

Human Degradation and Spirituality for a New Humanity

Calendar of Lessons

For Liturgical Year 2016-2017, the lessons are subdivided into these four scopes and strands:

- **Scope 1: Rootedness**
Strand 1: ***Jesus' Encounters with Human Degradation and its Transformations***
 - Advent and Christmastide (27 November 2016 – 1 January 2017)
 - Epiphany (8 January – 26 February 2017)
- **Scope 2: Identity: On Being and Becoming**
Strand 2: ***Jesus' Choice of the Kind of Messiah***
 - Lent (5 March – 9 April 2017)
 - Eastertide (16 April – 28 May 2017)
- **Scope 3: Unity and Solidarity**
Strand 3: ***The Church United to Respond to Human Degradation***
 - ***Pentecost (4 June – 20 August 2017)***
- **Scope 4: Fruitful Lifeworks**
Strand 4: ***The Church Manifesting the Marks of a Christ-like Life***
 - Kingdomtide (27 August – 26 November 2017)



Quadrennial Theme: Spirituality for These Critical TimesYear 3 Theme: **Human Degradation and Spirituality for a New Humanity 2016-2017**Scope 1: **Rootedness**Strand 1: ***Jesus' Encounters with Human Degradation and its Transformations***

Included Sundays for Advent and Christmastide Season (6 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(1) November 27, 2016	First Sunday of Advent	Liberating Cultural Breakthroughs	1 Samuel 25:13-34 Matthew 1:18-24	There are cultural practices and beliefs that cause human suffering and degradation, thus, the church should make a cultural breakthrough in the transformation towards a new humanity.
(2) December 4, 2016	Second Sunday of Advent/Family Sunday	Seeds of New Humanity	Isaiah. 7:14 Luke 1:26-35	Like the enslaved people in Egypt, the new humanity emerges from among the victims who long for freedom and wholeness.
(3) December 11, 2016	Third Sunday of Advent/Human Rights Sunday	Challenging Oppressive State Powers	1 Kings 12:1-16 Luke 2:1-6	The church has the duty to expose and challenge state policies that violate human rights.
(4) December 18, 2016	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Jesus as God's Love Incarnate	Isaiah 49:1-3 John 3:11-17	In the midst of a broken humanity, God came in Jesus

				to mend it and make it whole.
(5) December 25, 2016	First Sunday after Christmas	The Birth of Jesus	Psalms 91:11 Luke 2:7-18 John 1:14	We joyfully celebrate the birth of Jesus in a world that longs for fullness.
(6) January 1, 2017	First Sunday after Christmas	Defending Children, Symbols of a New Beginning	Isaiah 43:18-19 Matthew 2:1-16	Upholding the rights and welfare of children makes a just and compassionate society now and in the future.
Included Sundays for Epiphany Season (8 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(7) January 8, 2017	Epiphany Sunday	Channels of God's Healing	2 Kings 7:1-16 John 9:1-41	We are all healers to one another.
(8) January 15, 2017	First Sunday after Epiphany/Christian Unity	The Inclusive Healing Ministry of the Church	2 Kings 5:1-19 Mark 1:29-31	"The kingdom of God is present...where healing is given to the sick." (UCCP Statement of Faith)
(9) January 22, 2017	Second Sunday after Epiphany/National Bible Sunday	Healing of Animosities	Isaiah 11:1-9 Galatians 3:28	Respecting and appreciating differences is a condition for creative unity and harmony.
(10) January 29, 2017	Third Sunday after Epiphany	Healing as a Message of Salvation	2 Kings 4:8-37 Luke 8:41-56	Salvation comes whenever healing happens.
(11) February 5, 2017	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	Healing of Social Divides	Ruth 1:1-21 Luke 13:10-17	Social division is eradicated when human fellowship, care, respect,

				and dignity are restored.
(12) February 12, 2017	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	Healing of Broken Relationships	Genesis 32:1-32, 33:1-4 Matthew 5:24	Where there are broken relationships, it is the duty of the church to bring about reconciliation through forgiveness and repentance.
(13) February 19, 2017	Sixth Sunday after Epiphany	Healing from Demon Possession	1 Samuel 16:14-23 Mark 5:1-20	The Spirit of God drives away the demons of envy, fear, and greed for the Spirit to dwell in.
(14) February 26, 2017	Seventh Sunday after Epiphany/Transfiguration Sunday	Healing towards Transformation	Exodus 34:29-35 Mark 9:2-8	The transfiguration of Jesus is a preview of his resurrection which is our hope and destiny.

