

New Life From Dry Bones

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Pentecost

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Memory Verse: Ezekiel 37:5 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.'

The Children's Sermon

If you listen to the words we use in our worship today – in the Bible readings, in the sermon, and in today's hymns, you will hear a lot of talk about breathing life into people. Today is called Pentecost. It comes roughly 50 days after our Easter, but back in Bible times, it was 50 days after the Passover. It was a holiday for the Jewish people long before it became a Christian holiday. But something very special happened one particular Pentecost many years ago, just after Jesus rose from the dead. On this particular Pentecost, God took advantage of the fact that many Jews were gathered in Jerusalem for the celebration of Jewish Pentecost. They weren't dead like the bones in our Ezekiel story, but even so, God came to them and breathed new life into them and changed them. God took a group of rattled and confused followers of Jesus, He breathed His Spirit into them and they were brought alive in a new sense. They were filled with energy. They had new insight. They understood each other in a new and different way. They bonded together and began something that today we call the Church. That's why today, we call Pentecost the birthday of the Church.

Now, let's dive a bit deeper into this Pentecost sermon and imagine what it might have felt like to be there on that special day. Picture this: you're sitting in a room with your

friends, maybe feeling a little scared or unsure about what's going to happen next. Suddenly, a sound like a strong wind fills the room, and something amazing happens. It's as if the air itself is alive, and you feel a warmth and energy you've never felt before. This is the Holy Spirit coming to be with you, just as Jesus promised.

This Pentecost sermon reminds us that the Holy Spirit didn't just come to those people long ago; the Holy Spirit is still with us today, breathing life into us, making us feel brave when we're scared, and helping us understand how much God loves us. It's like having a best friend who is always there, guiding us and cheering us on.

Remember, I told you I had two stories to tell you. I think most of you probably know the second story. It is not from the Bible, but it is a good story all the same. It is the story of Pinocchio. Who can tell us something about Pinocchio?

Yes, Pinocchio was a puppet. He was nothing but a few sticks of dry wood screwed together. He was like a pile of dry bones. But after a long series of adventures, which bring him closer to his father, the puppet maker, life is breathed into this puppet and he becomes a real boy. As a real boy, he can love his Father and serve his Father like he couldn't do when he was a puppet.

In our Pentecost sermon today, we learn that just like Pinocchio, we can also be filled with life and purpose. Sometimes, we might feel a little bit like those dry bones or like Pinocchio before he became a real boy. We might feel lonely, scared, or unsure of ourselves. But just as God breathed life into those dry bones and just as Pinocchio was brought to life, God breathes life into us through the Holy Spirit. This makes us alive in a whole new way, ready to love, serve, and follow God.

Let's imagine ourselves as lifeless puppets. Our Heavenly Father is looking down on us and he is breathing life into us. Once again, God will make dry bones walk on this earth to serve and love the Lord. More than that, these dry bones will run, skip, jump, and dance for the Lord. Let's see you move your bones with new life from the Lord.

This Pentecost sermon is a reminder that God's love and the Holy Spirit can change everything. When we feel like we're just a pile of dry bones, God's love can make us feel alive again. It's like when you're playing outside on a sunny day, running around without a care in the world. That joy, that energy, that's a little bit like what the Holy Spirit brings to our lives.

In conclusion, our Pentecost sermon today teaches us about the amazing power of God's love and the Holy Spirit. Just like the disciples long ago, we are given new life and energy to do great things. And just like Pinocchio, we are transformed from wooden puppets into real, loving children of God. So, let's go out into the world, filled with the Holy Spirit, ready to spread love, joy, and kindness everywhere we go. Remember, with God's love in our hearts, we can do anything. Happy Pentecost, everyone! Let's celebrate the birthday of the Church and the new life we've been given.

Bible Memory Verse

Ezekiel 37:5 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.'

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue

-Markers or crayons

Get Ready:

-Cut out bone shapes from the construction paper ahead of time.

-Write one word of the memory verse on each bone.

Do This:

1. Mix up the bone shapes and spread them out on a table. Challenge the children to find the bones and assemble them in the correct order to form the memory verse.

2. Once the verse is correctly assembled, have the children glue the bones onto a larger piece of construction paper to create a 'come to life' skeleton.

3. Encourage the children to decorate their skeleton and the background to show the skeleton 'coming to life' with the breath of God. They can draw breath lines or even use blue tissue paper to represent the breath. This will help them remember that God's power can bring hope and life to any situation.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Red, orange, and yellow tissue paper
- White construction paper (one sheet per child)
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Dry bones template (skeleton or bone shapes printed on paper)
- Markers or crayons
- A large empty jar or clear plastic container
- Small LED tealight candles (one per child)

Get Ready:

- Cut the tissue paper into flame shapes in advance.
- Print or draw dry bones templates.
- Set up a "Valley of Dry Bones" area on a table with the templates and markers/crayons.
- Create a "Pentecost Wind and Fire" crafting station with tissue paper flames, glue, and white construction paper.
- Place the large jar or container in the center of the room with LED tealights next to it.

