

CONNECT GROUP GUIDE

PENTECOST
PENTECOST
PENTECOST
PENTECOST
PENTECOST
PENTECOST
TRINITY
TRINITY
TRINITY
TRINITY
TRINITY
TRINITY
TRINITY



PENTECOST

Ten days after the ascension of Christ and fifty days after his resurrection, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples on the day of Pentecost.

Pentecost was an established Jewish festival also known as the Feast of Weeks, which was a harvest festival. It drew people from many nations back to Jerusalem (Leviticus 23:15-21; Deuteronomy 16:16).

Pentecost symbolises a new beginning. It celebrates the unleashing of the Holy Spirit on the world and the empowering of the church to reach the world with the gospel.

Pentecost is a great festival of the Church.

We celebrate:

- our gratitude for the faithfulness of Christ in fulfilling his promise to send "another counsellor" (John 14:16);
- the work of the Spirit in renewing all of creation;
- the Spirit's power for the mission of reaching the world with the Gospel.

The traditional colour for Pentecost is red, after the flames described in Acts 2:3

TRINITY

While every Christian worship service is a wonderful celebration of the Trinity, Trinity Sunday focuses explicitly on the mystery, power and beauty of the triune God. Our Christian identity and mission are given to us as we are baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Our worship is directed to the Father, mediated through the Son, and prompted by the Holy Spirit. At its best, our worship is also an expression of the unity and common purpose of the church, which Jesus prayed would reflect the unity between himself and God (John 17:20-21).

Trinity Sunday, traditionally celebrated one week after Pentecost, marks the acknowledgement that all three persons of the Trinity exist together from eternity to eternity. This is a celebration linked with a doctrine rather than an event (like Christmas or Easter), which is a summary of scriptural teaching about God's being.

MAY 28

P E N T E C O S T

... the coming of the Holy Spirit

INTRO

Many passages in the Bible talk about the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Wind, or Breath of God.

Which passages resonate with you?

What do you love about the Spirit?

What do you want to know more about with regards to the Holy Spirit?

Read Acts 2:1-21

1. What signs accompanied the arrival of the Holy Spirit?
 - (a) as a visitor?
 - (b) as a disciple?
2. What do you think it would have been like to be there?
 - (a) as a visitor?
 - (b) as a disciple?

3. Why did the Holy Spirit's power fill the disciples?
Compare Acts 2:1-21 with Acts 1:8

5. What does it mean to prophesy?

6. What were Peter and the disciples telling the crowds when they prophesied?

7. Who can be saved?
Does this still hold true today?

For prayer:

If you want revival, if you want God to pour out His Spirit granting salvation to friends, family, neighbours. Here is a great way to start:

The evangelist Rodney "Gypsy" Smith was asked the secret of revival. He said, "Kneel down in the middle of the floor, and with a piece of chalk draw a circle round yourself. There, on your knees, pray fervently and brokenly that God would start a revival within that chalk circle."



Pray for the Holy Spirit to be present:

- in your midst
- in your life
- in our church, and
- in our witness

JUNE 4

TRINITY

... Father, Son and Holy Spirit

INTRO

Do you know any Bible passages that mention the three persons of the Trinity in the same breath?

* (see below)

What does it mean to you that God is Triune?

* Here are a handful to get you started:

- Matthew 3:16-17; 12:28; 28:19
- Luke 3:21-22
- John 14:16-17; 14:26; 15:26; 20:21-22
- Acts 1:4; 2:33; 10:38
- Romans 1:4; 8:9; 14:17-18
- 1 Corinthians 6:11; 12:4-6
- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 13:14
- Galatians 4:6
- Ephesians 1:17; 2:18; 2:22; 4:4-6
- Titus 3:6
- Hebrews 9:14
- 1 Peter 1:2
- See also Old Testament:
 - Isaiah 48:16; 61:1
 - Daniel 7:13-14
- See also the way God refers to Himself in the plural in Genesis 1:26, 3:22, 11:7; Isaiah 6:8

Gregory Nazianzus, an early church father, spoke of God as Trinity:

"Every time I think of the One, my mind is drawn to the Three; yet every time I think of the Three, my mind is drawn to the One."

He could not explain the Trinity; he could simply worship and adore the Three in One and the One in Three.

The Trinity, rightly understood, leads us to awe, wonder, and a sense of being included in the very life of God.

Read Matthew 3:13-17

1. Why did John say he needed to be baptised by Jesus?
2. Why did Jesus insist on being baptised by John?

3. What does God reveal by opening heaven?

Compare John 14:20, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 1:13-14.

4. **A Christian is united with Jesus.**
What does it mean to be united with one person of the Trinity?

5. Does it change the way you relate to the Father, the Holy Spirit or other believers?

6. Does it change the way you pray?

Jesus spent time and energy to slow down and be alone, to pray, to meditate on the Scripture, to fast, and to take a weekly sabbath. This kept Him grounded in His relationship with His Father and the Holy Spirit.

7. What practice will you focus on to become more conscious of your relationship with God?



Paul urges Christians to make it their ambition to lead a quiet life (1 Thess 4:10-11).

Spend some time drawing near to God, and allow Him to draw near to you.

Quiet your hearts before the God of love and know that the Father holds you and will never let you go.

The Son holds you and will never let you go.

The Spirit dwells within you and you can never be separated from Him.



*Living to Love and
Proclaim Jesus*

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