Scope 2: **Identity: On Being and Becoming**
 Strand 2: ***Jesus' Choice of the Kind of Messiah***

Included Sundays for Lent (6 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(15) March 5, 2017	First Sunday in Lent	Choosing our Destiny	Jeremiah 1:4-10 Matthew 16:21-23	Jesus chose to obey God's will and it became his destiny. When we make a choice to follow Jesus, it becomes our destiny.

(16) March 12, 2017	Second Sunday in Lent	Servant Messiah	Isaiah 53:4-6 Mark 10:42-45	As a servant messiah, Jesus served the suffering ones. As a result, he suffered with them. When we serve the suffering ones, we also suffer with them.
(17) March 19, 2017	Third Sunday in Lent	Loyalty to God	Ruth 1:16-17 Luke 7:1-10	The love for God is the basis of our unwavering loyalty to God.
(18) March 26, 2017	Fourth Sunday in Lent	Peace-building	Jeremiah 1:9-10 Matthew 10:34	Building peace, as a messianic mission, requires forcible removal of obstacles to peace—inequitable distribution of resources, abusive relationships, and injustice.
(19) April 2, 2017	Fifth Sunday in Lent	Marks of the True Messiah	Isaiah 42:1-7 Matthew 11:2-6	The true messiah is known through his healing, liberating, and restoring deeds.
(20) April 9, 2017	Sixth Sunday in Lent/Palm Sunday	Jesus Encountering the Powers	Zechariah 9:9-10 John 12:12-19	Jesus enters Jerusalem to challenge the powers-that-be that cause human misery.

Included Sundays for Eastertide (7 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(21) April 16, 2017	Resurrection Sunday	Resurrection of the Righteous	Daniel 12:1-3 John 11:25-27 Romans 6:5	Those who remain faithful to the end will not perish but have eternal life.
(22) April 23, 2017	First Sunday after Resurrection	Suppressing the Truth of the Resurrection	Jeremiah 28:15-17 Matthew 28:11-15	The response of the powers-that-be to the resurrection was to cover up the truth with a lie and criminalize those who believe.
(23) April 30, 2017	Second Sunday after Resurrection	Moment of Human Frailties	2 Samuel 21:10 Mark 16:1-8	After Jesus died, the disciples experienced a lacuna moment of mourning, confusion, fear, depression, and disbelief. This experience is not sin but needs to be accepted and brought to the Lord.
(24) May 7, 2017	Third Sunday after Resurrection	Appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene	2 Kings 7:7-20 Mark 16:9-11	The testimony of those who speak the truth are often discredited on account of their status in society.
(25) May 14, 2017	Fourth Sunday after Resurrection	Failure to Recognize the Appearance of Jesus	Genesis 18:1-15 Mark 16:12-13	Due to their extreme grief, the disciples were not able

				to apprehend the risen Lord. But Jesus overcomes our failure to discern and communes with us.
(26) May 21, 2017	Fifth Sunday after Resurrection/UC CP Sunday	Celebrating the Resurrection	Exodus 16:1-26 Luke 24:36-46	Jesus comes to commune with us in ordinary, basic, and common activities and struggles.
(27) May 28, 2017	Sixth Sunday after Resurrection/Ascension Sunday	Anticipating the Fullness of God's Reign on Earth	Daniel 12:13 Mark 16:15-20	Jesus ascends to heaven to receive God's authority to realize God's reign in its fullness.

Scope 3: **Unity and Solidarity**Strand 3: ***The Church United to Respond to Human Degradation***

Included Sundays for Pentecost Season (12 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(28) June 4, 2017	Pentecost Sunday	The Spirit Breaking through Cultural Captivity	Joel 2:28-29 Acts 2:1-12	The Spirit enables the Gospel to be communicated in the languages and cultures of the people.
(29) June 11, 2017	First Sunday after Pentecost/Trinity Sunday	The Holy Trinity in the Faith of the Church	Genesis 1:26-27 Jude vv. 19:21	God is a community of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the source and basis of the

