

PENTECOST SUNDAY

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SCRIPTURE PASSAGE/ LECTORY WEEK:

Acts 2:1-21

SOCIAL PRINCIPLES/
BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS REFERENCES:

¶162 Preface, The Social Community

OBJECTIVE:

Understand how the Gospel is more than just four biblical books but is in fact active acts of justice and to find ways to meet the needs of their community.

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

butcher paper, markers/crayons/colored pencils

LESSON PLAN STRUCTURE (1 HOUR)

CENTERING MOMENT (5 MINUTES)

Say: Let's begin by finding a comfortable seated position. You can sit on a chair or on the floor whatever helps you feel relaxed and supported. When you are ready, place your hands in your lap with your palms facing up. This is a way of reminding ourselves that we are open to receiving what God wants to share with us today.

Say: If you feel comfortable, gently close your eyes. I'm going to invite us to breathe together. Breathe in slowly as I count to three ... 1..2..3.. Hold that breath for three counts ... 1...2...3... Now slowly release your breath as I count to three... 1..2..3.. Let's do that again.

(Repeat as needed).

Say: As you breathe, let your shoulders relax. Let go of anything that feels heavy or distracting. Be present in this moment. Now let us pray together.

Pray: God of all nations, help us to see where we can meet the needs of our community and our world through the work of the Gospel. Show us what the Gospel looks

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like for our neighbors, so that we may more fully serve those who are most in need.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE STUDY (25 MIN.)

Say: We are going to start with a story from the Old Testament, the story of the Tower of Babel.

(Invite a student or students to read Genesis 11:1-9)

Say: After the flood, humanity settled in one place. Everyone spoke the same language and lived the same way. They decided to build a tower that would reach heaven, hoping to make a name for themselves and stay in one place forever. In the story, God responds by confusing their language and the people scatter across the earth. The city is called Babel, which means confusion. This story has been told to help people understand why there are so many languages and cultures and why people live all over the world. It shows how humans wanted control and sameness, while God pushed them toward diversity and movement.

Say: Now let's go forward to the New Testament and read the story of Pentecost.

(Invite a student or students to read Acts 2:1-12)

Say: Pentecost is powerful because it reserves the story of Babel. Instead of language being a punishment, language becomes a gift. By the time of Jesus, the world was fairly connected, but most people didn't speak multiple languages. When the Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost, the disciples suddenly can speak in many languages, not so everyone becomes the same again, but so everyone can understand the good news where they are.

Say: God doesn't erase differences. God works through them. The Gospel is so important that it must be shared with everyone, and it looks different depending on what people need. For a hungry person, the Gospel looks like food. For a sick person, the Gospel looks like healing. For someone who is incarcerated, the Gospel looks like freedom and dignity. We bring the Gospel to life when we notice the needs around us and respond with love and action.

NOTES

Gospel means "good news", not just the stories of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospel for one person may not be the same for another.

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Discussion Questions

- What does the Gospel mean to you personally?
- What does the Gospel look like in our community?
- Who in our community might experience the Gospel differently than we do?
- How can we help bring about the Gospel for our community in real, practical ways?

GROUP ACTIVITY (25 MIN.)

(Spread out a large piece of butcher paper and invite everyone to gather around it. Together, draw a map of your city, town, or neighborhood. It doesn't have to be perfect, this is about awareness, not accuracy.)

As they draw, invite them to mark the following:

- Places they spend a lot of time
- Areas that seem underserved or overlooked
- Places where immigrants or newcomers gather
- Schools, shelters, clinics, churches, food pantries, or community centers
- Any areas they don't know much about but are curious about

Guiding Questions during activity:

- Where could we engage with our community in new ways?
- Who is underserved in our community?
- Where do services already exist?
- What services seem to be missing?

NOTES

Supplies Needed: Large Butcher Paper, Markers, Crayons, or Colored Pencils

If you can find one, provide your youth with a map of your town/city/community. Google maps can also be a helpful tool, especially if you have younger youth who aren't driving yet and may not know the streets as well.

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- What patterns do we notice? (Are some areas overserved while others are overlooked?)

(Encourage conversation and curiosity, not judgment.)

CLOSING MOMENT (5 MIN.)

Say: Let's gather around our map. This represents the place where God planted us and where the Gospel is meant to come alive through us.

(Invite everyone to place a hand on the map.)

Say: We are going to do a popcorn prayer. One person will start the prayer, and anyone can "pop in" with a short prayer when they feel led. When everyone who wants to pray has done so, the person who started will close the prayer.

Encourage prayers focused on:

- The community
- People who are underserved
- Ways the group might respond to community needs

(Pray the popcorn prayer)

Say: God's Spirit still moves like it did at Pentecost, helping us to listen, understand, and love across differences. May we go from this place ready to bring the Gospel to life in our community.