

The Mystery of Pentecost

Look at the red box in front of you. Do not open the lid yet.

This is the Mystery of Pentecost.

I wonder what could be inside. This looks like a parable box, but it is red. It must be like a parable and yet not be a parable.

Let's look inside and see what is there.

Take out the red felt and smooth it out on the table.

There was once a great tower.

Place the first block (or small box) down in the middle of the red felt.

Everyone working on the tower spoke the same language and worked together.

Put the second block down on top of the first.

But as the tower grew taller and taller, they began to talk in different ways.

Slowly place the remaining blocks on top of each other.

The tower came close to God, but the people forgot why they were building it. They grew so proud of themselves that they began to think they were greater builders than God. Each group thought they were better than any of the others.

A huge noise replaced their talking. It made no sense. Everyone was babbling.

Push the tower you have built over.

Soon the tower fell down, so it was called the Tower of Babel. The language of the people of the earth was shattered and broke into splinters. Each one was beautiful, but it was broken.

Slowly pick up the blocks and put them back in the red box. Sit back and pause. Reflect silently on what has happened.

Thousands of years passed. Jesus came.

Take out the wooden figure and place it to the left of the red felt.

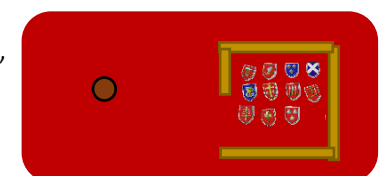
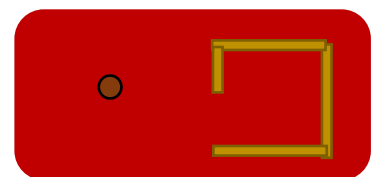
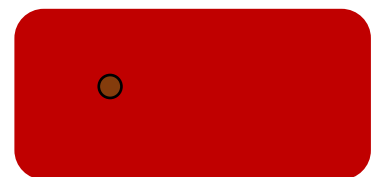
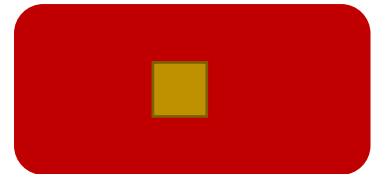
But then Jesus died on the cross, but somehow he was still with the people around him as he is with us. They kept seeing him, and they couldn't let him go. Then one day something amazing happened.

Lay out the tan felt strips in a rectangle to the right of the red felt, leaving an open space for a doorway.

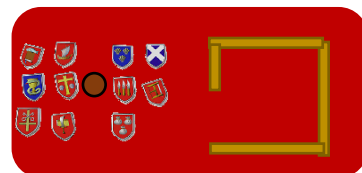
The disciples were in Jerusalem.

Place all the symbols or shields of the Twelve, except the symbol for Matthias (the sword and book), inside the rectangle. There is no symbol for Judas.

Here they are: Peter, James, John, Andrew, Phillip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the Less, Simon, and Jude. There are only eleven disciples because Judas had already betrayed Jesus and stopped following Jesus.



Move the symbols for the disciples outside Jerusalem and place them in a circle around the wooden figure of Jesus.



Jesus took them outside Jerusalem to a Mountain called Olivet.

Pick up the wooden of figure of Jesus and raise it up high. Then place the figure back into the red box.

Jesus then went up.

Turn your hands over and hold them over the circle of disciples and then allow one hand to move slowly down and lightly touch the disciples.

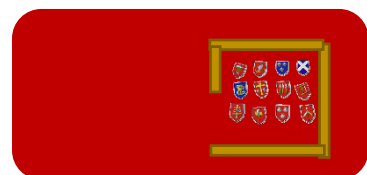
Soon the Holy Spirit would come down.

Move the symbols back into the rectangle of Jerusalem.

The eleven disciples went back into the city. They were full of joy and went to the Temple to pray.

Add the symbol of Matthias to the group, which is now inside "Jerusalem."

Crowd them together in the centre of the rectangle made from the brown strips.



They then went to the upper room and, with God's help, decided that Matthias would take Judas' place.

On Sunday the Twelve were together again. Suddenly there was a sound like a mighty wind rushing in to be with them. It was the Holy Spirit. They became so full of its power that they seemed to be on fire. Their tongues burned in their mouths. They were so excited that people wondered what was going on.

When the disciples went out on the street, there were people there from many different countries. They spoke many different languages.

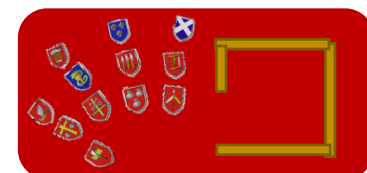
Everyone could see that the Twelve had come close to God - and God had come close to them - in a new way. It no longer mattered that they spoke different languages.

Place the symbols of the Twelve, around the red felt, radiating out from "Jerusalem".

The disciples had become apostles!

They went out into all the world to tell this story.

Ever since, Pentecost has been celebrated to remember that day.



Sit back and look at story for a moment, then begin the wondering.



I wonder what part of the story you like best.

I wonder what the most important part could be.

I wonder where you are in the story. What part is about you?

I wonder if there is anything in our church that reminds you of this.

Take out the 7 blocks again. Take a look in each one.

In each block there is a gift of the Holy Spirit that the apostles received on the day of Pentecost.

I wonder which gift of the Holy Spirit you would like more of in your life.

After the wondering is over, put the story away carefully into the red box. Place the lid back on.