				church as community.
(30) June 18, 2017	Second Sunday after Pentecost	The Holy Spirit Sustaining the Church	Jeremiah 7:1-11 Matthew 23:13-28	The Holy Spirit bids the church to unite with the people to confront the oppressive powers.
(31) June 25, 2017	Third Sunday after Pentecost	Defending the Powerless	Psalms 82:3-4; 146:5-9 Proverbs 31:8-9 James 1:27	The Holy Spirit sustains the church in its ministry of protecting the oppressed and the helpless and upholding their rights.
(32) July 2, 2017	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost	Breaking Down Walls that Divide	Isaiah 56:3-8 Amos 9:7 Luke 14:12-14	The church, by nature, is inclusive. It embraces differences and does not harbor animosities.
(33) July 9, 2017	Fifth Sunday after Pentecost	Confronting Human Greed	Deuteronomy 5:21 Acts 2:44-47; 4:33-35	The church confronts the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.
(34) July 16, 2017	Sixth Sunday after Pentecost	Casting Out Demonic Powers	Psalms 103:2-5 Mark 1:23-27; 7:24-30	The church's ministry of healing requires the driving out of demonic powers that hold people in their sway.
(35) July 23, 2017	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost	Being Present	Deuteronomy 31:8 Psalm 40:1-3 Revelation 21:3-4	The church embraces the ministry of presence to embody God who is Immanuel.

(36) July 30, 2017	Eighth Sunday after Pentecost	Nurturing Hope	Job 5:15-16 Psalm 34:17-20 Matthew 11:28-30	The church journeys with people in the darkness of despair, reviving the hope and keeping it alive.
(37) August 6, 2017	Ninth Sunday after Pentecost	Reaching Out to Victims of Abuse and Social Evils	Isaiah 25:4 Matthew 18:21-35	The church is a community that provides comfort, assistance, shelter, and intervention to victims in their needs.
(38) August 13, 2017	Tenth Sunday after Pentecost	Pursuing and Building Peace	Psalm 34:11-14 1Peter 3:8-12	The church plants peace in a world rocked by conflict, violence, and wars.
(39) August 20, 2017	Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost	The Church Awakened to Do Mission	Isaiah 59:17 Ephesians 6:14	An awakened church girds up and equips itself for mission.

Scope 4: **Fruitful Lifeworks**Strand 4: ***The Church Manifesting the Marks of a Christ-like Life***

Included Sundays for Kingdomtide Season (14 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(40) August 27, 2017	First Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Mission Sunday	Leaving Everything to Follow Christ	Isaiah 6:1-8 Luke 5:1-11	Obedience to Jesus means letting go of those cares that keep us from following him.
(41) September 3, 2017	Second Sunday in Kingdomtide/ CEN Sunday	Mission to the Periphery	1 Samuel 18:1-5 Philippians 2:5-8 2 Corinthians 8:9	Removing our self from the center of our life so that we can put others in its place.
(42) September 10, 2017	Third Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Children' Sunday	Humility-Powered Mission	Proverbs 15:33, 11:2 Luke 18:9-14	Behind genuine mission is a humble heart that seeks the well-being of others.
(43) September 17, 2017	Fourth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Youth Sunday	Accountability in the Kingdom	2 Samuel 12:1-13 Luke 15:11-24	Being created in the image of God, we are responsible and accountable to each other.
(44) September 24, 2017	Fifth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Fellowship of the Least Coin Sunday	The Kingdom as a Forgiving Community	Genesis 45:1-5 Acts 7:59-60	Being forgiving is a quality of those who belong to the Kingdom of God.
(45) October 1, 2017	Sixth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Worldwide Communion Sunday/CYAP Sunday	Towards a Reconciled Community	Genesis 45:9-15 Philemon 1:10-20	True reconciliation moves relationships to a higher plane.
(46) October 8, 2017	Seventh Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Peace Sunday	Living the Faith	Esther 4:13-16 James 1:27	Forgiven and reconciled, we

				are freed to do good.
(47) October 15, 2017	Eighth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ UCM Sunday	Being Accepted in the Kingdom of God	Hosea 1: 1-3, 3:1 John 4:7-15	The Christian community is accepting of others unmindful of any advantage.
(48) October 22, 2017	Ninth Sunday in Kingdomtide/Solidarity with Indigenous People Sunday	Reverence for Life	Exodus 2:1-10 Luke 7:1-10	Life is respected beyond social class, ethnicity, and religion.
(49) October 29, 2017	Tenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Reformation Sunday	Discerning God's Ways through Jesus	Job 42:1-6 John 14:5-11	To know Jesus is to know God. The gospel makes faith simple to everyone.
November 5, 2017 (50)	Eleventh Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Church Workers Sunday	Prayerful Life	Daniel 6:6-23 Mark 14:32-38	Communing with God through prayers encompasses all of life.
(51) November 12, 2017	Twelfth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Theological Education Sunday	Audacious Compassion	1 Kings 17:8-16 Luke 10:25-37	Those who have less in life or regarded low are the most compassionate.
(52) November 19, 2017	Thirteenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Migrant Workers Sunday	Learning from the Faith and Witness of Migrants	Psalms 137:1-6 1 Peter 1:1 James 1:1-4	Being steadfast in the faith makes us complete and whole.
(53) November 26, 2017	Fourteenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Stewardship Sunday	Service Motivated by Love	Judges 5:6-13 Mark 2:1-12	Stewardship is manifested through the collective response of the faith community.

