

The Race You Can't Win Alone

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Pentecost Sunday

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-22

Memory Verse: Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. - 1 Corinthians 12:12

The Children's Sermon

You'll need:

- Fogged glasses, mitts for hands, leg splints, earplugs, or sound-resistant earmuffs, rope to tie legs of each other together.

Does anyone know what day it is today in the Church? - answers

Today is Pentecost. That is the day we celebrate God the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is a day we remember the Holy Spirit coming down from heaven like tongs or pieces of flames on the Apostles. When the Holy Spirit came to the Apostles, God gave them all sorts of gifts that Jesus had to help them show everyone Jesus' love.

I have a game for us to play this morning. It is a race to see who can get to the back of the church first but, we have some strange rules. I am going to make it just a little harder than just running to the back of the church. The first rule is no one can win unless everyone wins.

(Handing out props)

- You (give fogged glasses) can't see where you are going
- You (leg splints) can't walk
- You (ear plugs) can't hear
- You two (rope) have to use each others legs
- You (no prop) have to tell everyone how to do it but you can't talk
- You (mitts) can't use your hands to help

Do you think you can make it? (answers)

The bible tells us how we can do it. (Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-22 out loud to the kids)

Today we're going to learn about how we all need to work together, like a big team, to do great things. This idea is called Unity in the Body of Christ.

The Bible tells us that just like our bodies have many parts – like eyes, ears, hands, and feet – Christians are all parts of one big body, which is the Body of Christ. Even though we're all different, we belong together and need each other.

So, let's think about our bodies for a minute. Imagine if your feet decided they didn't want to be part of your body anymore because they weren't hands. That sounds silly, right? Your feet help you run, jump, and walk. Every part of your body has a special job, and it's the same with us in the church. We all have our own special jobs to do. That's Unity in the Body of Christ.

Now, imagine if the whole body was just an eye. How would you hear your favorite song or smell fresh cookies? It wouldn't work very well. God made our bodies to have

different parts for a reason, and He made us all different for a reason too. We all have our own special skills and gifts that we can use to help each other. That's what makes us strong. That's Unity in the Body of Christ.

Sometimes, we might think that some jobs or gifts are more important than others. But that's not true. The Bible tells us that every part of the body is important, even the parts that seem small or weak. We can't say to someone, "I don't need you!" because we all need each other. That's how we work best. That's Unity in the Body of Christ.

Let's think about a puzzle. Each piece is different, right? Some are edge pieces, some have funny shapes, and some might seem really small. But to complete the puzzle, we need every single piece. If even one piece is missing, the puzzle isn't complete. We are like those puzzle pieces in the Body of Christ. We all fit together to make something beautiful. That's Unity in the Body of Christ.

So, what can we do to make sure we're working together in unity? First, we can be kind and listen to each other. We can also be willing to help, even with small things, because every little bit helps. And we can celebrate each other's gifts, cheering each other on, because when one of us does well, we all do well. That's Unity in the Body of Christ.

Now, let's pray together. Dear God, thank you for making each of us special and giving us gifts to share. Help us to work together in unity, to be kind, and to help each other. Please show us how we can use our gifts to make our church and our world a better place. We love you, God. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. - 1 Corinthians 12:12

You Will Need:

- Construction paper in various colors
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into different shapes beforehand, representing different parts of the body (e.g., circles for heads, rectangles for bodies, ovals for arms and legs).
- Set up a table with all the materials spread out so each child can reach them easily.

Do This:

1. Explain to the children that just like our bodies have many parts, the church is made up of many people, each with their own special role. Share the memory verse.
2. Ask each child to pick different shapes to create their own 'body part' on a piece of construction paper. They can draw faces or clothes on their shapes with markers.
3. Once everyone has their body part ready, work together to glue the parts onto a larger piece of construction paper, forming one big body. Discuss how each part is important and how we all work together in the church, just like parts of a body.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Red, orange, and yellow tissue paper

- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Paper plates
- Markers or crayons
- Bible

Get Ready:

- Cut the tissue paper into flame shapes beforehand.
- Write each child's name on a paper plate.
- Have the Bible open to 1 Corinthians 12:12-22.

Do this:

1. **Introduction:** Explain that Pentecost is a special day when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, and it's like the birthday of the Church. Mention that just like each part of our body is important, every person in the Church is important too, which is what 1 Corinthians 12:12-22 teaches us.
2. **Craft Activity - Creating the Pentecost Plate:** Give each child a paper plate and ask them to draw themselves in the center with markers or crayons. Around the edge of the plate, they will glue the red, orange, and yellow tissue paper flames to represent the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost. As they work, discuss how the flames symbolize the Holy Spirit and how it gives us each unique gifts to serve in the Church, just like different parts of the body have different jobs.
3. **Interactive Reading:** After the craft, gather the children and read 1 Corinthians 12:12-22 aloud from the Bible. Pause after each verse to ask questions like, "What does this verse tell us about how we work together in the Church?" or "Can you think of a

time you helped someone at church or at home?" This helps them connect the Scripture to their lives and the craft they just made.

