What was the task God set the disciples and has set us that we need the Holy Spirit to give us the ability to do?
* What does that mean for you today?

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

Plan a flashmob for during the coffee time after the service. Use a worship song everyone knows – one that is upbeat and fun. Play a recording of the song (loudly) to take away self-consciousness and give it as much impact as possible, but if you can have some confident voices start and others join in, that will help the effect of confusion among your unsuspecting coffee-slurping congregation!

Choreograph a simple movement for the young people to follow while they sing – for example have them all mingle all over the place right across the room before it starts, then as they all start to sing, they should walk backwards up through the crowd until they are all back-to-back in a huddle in the centre of the room. They rotate as a group and then when the song ends, they all walk straight off in different directions as if nothing had ever happened. It might be a good idea to have a quiet word with the church leader and / or coffee team, warning them something special might happen!

Make sure someone films it to enjoy watching back later (providing you have permission to film all the young people from their parents or carers).

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** list of all the activities your church is involved in

Focus the prayer time not on yourselves but on your church and the mission God has empowered us for – display a list of all the activities the church runs and pray for each of them in turn; the leaders and those who take part – that they will be effective in being “my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”.

Pray the church will be blessed by your flashmob!

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