The Pentecost Season (Holy Spirit)

Pentecost or the Fiftieth Day marks the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the believers fifty days after the Resurrection of Jesus. As recorded in the Book of Acts, chapter 2, it took place while the disciples were gathered in Jerusalem for the Jewish harvest festival, fifty days after the Passover. It signifies the empowerment of the church by the Holy Spirit and the launching of its mission to evangelize the world. This spiritual event is celebrated as the church's "birthday."

The presence of the Spirit of God in the church is manifested in the spiritual quality of its community life (Acts 2:44-47, Galatians 5:22-25), the unselfish sharing of gifts from the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12) and in its zeal to witness to God's love in Jesus Christ. Technically, the liturgical color Red is used only for this particular Sunday.

Pentecost Sunday

The Spirit Breaking through Cultural Captivity

Old Testament: Joel 2:28-29 (NRSV)

²⁸Then afterwards I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. ²⁹Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

New Testament: Acts 2:1-12 (NRSV)

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." ¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

General Concept: The Spirit enables the Gospel to be communicated in the languages and cultures of the people.

Key Concepts in the Different Age Levels in Sunday School

N/K/YE: The Church tells the Gospel to people using the language they understand

ME/OE: The Pentecost enables God's Spirit-filled people to spread the Gospel to people using the language they understand.

Y: The promise of Pentecost is for God's Spirit-filled people to spread the Gospel to people using the language they understand.

A: The Church is empowered by the Holy Spirit to communicate the Gospel as a sign of life, hope, reconciliation, and service to people using the language they understand.

Exegesis of the Biblical References

"Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit."

"pour out" (Hebrew: ashphuk) - to pour out, spill, to shed to pour out oneself

"my spirit" (Hebrew: ruachi) - Spirit of God, as inspiring ecstatic state of prophecy

"prophecy" (Hebrew: u-nbaw) - to prophesy under the influence of divine spirit

"dreams" (Hebrew: chlmute) - to dream ordinary or with prophetic meaning

"visions" (Hebrew: chzinuth) - in the ecstatic state, oracle, prophesy in divine communication

When God's Spirit is poured, the Spirit comes upon everyone regardless of gender (sons and daughters), age (old and young) and even social status (slaves). Everyone can receive God's Spirit and it is God who initiates it. This goes to show that nobody can limit the outpouring of God's Spirit. Yet when the Spirit is poured upon to all people, it is important to note that it is done for God's purpose. Most of the effects of the outpouring of the Spirit (prophecy, dreams, visions) are understood in terms of the prophetic role which is to proclaim God's will. In Joel's time the Spirit came upon people specifically chosen by God like charismatic leaders such as Moses and the prophet Elijah. This time come, the Spirit would be poured upon all kinds of people.

The coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost is described in detail that it could have been told by a person who was there. Descriptions like "sound like the rush of violent wind", and "Divided tongues, as of fire" portray a vivid scene and can only be given by an eyewitness. A word for word transliteration of the original Greek in Acts 1:2-3 looks like this "And became suddenly out of the heaven resound as even of being carried blowing forcible and it fills whole the home where they were sitting. And were viewed to them being through parted tongues as if is seated besides on one each of them." Even in the original it is very detailed in description.

The writer of Acts is the same writer of Luke (Acts 1:1-5; Luke 1:1-4) to the same patron Theophilus. Consistent in having an "orderly account" (Luke 1:1) and gathering data from "eyewitnesses" (Luke 1:2), our biblical text tells the story of how a band of Jesus' disciples became fiery orators and preachers in proclaiming the Gospel. As they were able to tell the Gospel in various languages, this act of God contrasts with the biblical story of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9) where God gave the people several languages to stop the building of their tower. Both stories in the Tower of Babel and the Day of Pentecost illustrate that languages come from God. This is important because ethno-linguistic studies show language is closely tied with culture and this affirms that all languages and cultures basically come from God.