Do this:

1. ****Valley of Dry Bones****: Start by telling the story from Ezekiel 37:1-14, focusing on how God brought dry bones to life. Let the children color and cut out the dry bones templates, discussing how, just like God brought life to the bones, He brings new life to us through His Spirit.
2. ****Pentecost Wind and Fire****: Move to the story of Pentecost, explaining how God sent His Holy Spirit like a powerful wind and flames of fire to be with His people. Have the children use the tissue paper to create flames on their white construction paper, symbolizing the Holy Spirit's presence at Pentecost and in our lives today.
3. ****Light of the World****: Conclude by discussing how the Holy Spirit helps us shine God's light in the world. Each child gets an LED tealight to place inside the large jar or container, illustrating how together, with the Holy Spirit, we can light up the world. Turn off the lights and let the children see how their combined light brightens the room, reinforcing the idea of community and the power of the Holy Spirit within us.

Snack Activity: Breath of Life Cookies

You'll Need:

- Sugar cookies (pre-baked round cookies)
- White frosting
- Red, yellow, and orange food coloring
- Small paintbrushes (food safe)
- Mini marshmallows
- Toothpicks

Get Ready: Prepare a clean table or countertop where the children can work. Place a plastic tablecloth or disposable paper for easy cleanup. Make sure each child has access to the ingredients and tools needed.

Do this:

1. Explain that the sugar cookies represent the dry bones in the valley from Ezekiel 37:1-14, and the frosting is like the breath of life God gives us. The colors red, yellow, and orange will represent the fire of the Holy Spirit from the Pentecost story.
2. Have the children spread white frosting on their cookies evenly to cover them. This represents God's spirit covering the dry bones and giving them life.
3. Let the children use the food coloring and paintbrushes to paint flames on their cookies. They can dip a mini marshmallow in food coloring and press it on the cookie to make flame shapes, or use toothpicks to draw flames.
4. While they work, talk to them about how God's spirit gives us life and power, just like He did for the bones in Ezekiel's vision and the disciples at Pentecost.

Game Activity: Valley of Dry Bones Relay

You'll Need:

- A large open space, preferably outdoors

- Chalk or tape to mark start/end lines
- Printed pictures or small figures representing bones
- Baskets or buckets for each team

Get Ready: Before the game, mark a start and an end line in the playing area. Place a basket or bucket filled with 'bones' (printed pictures or figures) at the start line for each team. Teams will race to the end line where an empty basket or bucket is placed to collect their bones.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into teams. Each team stands behind their basket of bones at the start line.
2. When you say 'Go,' the first player from each team grabs a bone, races to the end line, and drops it into the empty basket or bucket. They then race back and tag the next player in line.
3. The relay continues until all the bones have been moved from the start line to the end line basket. The first team to transfer all their bones and have all members cross back to the start line wins.

After the game, gather the children and explain how the bones represent the people of Israel in Ezekiel 37:1-14, and how God brought them back to life, just like the Holy Spirit brings new life to us at Pentecost.

Craft Activity: Breath of Life Wind Chimes

You'll Need:

- Paper plates
- String

- Markers or crayons
- Hole punch
- Scissors
- Various decorations (stickers, glitter, etc.)
- Small bells or beads

Get Ready: Cut the paper plate into a spiral shape starting from the edge towards the center, leaving a circle at the center to represent the valley from Ezekiel 37. Punch holes at the bottom edge of the spiral for hanging bells or beads.

Do this:

1. Color the paper plate spiral with markers or crayons. You can draw bones on it to represent the dry bones in the valley from Ezekiel 37:1-14. Decorate it with stickers and glitter to make it vibrant, symbolizing the life and spirit that God breathes into us.
2. Use the hole punch to make holes at the bottom of the spiral (if not already done in preparation). Thread strings through these holes and attach bells or beads. These will represent the sound of the wind, reminding us of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost.
3. Hang your Breath of Life Wind Chimes outside or in a window. Every time the wind blows and you hear the chimes, remember how God's spirit gives us life and how the Holy Spirit came to the disciples at Pentecost, filling them with life and power.

Prayer Activity: Breath of Life Prayer Windmills

You'll Need:

- Paper cups
- Straws
- Markers or crayons
- Tape

- Scissors

Get Ready: Before the activity, read Ezekiel 37:1-14 to understand how God's breath brought life to the dry bones, and relate it to the story of Pentecost where the Holy Spirit brought new life to the disciples.

Do this:

1. Give each child a paper cup and markers or crayons. Let them decorate the cup with symbols of the Holy Spirit (like flames or doves) and write 'Breath of Life' or 'Holy Spirit' on it.
2. Help the children cut a small hole in the bottom of the cup. This is where the straw will go through.
3. Insert a straw into the hole at the bottom of the cup and secure it with tape. This will be their 'prayer windmill.'
4. Gather the children in a circle, and share a short explanation of Pentecost, emphasizing how the Holy Spirit gave the disciples new life and power, just like God's breath gave life to the dry bones in Ezekiel.
5. Encourage the children to think of a prayer asking for the Holy Spirit to bring new life and energy into their own lives, their family, or their friends.
6. After they have thought of their prayer, tell them to blow into their 'prayer windmill' as a sign of sending their prayers to God through the Holy Spirit's power. Remind them that just like the wind turns the windmill, the Holy Spirit moves and works in ways we can see and feel.
7. Conclude with a group prayer, thanking God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and asking for His presence to be felt in everyone's lives.