4. **Closing Circle:** Have the children sit in a circle with their Pentecost plates. Go around the circle and let each child share one gift or talent they think God has given them to help others. It could be being a good friend, helping clean up, or even making people smile. Close with a prayer, thanking God for making each of us unique and important to the Church, just like different parts of our body are important to us.

Snack Activity: Pentecost Flame Fruit Platter

You'll Need:

- A large platter
- Strawberries
- Mangoes
- Pineapple
- Red grapes
- Toothpicks
- A picture of a flame (for reference)

Get Ready: Wash all the fruits thoroughly. Slice the strawberries, mangoes, and pineapple into bite-sized pieces.

Do this:

1. Arrange the fruit pieces on the platter to resemble a flame. Start with a base of pineapple pieces at the bottom for the light part of the flame. Add mango pieces above the pineapple to add the middle, brighter flame layer. Then, top with strawberries to represent the intense top of the flame.

2. Use the red grapes to outline the flame shape and give it a distinct border, showing how the Holy Spirit surrounds and protects us, just like the body of Christ is made of many parts but is still one body as described in 1 Corinthians 12:12-22.
3. Insert toothpicks into the pieces of fruit so the kids can easily pick them up and eat them. As they enjoy their snack, talk about how Pentecost is considered the birthday of the Church and how the Holy Spirit came down like flames on the apostles, giving them the ability to speak in different languages to spread the word of God to all parts of the world. Explain how each piece of fruit represents different gifts of the Spirit, and though they are different, they all come together to make something beautiful, just like the members of the Church.

Game Activity: Pentecost Puzzle Race

You'll Need:

- Puzzle pieces (each piece representing a member of the body of Christ, e.g., an eye, a hand, a foot, etc.)
- Large envelopes or bags (one for each team)
- Timer

Get Ready: Before class, create a simple puzzle that when completed forms a picture representing the body of Christ or the day of Pentecost (such as a dove, flames, or people gathered together). Make sure each puzzle has the same number of pieces. Place each puzzle's pieces into separate envelopes or bags. Create enough puzzles for each team of 3-4 children.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into teams and give each team an envelope or bag with their puzzle pieces. Explain that just like in 1 Corinthians 12:12-22, each piece of the puzzle is

important and represents a different part of the body of Christ. Our goal is to work together, using everyone's gifts, to complete the puzzle.

2. On 'Go,' teams will start working together to assemble their puzzles as quickly as they can. Encourage them to communicate and work together, highlighting that every member of the team is important and has something to contribute, just like every member of the church is important.

3. Once a team has completed their puzzle, they should raise their hand. Stop the timer and celebrate their accomplishment. Discuss as a group how working together helped them complete the puzzle faster and how this relates to the importance of every member in the body of Christ and the church.

Craft Activity: Pentecost Wind Twirlers

You'll Need:

- Red, orange, and yellow paper strips (1 inch wide, 12 inches long)
- Markers or crayons
- String or yarn (about 24 inches long)
- Hole punch
- Scissors

Get Ready: Write each verse of 1 Corinthians 12:12-22 on separate paper strips. If the children are able, they can write the verses themselves.

Do this:

1. Have each child choose several paper strips with the verses written on them.

Encourage them to color and decorate their strips with markers or crayons, symbolizing the different gifts and talents we all have, just like the different parts of the body.

2. Next, guide the children to carefully punch a hole at one end of each strip. Help them thread the string through the holes of their decorated strips, tying a knot at the top of each strip to secure it to the string. This will create a vertical line of verses hanging down.

3. Finally, hang the Pentecost Wind Twirlers in a place where the wind can catch them, reminding the children that just like the wind moves the twirlers, the Holy Spirit moves within each of us, uniting us and giving us strength and gifts to serve the church and the world.

Prayer Activity: Pentecost Puzzle Prayer

You'll Need:

- Different colored pieces of construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers

Get Ready: Before the activity, cut the construction paper into puzzle pieces. On each piece, write different gifts of the Spirit (e.g., love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) or parts of the body (e.g., hand, foot, eye, ear) to represent 1 Corinthians 12:12-22 and the diversity and unity in the body of Christ.

Do this:

1. Mix all the puzzle pieces in a basket. Have each child pick one piece from the basket.
2. Ask the children to find others with a piece that could 'connect' to theirs, either by matching colors or by how the gifts or body parts might work together. This encourages them to think about how different gifts and roles in the church can complement each other, just like in a body.

3. Once they've formed a 'body' with their puzzle pieces, lead them in a prayer thanking God for giving us different gifts and placing us in the church where we can work together, just like parts of a body. Encourage them to pray for the ability to use their unique gifts to serve others and to appreciate the different gifts in their friends.