What God did in the Day of Pentecost and revealed in Joel points to the fact that the Spirit of God can be upon every person and found in every culture. While culture and

language can be used to create division and identity, the Spirit enables us to cross cultures and affirm our connection with one another and even enhance our interdependency to one another and to God.



*Companion Guide for the Teachers and Other Users***Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels****I. Objectives**

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. Describe the day of Pentecost as the coming of the Holy Spirit and relate it to the birth of the church with the gathering of the believers;
2. Take the role of a witness when showing appreciation to the coming of the Holy Spirit; and
3. Speak about the Gospel to others using the language they understand.
- 4.

II. Concept: The Church tells the Gospel to people using the language they understand.

Materials: The Holy Bible (NRSV), offering plate, materials for the Pentecost headbands (one-inch strips of cartolina long enough to go around the circumference of a child's forehead, drawings of tongues of fire, scotch tape or stapler), a birthday cake (can be native cakes)

III. Learning Experiences**A. Opening Worship**

1. Welcome time: Smile and greet the children as they come. Check the attendance.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for this day that we have gathered in your name. Bless each one of us as we study your Word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "When the Spirit of the Lord Is in Our Heart"
*When the Spirit of the Lord is in our heart, we can sing like Mary sang (twice).
 We can sing oh, Lord (twice). We can sing like Mary sang. (repeat this line)
 When the Spirit of the Lord is in our heart, we can lead like Moses led (twice).
 We can lead oh, Lord (twice). We can lead like Moses led. (repeat this line)
 When the Spirit of the Lord is in our heart, we can pray like Daniel prayed (twice).
 We can pray oh, Lord (twice). We can pray like Daniel prayed. (repeat this line)
 When the Spirit of the Lord is in our heart, we can dance like Miriam danced (twice).
 We can dance oh, Lord (twice). We can dance like Miriam danced. (repeat this line)*

B. Getting Ready

Tell the class to greet each other because they celebrate the Day of Pentecost. Remind them that during the first Pentecost, many of God's believers were gathered. When God outpoured the Holy Spirit to each of these believers, they became Spirit-filled, and as such became members of the Body of Christ, the Church. If you have a birthday cake, tell the children to gather around it and sing "Happy Birthday, Church".

C. Learning Time

Prepare the children to listen to the story.

The Holy Spirit Comes

(Based on Acts 2:1-12)

Jesus rose from the dead. Forty days after, Jesus went up to heaven to be with the Father. Before Jesus left, he made a promise to the disciples. Jesus said, "I will send the Holy Spirit to you. The Holy Spirit will stay with you forever."

The disciples waited. After ten days of waiting, something happened. The Holy Spirit came! A strong sound like a rushing wind was heard. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit seemed like tongues of fire. Each tongue rested on each of the disciples. The Holy Spirit made the disciples speak about the Gospel in different

languages so that those who heard the Gospel understood it in their own language. They were the first to believe and became members of the Body of Christ, the Church. That was when the Church was born. That day is called Pentecost, fifty days after Resurrection Sunday. The Spirit of God is with those who continue to believe in the Gospel.

D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

Discuss how the children felt as they listened to the story.

- a. What happened after 40 days when Jesus rose from the dead? (Jesus went back to heaven to be with the Father.)
- b. What was Jesus' promise to his disciples? (Jesus will send the Holy Spirit.)
- c. After how many days did the Holy Spirit come? (10 days)
- d. What do you call that day? (Pentecost) How many days passed by from Jesus' resurrection to the Pentecost? (50 days) For the YE, say: "The word "pente" means 50.
- e. What did the disciples hear and see? (Sound of wind and tongues of fire)
- f. What happened to the disciples? (The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit.) For YE, ask: "Can we say that the disciples are Spirit-filled? Why or why not?" (Yes)
- g. What did the disciples do when they were filled by the Holy Spirit? (The disciples spoke about the Gospel to different people using the language the hearers understood.)
- h. What happened to the people who heard about the Gospel? (The different people believed in God.)
- i. What was born on that day? (The Church) What does the Church symbolize? (The Body of Christ) Present the birthday cake and ask the class sing the birthday song. Let the children blow the candle together. For YE, say: "The church is composed of people who believe in God."
- j. Are you willing to talk about God to your friends? What will you say?

