

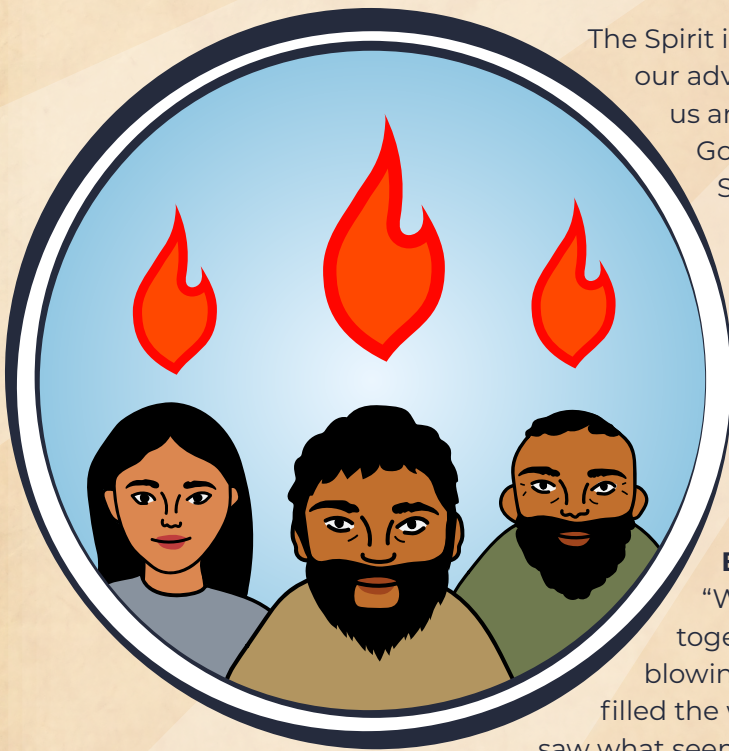
Pentecost



On Pentecost we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon humanity. It's a reminder of God's faithfulness, and the fullness of life experienced in relationship with him. Pentecost is the day on which we move from spectators in the gospel story to active participants. It is the day the church, the body of Christ, was born.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

"And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, 'you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now'" (Acts 1:4-5, ESV)



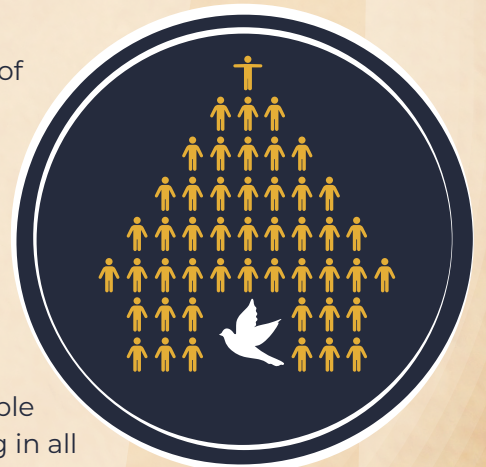
The Spirit is God's personal presence. The Holy Spirit is our advocate, counselor, and comforter, encouraging us and propelling us forward in the abundant life God has for us. John 3:8 compares the Spirit-filled life as one blown and controlled by a wind that one "cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going." A life led and empowered by the Spirit requires a life of trust in the faithfulness of the Father to fulfill his promises and meet our needs. We set our sails, wait for the wind, and allow the Spirit to lead and unfold in God's perfect timing.

Birth of the church

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." (Acts 2:2-4)

The account of Pentecost in Acts describes an exciting eruption of God's wind and fire washing over the lives of those present. The disciples went from the Upper Room out into the streets, boldly declaring the good news of Jesus crucified and risen and the Spirit outpoured.

This was a familiar symbol to disciples, a sign of God's presence; like the glory of God filling the temple or the pillar of fire that symbolized God's presence with the Israelites while they were journeying to the promised land. This is the marking out of temple space, places where heaven and earth meet. The Lord is dwelling in all of the disciples, symbolizing God's personal presence not just for a few select prophets but for all his children. The Spirit is taking up residence in the new temple, our bodies, the body of Christ.



Pentecost tells us that the power of the resurrection is not just for us—it is *in us*!

