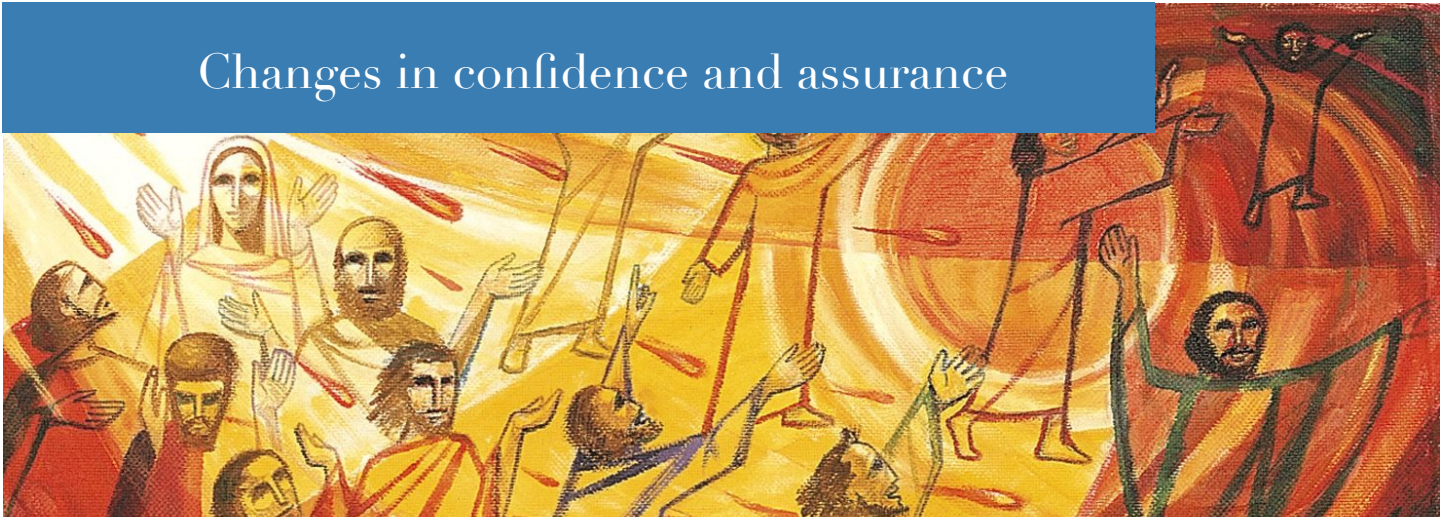


Changes in confidence and assurance



Y5/6 Pentecost Pause Day: Cycle 2

Overview:

Revise the Pentecost story

- Is the change to the disciples surprising?
- Wind: God the Holy Spirit came as wind and blew through the room. Look at how you cannot see the wind but we do see it's powerful effects...
- Think about how Christians say it's the same with God the Holy Spirit - you can see its work. Look up references to what the effects of God the Holy Spirit are.
- Reflective activity: what character aspects would we love to see changed in ourselves?
- Glove activity

You will need:

- Bibles (select a version that is easy for the class to access)
- 'Bookmarks' to record the disciples' emotions
- Colouring pencils
- Something (e.g. Large sheets of card or umbrellas) with which to experience wind resistance.
- Hoops and paper for labels
- Each child's name written out on a slip of paper (or equivalent)
- A glove per child
- Pretty paper and some means of attaching it easily to the glove.
- Calm music

Session 1

- Retell the Pentecost narrative (Acts 1 and 2). Split the story into the 5 chunks below for the retelling. Ask the children to colour in their 'bookmark' boxes as each chunk is narrated. Their choice of colour should correspond to how they perceive the disciples to have been thinking and feeling in that part of the events. They can also choose to add a simple doodled image to each box to remind them which part of the story it represents. Some children may choose to use more than one colour in each box or mix colours.

- Acts 1v6-9 (Jesus ascends into heaven and leaves the disciples).
- Acts 1v12-14 (The disciples live together in a room in Jerusalem. NB at this point they would have been quite scared, having seen their leader crucified recently and wondering if they were next.)
- Acts 2v1-4 (As promised God the Holy Spirit comes to the disciples).
- Acts 2v5-17, 32-33 (The disciples go out into the street and speak with confidence about Jesus, each speaking in a different language as he has enabled them).
- Acts 2v37-47 (Lots of the people listening became followers. They shared everything and looked after everyone, and all the time more and more people were watching, listening and becoming new believers).

