

Pentecost Sunday all-age service



Introduction

Thank you so much for considering using the Wycliffe all-age service plan.

This plan is designed to provide a brief, easy-to-understand, unpacking of Acts 2, communicating the key messages in a fun and engaging way.

It provides an outline of the service, with the specific prayers and worship songs left for you to choose, based on your church's requirements.

The sermon notes are short, providing a brief outline of how to communicate the three key messages in a way which can engage both young and old. Along with our sermon notes is a two-minute Wycliffe video, which will be available in early March at wycliffe.org.uk/pentecost-resources.

We also provide a small group resource for children and youth, which is designed to be used to follow on or lead up to this talk. The small group resource further unpacks the application of the service messages for individuals and church family.

We are offering these resources free of charge, but if you would like to make a donation or take up an offering, you can find all the information you need at wycliffe.org.uk/church-giving.

Thank you so much for considering using the Wycliffe Pentecost resources. I pray that you and your church find them a blessing and an encouragement this Pentecost.

God bless,



Neil Graham
Director for Churches
Wycliffe Bible Translators

Pentecost: Sunday all-age service

Objective: To provide an engaging and fun service, showing why God spoke to people in a language they understood best and how this affects our ministry

Introduction

Welcome – Introduce the theme/object of the service

To help introduce the theme, print out the words in Appendix 1 (page 6), and ask for five children to come to the front and read them aloud. Explain each of these words means hello in different languages. Go on to say that as we look at today's Bible passage we are going to explore the story of Pentecost, when God poured out his Holy Spirit on the disciples and how they were given the ability to share with people the good news of Jesus in their own languages.

Pray

Worship

Activity – Guess the meaning quiz/game

This activity is designed to give an understanding of the importance of people hearing God's word in a language they understand best.

Divide the congregation into two teams and explain how you are about to read out a list of phrases and words. The team that shouts out the correct meaning first wins the point. There is a mix of words that are trending with younger people and others that will be familiar to an older age group.

| Word/phrase | Meaning |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Salty | To be bitter or annoyed about something |
| Burning the candle at both ends | Someone who is working long hours, a hectic lifestyle |
| Cop a mouse | Get a black eye |
| GOAT | Greatest of all time |
| As fit as a butcher's dog | Very fit and bouncing with energy |
| Tea | Gossip or interesting news shared between friends |
| Pearls before swine | You are wasting your time by offering something that is helpful or valuable to someone who does not appreciate it |
| Know your onions | To be experienced or knowledgeable about a subject |
| Gas | Describing something that's cool |
| A stitch in time saves nine | Making an effort at the beginning may save a lot of extra work later |

Pentecost: Sunday all-age service

Once you have completed the quiz/game, unpack the purpose of this further.

The aim of this quiz/game was so we could have fun – but we also played it to illustrate a point. Even though all the words and phrases we said were in English, we may have found some of them hard to understand and not known what they meant in their context. This is because our understanding differs, based on our culture and age.

This is true for people hearing the gospel. We can use words and phrases which make sense to us, but that others will not understand or may misunderstand what we are saying. This is true for people who are reading God's word in a language which is foreign to them rather than in their own language.

As we unpack the story of Pentecost, we see how God considers the best way to communicate to people the good news of Jesus. At Pentecost God chose to speak to the pilgrims in Jerusalem in their own languages. God did this so that they could know that Jesus is alive not only with their minds, but also in their hearts.

Next we are going to look further at why God did this.

Worship

Pray

Watch Wycliffe Pentecost video

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost has so much to teach us today about the 'wonders of God' (v11) both in our own lives and in our calling, as followers of Jesus, to reach others for him.

Let's explore:

1. What did Jesus tell the disciples about the Spirit?
2. What was the immediate impact of the coming of the Spirit?
3. What did all this mean?

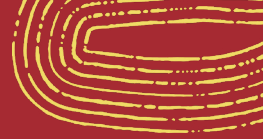
*Either read these three sets of verses here: **Acts 1:4–8, Acts 2:1–18 and 36–41**, or read them before each of the three points below:*

1. The Holy Spirit will bring power to witness to Jesus

Explain:

| In Acts 1 the very last thing Jesus said to his disciples before he was taken up to heaven was: 'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' (Acts 1:8)

Pentecost: Sunday all-age service



- | Jesus told the disciples that the gift of the Holy Spirit would give them a power from beyond themselves: power from God.
- | The power of the Spirit will change their lives, Jesus tells the disciples, and will enable them to be witnesses for him.
- | And they are to be witnesses for Jesus in an expanding circle: to people locally (in Jerusalem), to people in their wider nation (Judea and Samaria), and to people everywhere around the world (to the ends of the earth).