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: Why is the Pentecost significant? (The people were filled with the Holy Spirit and they believed in the Gospel. It is the birth of the Church. The disciples told the people about the Gospel using their own language.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Read the memory verse in Acts 2:4: "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability."
2. Let the children share the things that they can do for the church. Emphasize the use of a language that is understandable to those who listen to the Gospel.
3. Distribute the materials needed to make their Pentecost headband. Assist the class in making this artwork. For the YE, tell them to list the friends they want to share about the Day of Pentecost. Let them write sentences like: "The Holy spirit makes us speak about the Gospel. The Holy Spirit guides us in our lives."

G. Closing Worship

1. Ask the class to recite the memory verse. Let them say something about the Pentecost and ask them to say this again to family members or friends.
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "When the Spirit of the Lord Is in Our Heart"
4. Closing Prayer: "Dear God thank you for sending the Holy Spirit who will teach us about God's love for us. Help us to speak clearly using the language that we use and understand. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."

Middle and Older Elementary Levels**I. Objectives**

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. Define the meaning of Pentecost and relate it with the numbers 40 and 50;
2. Tell how the Pentecost happened and how the Church celebrates it in connection with the spread of the Gospel;
3. Act out one's role as a witness of the authenticity of the Gospel; and
4. Express one's gratitude to the coming of the Holy Spirit through creative activities.

II. Concept: The Pentecost enables God's Spirit-filled people to spread the Gospel to others using the language they understand.

Materials: The Holy Bible (NRSV), offering plate, song chart, verse chart, crayons, white cartolina (or manila paper, craft paper, or any material that could be used for the Story Map Reading)

III. Learning Experiences**A. Opening Worship**

1. Welcome time: Smile and greet the children as they come. Check the attendance.
2. Opening prayer: "Ever loving God, we thank you for this special time that we gather to praise you and honor your name. Your presence will surely guide us as we study your Word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Spirit of God, Descend upon my Heart" (HFJ # 181)

B. Getting Ready

Show the number 40. Tell the class that the number 40 is mentioned 146 times in the Scriptures. This number is symbolic of a lengthy period of time. It also symbolizes a period of testing or trial. Draw from the class about their knowledge of the following:

1. Moses lived forty years in Egypt, 40 years in the desert, and 40 years as a man of God in the desert after he led the Israelites out of Egypt.
2. Moses was in Mt. Sinai 40 days and nights on two separate occasions, receiving god's laws.
3. Moses asked the twelve spies to investigate Canaan, the Land of Promise, for 40 days.
4. Elijah fasted for 40 days at Mount Horeb.
5. Jesus stayed in the wilderness for 40 days and nights when he was tempted by Satan and came out victorious in order to begin his ministry.
6. Jesus appeared to his disciples for forty days after his resurrection.
7. Jesus ascended to heaven 40 days after his resurrection.

C. Learning Time

1. Present the number 50. The prefix "pente" means 50 in Greek. Remind the class that 10 days after the Day of Ascension, The Holy Spirit came and all who were there were filled with the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is also known as the Feast of Weeks or First Fruits. The Year of Jubilee also happens every 50 years.
2. Divide the class into two groups. Instruct the first group to read Joel 2:28-29 and the second group Acts 2:1-12.
3. Have each group leader read aloud their assigned biblical references.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. Ask the class what they think about the word "witness". Let the children give their ideas. Tell the class that being a witness is telling what one saw, heard, felt, or smelled. To be a witness is to use words about what you saw, heard, felt, or smelled.

2. Tell the two groups, after listening to the two passages, to pretend that they were present during the event and they are now reporting as first-hand witnesses.
 - a. Joel 2:28-29. The children will say what they heard from Joel about the Spirit of God (Joel said that the Spirit will be poured out to all people. Things will happen to the old (dream dreams) and the young (see visions) when the Spirit is poured out to them.)
 - b. Acts 2:1-12. The children will say what happened when the Holy Spirit came: what they saw, heard, felt, and smelled during the Pentecost (Sound of a big rushing wind, coming of the tongues of fire that did not burn and rested on each of the disciples; filling of the disciples of the Holy Spirit; and the disciples speaking in different tongues as enabled by the Holy Spirit). The children will describe how the people who received the Holy Spirit will do (The believers will preach the Gospel using the language that the hearers will understand. The church will be born. The Church will do what God wants them to do through the intervention of the Holy Spirit).
3. Have each group present their report creatively (drawings, jingles, advertisement, poems).