Afterwards, children to share and discuss what they chose to put on their bookmarks for each chunk and why. Some interesting discussion may well arise at this point, with helpful questions like: *Did anyone see things differently?* ie questions that allow for multiple and varied answers. It might be interesting to ask: *Does the change in the disciples' behaviour from hiding away scared to openly preaching on the streets surprise you?* Again, make it very easy for the children to both agree and disagree because this will bring interesting discussion as to why they think what they do.

- Find Acts 2v1-4. How is the arrival of God the Holy Spirit described? What are the characteristics of wind? How do you know when it is windy? What does it feel like to run outside in the wind? What is the wind useful for (flying kites, drying clothes etc). Can you see the wind? Maybe go outside and experience wind and run with large sheets of stiff cardboard/corrugated plastic/umbrellas across the playground to feel wind resistance? Note that Christians believe that God the Holy Spirit is like the wind because he is

seen by what he does. Find and read (NB this work may need carrying over into session 2 to give it enough time):

* Galatians 5v22-23

Children to record on a mind map (in pairs?) the 'effects' of God the Holy Spirit that they read about - maybe listing examples for each?

Session 2

* Finish off any work as required from session 1.

* Circle time... What characteristics do they admire in others in the class? (kindness, thoughtfulness, ability not to take things personally, patience, forgiving nature, good listening, being trustworthy, good sense of humour etc) *Reflection: what is the difference between a character attribute and an action or skill? How can we grow good characters in our lives? Which do you think is more important: to have a good character (honest, reliable, peaceful, kind...) or to have good skills (academic cleverness, artistic talent, sportiness/coordination, musical flair etc)?* Again, make space for the children to take either position and thus have a debate/discussion.

* Place some hoops (or similar) in the middle of the circle. Put a label in each hoop of a different character attribute that they admire. Give each child the name of another child in the class. Taking turns, children to place their name in one of the circles and give an example of a time when that child has shown that character attribute. This may be harder with some names than others! Children may benefit from working in pairs to come up with an example for each of the names. Maybe think of some more titles for the hoops and repeat the activity. *Reflection: which hoops would the children have liked to see their names in? Are they the sort of people for whom the class might have found it hard to think of examples or do they often show that character trait? Can they think of other examples when they have been like that?*

* Without being personal, come up with a class list of character attributes that are not good e.g. Not listening to others, telling lies, dominating others, being too bossy, saying unkind things, getting cross easily. It may help to look back over the positive attributes and try and think about what the opposite would be. Leave the resulting list somewhere where the children can see it (as a support for the activity in the next session).

Session 3

Make sure each child has their old glove in front of them. Put it on and find which side is the palm and which is the back of the hand.

Children to have a time of quiet personal reflection. Reassure them that the work from this session will be private and they will not have to share it with anyone if they do not want to. Ask them to think about the times recently when they have struggled to get on with other children at school. Often, even if the problem was often largely someone else's fault, there are still things that the child could have handled differently that would have prevented the situation from enflaming. Provide them with pretty pieces of paper and ask the children to write down (or draw?) the characteristics they see in themselves which aren't very nice and which they would like to change. Perhaps they struggle more to get along with people at home, or in another context. What do these struggles show them about character traits that they need to work on? Do they lack patience? Do they harbour a grievance? Do they lack self control? Use the ideas from the Bible and from the morning circle time as a basis for reflection. Stick the pieces of paper on to the *palm* of the glove (this might need to be done with double sided sticky tape or a neat cross stitch?)

Now remind them of the hoops work in the morning and of the list of character traits that God the Holy Spirit brings. What character traits would they like to see increase in themselves? Can they think of particular situations in which they need these characteristics more? Children to record their thoughts on more pieces of pretty paper, but this time attach them to the back of their glove.

Reflection time

When everyone's glove is ready, children to find themselves a space in the classroom where they have some privacy and where they are away from distractions. Maybe put on some calm, quiet music in the background to set a peaceful ambience. Ask the children to put on their glove and sit with the palm facing them. Reflect privately: How do those words and pictures that describe their negative behaviour make them feel? Read each of them and think again of the times when they behave like this. Now children to turn their hand over and read the words and pictures that speak of who they would like to become. Remind them that the Bible teaches that this transformation is possible through the work of God the Holy Spirit. If they would like this for themselves, ask the children to symbolise this by closing their fist slowly. This hides all the character traits they are unhappy with and no longer want to show to the world, and exposes all the good character traits that they want to grow and let everyone see more of. Read Ephesians

3v20-21 as a prayer, asking God to do more than we can ask or imagine in transforming our characters.

Children may wish to take their glove home with them as a reminder of what they have thought through today.