Apply:

- | Jesus wants us to tell others about him – to be his witnesses locally, nationally, and internationally.
- | Often we struggle to do this – however, he doesn't expect us to do this in our own strength but in the power of the Spirit.

2. Filled with the Holy Spirit, people declare the wonders of God

Explain:

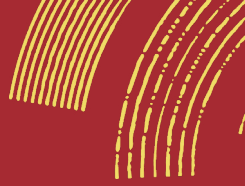
- | When the Holy Spirit came, as Jesus promised, the Spirit enabled the disciples to declare the wonders of God.
- | People from 'every nation under heaven' were amazed to hear the disciples speak in their own languages. (Acts 2:6)
- | But what did the Holy Spirit enable the disciples to talk about, that speakers of many different languages heard?
- | They spoke about the 'wonders of God'. (v11)
- | We're not told exactly which wonders of God they were proclaiming. But surely it must have been the greatest wonder of all, which had just taken place: that God loved the world so much, he sent his Son to die for us, and that Jesus rose again and has now ascended on high – as Peter goes on to explain.

Apply:

- | We have good news to share, and the Holy Spirit enables us to declare God's wonders.
- | Our heart's desire should be for all people to hear for themselves the wonders of what God has done in Jesus.
- | So we speak of Jesus here in our local environments.
- | And we stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, who are today declaring the wonders of God in the thousands of languages they speak around the world.



Pentecost: Sunday all-age service



3. Now everyone can be saved and receive the Holy Spirit

Explain:

- | On hearing the wonders of God in their own languages people asked: 'What does this mean?' (v12)
- | So Peter stood up to tell the crowd that the pouring out of the Spirit meant that the day had now come that the Old Testament prophesied about: God pouring out his Spirit, and that 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'. (v21)
- | And the people asked 'what shall we do?' in response to this wonderful news. (v37)
- | Peter's reply was clear and is the same then as now: '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'. (v38)

Apply:

- | What Peter explained on the day of Pentecost proves that we now live in a world where anyone – you, your children, those who are far away (v39) – who calls on the name of the Lord can be saved and can receive for themselves his Holy Spirit. This is what the Old Testament prophets had promised.
- | The Spirit has come: now is the time to declare the wonders of God as we witness to Jesus.
- | As Jesus instructed the disciples in Acts 1, this is to happen locally, nationally, and internationally.

Application

The message of the gospel in people's own languages continues to cut people to the heart and to change lives around the world today.

Akoete (pronounced A-coat-e), a Bible translator in Togo, read the words of Jesus in Luke 13:3 – 'Unless you repent you will perish' – in his language Ifè (pronounced Ee-fay) and said: 'That really hit me, and through that I repented and I gave myself to Jesus.' Now he is part of the team translating the Bible for the Ifè people – since the Ifè New Testament was first distributed in 2011 they have seen the Ifè church grow. Akoete explains the difference: 'In the past people worshipped idols and there were almost no churches. But now there are churches in nearly all the Ifè villages.'

That is the difference which is made when people have the Bible in their own language telling them about the 'wonders of God'.

And that is why Akoete and the Ifè team are working so hard to finish translating the Bible into Ifè – they are on track to finish in 2026 – for they know that the impact of having the complete Bible in their language will lead more people to Jesus.



Pentecost: Sunday all-age service



Indeed, we know about Pentecost because we have the Bible in our language. The Bible is the main way that God communicates with us today, so having it in people's own languages – 1 in 5 people around the world don't yet have the Bible in their language – is key to people from the ends of the earth hearing about Jesus.

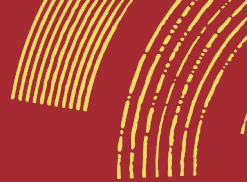
Jesus' instructions to the disciples – in the power of the Holy Spirit to be his witnesses locally, nationally, and internationally – is also a central part of our calling as his disciples today. So, may the Holy Spirit empower you this week to be a witness to Jesus to all the people you meet.

Pray to close

**Wycliffe
Bible
Translators**

*PO Box 1643, Oxford OX4 9PB
0300 303 1111
hello@wycliffe.org.uk
wycliffe.org.uk*





Hello

Bonjour

Guten tag

Olá

Konnichiwa