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Say: "The Pentecost symbolizes the coming of the Holy Spirit." Ask: "How does the Pentecost enable God's Spirit-filled believers in spreading the Gospel?" (The Pentecost enables God's Spirit-filled people to spread the Gospel to people using the language they understand.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Discuss the memory verse: "Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability." (Acts 2:3-4)
2. Ask the class to acknowledge the intervention of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. **For the ME Class.** Tell the children to plan how they will share the Gospel to their friends in school or in their neighborhood by saying kind words: a lonely person who does not have many friends; a person who is afraid; or a sick person.
 - b. **For the OE Class.** Tell the children to plan how they will witness to their friends about the Gospel in the church or in a mission field: a person who is moving to another place and feels sad about; it a person who feels lonely because of school problems; a sick person who is confined in the hospital; or a person who cannot relate to others.

G. Closing Worship

1. Have the children recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Spirit of God, Descend upon my Heart" (HFJ # 181)
4. Closing prayer: "Gracious God, we are grateful for the coming of the Holy Spirit which you promised us before ascending to heaven. We are blessed by the Spirit's guidance and sustenance. May we live our lives as the Spirit enables us. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."

Youth Level

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. Describe the Day of Pentecost and relate it with the Festival of Weeks;
2. View the events before the Pentecost happened and explain their significance;
3. Comment on the relationship between Jesus' life and the life of God's children; and
4. Express one's commitment to God's mission through the church.

II. Concept: The promise of Pentecost is for God's Spirit-filled people to spread the Gospel to others using the language they understand.

Materials: The Holy Bible (NRSV), worksheets

III. Learning Experiences**A. Opening Worship**

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Gracious God, we thank you for your loving care for each of us. We need your presence in our study of your word. This is our prayer in your Son's name. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Spirit of God, Descend upon my Heart" (HFJ # 181)

B. Getting Ready

Ask the students about their dreams and let each explain each dream briefly.

Present the following dream and have them get inspired by it: "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." (Martin Luther King)

C. Learning Time

1. Instruct the learners to read in unison the verses in Joel 2:28-29 and Acts 2:1-12. Discuss each passage and draw from the class the following insights:
 - a. In the Old Testament, God spoke to people. With the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost as Joel prophesied, God spoke to all believers through the outpouring of God's Spirit. Pentecost marks the completion of the redeeming work of Christ and it becomes a celebration that Jesus Christ's promise of sending Someone who will be present all the time has been fulfilled to all people regardless of age or race.
 - b. The Day of Pentecost marks the beginning of the Early Church. Those who were present during the Pentecost event were the first group of people who got the seal of approval from God. These people were enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak in different languages to address the needs of the different people who were there. This is a reminder to the present-day Church that the gathering of God's people is more than just fellowship but a venue to do God's mission.
 - c. The lessons of the Pentecost give God's children the reason for celebration because they have been given the opportunity to be part of the spread of the Gospel. The youth can be challenged to take up the work of Christ in the community where they are, using their brand of spreading the Good News.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

Discuss the passages using these questions and other information.

1. Recall the event at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). How different is it from the Pentecost? Why is the Pentecost significant in our lives?
2. Why is the use of a language understandable to the hearers an effective way of spreading the Gospel? How are we enabled by the Holy Spirit in this regard?

3. Complete this table to show the chronological order of the events before the Pentecost.

Events	Time	Remarks
1. The death of Jesus on the Cross		
2. The resurrection of Jesus		
3. The Ascension of Jesus		
4. The Pentecost		

Expect the following facts related to the above table.

1. Jesus was nailed to the cross and died on Good Friday.
2. Jesus rose from the dead on Resurrection Sunday.
3. Forty days after the Resurrection, Jesus Christ ascended to the Father and announced the Great Commission.
4. Ten days after Ascension, the Pentecost event happened. Pentecost is sometimes called the Fiftieth or the Festival of Weeks. On that day, the sound of a big rushing wind was heard and the tongues of fire came that did not burn and rested on each of the disciples; and the disciples were enabled by the Holy Spirit to use the language of the different people. Many of the hearers believed because they understood what they heard. The Church was born during the Pentecost. The Church is challenged to do what God wants them to do through the intervention of the Holy Spirit.

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: What is the promise that was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost? (The promise of Pentecost is for God's Spirit-filled people to spread the Gospel to others using the language they understand.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Go back to the dreams mentioned during the preparatory activity. Have the students relate their dreams to the Great Commission and encourage them to express their kind of commitment.
2. Tell the class to meditate on this: "In truth, Pentecost is not the complete reversal of Babel. We still can't understand each other; we routinely miscommunicate; we gather and we gripe, betraying the unity Christ has called us to as his Body. But the good news of the Acts 2 story, the good news of all our gathering "together in one place," is not that the Church has a mission, but that God's mission has a Church." ("Assembling in the Spirit," Debra Dean Murphy, *Ekklesia Project*, 2012.)

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "Spirit of God, Descend upon my Heart" (HFJ # 181)
3. Closing prayer: "Merciful God, we thank you for giving us the opportunity to experience Pentecost in our lives. May your presence always be with us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Adult Level**I. Objectives**

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. Explain the events surrounding the coming of the Holy Spirit;
2. Describe the effect on the disciples of the outpouring of the Spirit in the manner that they shared the Gospel;
3. Conclude that God's mission is made possible through the intervention of the Holy Spirit in the ministries of the Church; and
4. Commit oneself in sharing the Good News to promote hope, reconciliation, and service among people who receive it.

II. Concept: The Church is empowered by the Holy Spirit to communicate the Gospel as a sign of life, hope, reconciliation, and service to people using the language they understand.

Materials: The Holy Bible (NRSV), worksheets

III. Learning Experiences**A. Opening Worship**

1. Welcome Time
2. Opening prayer: "Gracious God, we thank you for your loving care for each of us. We need your presence in our study of your word. This is our prayer in your Son's name. Amen."
3. Opening hymn: "Spirit of God, Descend upon my Heart" (HFJ# 181)

B. Getting Ready

Tell the class to read Genesis 11:1-9 to recall the lessons learned in the Tower of Babel.

C. Learning Time

1. Instruct the male students to read Joel 2:28-29 and the female students to read Acts 2:1-12.
 - a. Discussion of the highlights in Joel 2:28-29
 - 1) "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," (The outpouring of the Spirit is a promise of God to all people.)
 - 2) "Your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." (Old people may lose their zest for life, but once the Spirit is outpoured into them, their enthusiasm will be revived that they even dream of things to come. Young people, when filled with the Spirit will be enabled to see visions of good things to come.)
 - 3) "Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit." (There will be no discrimination when God outpours God's Spirit.)
 - b. Discussion of Acts 2:1-12
 - 1) The three symbols during the Pentecost: Fire (symbol of God's presence; Wind (the strong creative force of God); and Tongues of fire (the enabling power of the Spirit to give the disciples the ability to speak in the language understood by the different hearers present)
 - 2) The comparison of the Tower of Babel and the Pentecost in relation to the languages used, the former leading to confusion and the latter leading to understanding.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. Who fulfilled the prophecy of Joel? How did it happen?

2. God poured out God's spirit to chosen people for special reasons. During the Pentecost, God filled the ordinary people with God's Spirit. What is the implication of this outpouring of God's Spirit in the church today?
3. Why is the use of language understood by the hearers important when sharing the Good News?

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: Why and how is the Church empowered by the Holy Spirit? (To communicate the Gospel as a sign of life, hope, reconciliation, and service to people using the language they understand.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

Present these sentences and ask the adults to share their views or insights.

1. "This is the promise of Pentecost: now we no longer depend solely on Jesus to be the one who understands. Now we, too, understand. And now we, too, can speak and our voices can spread the Spirit of understanding." ("Sense Where None Seems Possible," Nancy Rockwell, *A Bite in the Apple*, 2013.)
2. "God meets us in the messiness of different languages and does not ask us to speak God's language. Instead, God chooses to speak our many languages." ("Think Differently about Difference," Eric D. Barreto, *On Scripture*, 2012.)
3. "According to Jewish tradition, the Israelites arrived at Mt. Sinai fifty days after leaving Egypt, so the festival of Weeks (Pentecost) came to commemorate the giving of the law. The 'coming' of the Holy Spirit is very much like the account of the birth of our Lord in Luke." ("Pentecost: The Day of the Lord," Carl A. Volz, *Word & World*, 1990.)
4. "Pentecost, then, was the anniversary of the law. The law was given expressly to Israel, but the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was to indwell each believer, whether Jew or Gentile." ("The Pentecostal Experience: A Study in Acts 2," by Lehman Strauss at the Biblical Studies Foundation.)

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "Spirit of God, Descend upon my Heart" (HFJ # 181)
3. Closing prayer: "Merciful God, we thank you for giving us the opportunity to experience Pentecost in our lives. May your presence always be with us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."