



Divine services for children

Suggested at least once a quarter, on a local or regional basis, a children's service should use the special Divine Service Guide that is provided for that quarter. Children's service Divine Service Guides replace the Sunday morning Divine Service Guide and should not be used in addition to the Sunday Divine Service Guide for that day.

The purpose is to:

- give the children a special word that is understandable, memorable, and relevant
- clearly put them in the center of the congregation
- create opportunity to connect multiple generations within the congregation
- strengthen the value of the divine service and increase their knowledge of Christ and the Bible

In order to help build excitement and to ensure that the entire congregation is prepared for these unique services, they should be announced well in advance. It is encouraged to consider setting a consistent frequency of the services (i.e. the last Sunday of the first month of each quarter). Where possible, the children can participate in some of the congregational functions (ushering, greeting, as the choir, etc.). The person giving the children's message should be someone that has the capability to communicate and connect well with the children. For example, a Sunday school teacher, young adult, etc. that is dedicated to prepare for this responsibility.

Liturgy

The divine service is opened in the normal way with the invocation, opening prayer, Bible verse, and response hymn. Thereafter, the minister at the altar can introduce the theme and a few thoughts, which should not exceed 5 minutes.

The person giving the children's message then begins in front of the altar, speaking directly to the children, who should be sitting in the first rows.

The unique children's portion is per the recommendations set out by the Children's Work Group that accompanied the Children's service Divine Service Guide for that given quarter. This section of the divine service can be anywhere from 15-25 minutes, depending on the number of students and their ages, and can include methods such as speaking, props, skits, demonstrations, and simulation. Questions and dialogue between the children and facilitator are encouraged.

During this time, the priests should sit in the congregation. The children's component can end with a congregational hymn, which allows the priest to return to the altar. The officiant can then summarize the children's component and prepare the congregation for Holy Communion, which should take no longer than 10 minutes. From then on, the service liturgy continues as normal.

It is also suggested that lunch or refreshments with the congregation be available after the service to highlight and celebrate these children services, and to provide additional opportunity for generations to interact with each other.



Power from on high

Bible Text:

Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. Luke 24: 49

Message: The Holy Spirit changes peoples' lives

Introduction:

Shortly before His ascension, Jesus promised His disciples that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit "not many days from now" (Acts 1: 5), but He did not mention exactly when this would happen. The Apostles therefore had to wait. On Pentecost, the promise was fulfilled. For the Apostles this was a confirmation that Jesus keeps His promises. In the exact same manner, Jesus will also fulfil the promise of His return (John 14: 3).

Main part

In Acts 2: 2 we read about what happened on Pentecost: there was a mighty rush of wind, then tongues that looked like fire settled upon each one of the disciples, and the Apostles began to preach in other languages. All those who received the Holy Spirit at that time were equipped with special gifts and powers, including

- the courage to profess Jesus everywhere and at all times (Acts 4: 20).
- the strength to love their neighbor as Jesus does (John 15: 12; Romans 5: 5).
- the knowledge that they could live their lives under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

New Apostolic Christians have experienced their very own personal Pentecost on the day of their Holy Sealing. Through Holy Sealing we have been equipped with a power that can enable us to act just as the Apostles and the believers of that time did. After receiving the Holy Spirit, one of the abilities of the Apostles was that they could speak in different languages (Acts 2: 7–12) without having studied or learned these languages. Can New Apostolic Christians also speak different languages? We can speak many new languages, for example, the language of

- friendliness instead of annoyance.
- forgiveness. Instead of saying, "I'll never forgive you! You're not my friend any more!" let us say, "Come, let's help one another."
- the fear of God: "I will not curse or mock, but will pray instead."
- patient endurance: "Even if people make fun of me, I will not stop talking about Jesus or my New Apostolic faith."
- plain and simple love. After all, the love of God has been poured out in our hearts (Romans 5: 5).

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit gives us the strength to act in accordance with the example of Jesus.



Didactic tips

- Use Acts 2: 1–6 as a Bible reading.
- Lighting a candle, a fire. Thoughts connected with this are: flame, warmth, light, extinguishing.

Supplemental Notes and Activity Ideas:

Acts 2:1-6

The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost (NIRV)

When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers gathered in one place. Suddenly a sound came from heaven. It was like a strong wind blowing. It filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw something that looked like fire in the shape of tongues. The flames separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in languages they had not known before. The Spirit gave them the ability to do this. Godly Jews from every country in the world were staying in Jerusalem. A crowd came together when they heard the sound. They were bewildered because each of them heard their own language being spoken.

Notes from the study Bible:

- This was a fulfillment of John the Baptist's words about the Holy Spirit's baptizing with fire (Luke 3:16).
- Why tongues of fire?
 - Tongues symbolize speech and the communication of the Good News.
 - In scripture, fire often denoted the divine presence (Ex 3:2-6).
- At Pentecost, fire came down on many believers, symbolizing that God's presence is available to all who believe in Him.
- God made His presence known to this group of believers in a spectacular way – roaring wind, fire and the Holy Spirit. Sometimes God reveals Himself to us in large recognizable ways, but sometimes He reveals Himself in a gentle whisper. We always need to wait patiently and listen for Him.
- The Holy Spirit gave the ability for the Apostles to speak in other languages – a miraculous attention-getter for the international crowd gathered in town for the festival. All the nationalities represented recognized their own languages being spoken. More than miraculous speaking drew people's attention; however, they saw the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The apostles continued to minister in the Holy Spirit's power wherever they went.





Going Deeper...

Galatians 5:13-26 | Living by the Holy Spirit's Power (NIRV)

13 My brothers and sisters, you were chosen to be free. But don't use your freedom as an excuse to live under the power of sin. Instead, serve one another in love. 14 The whole law is fulfilled by obeying this one command. "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." 15 If you say or do things that harm one another, watch out! You could end up destroying one another.

16 So I say, live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your desires controlled by sin want you to do. 17 The desires controlled by sin do not want what the Spirit delights in. And the Spirit does not want what the desires controlled by sin delight in. The two are at war with each other. That's why you are not supposed to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the authority of the law.

19 The result of sin's control in our lives is clear. It includes sexual sins, impure acts and wild living. 20 It includes worshiping statues of gods and worshiping evil powers. It also includes hatred and fighting, jealousy and fits of anger. Sinful desire is interested only in getting ahead. It stirs up trouble. It separates people into their own little groups. 21 It wants what others have. It gets drunk and takes part in wild parties. It does many things of that kind. I warn you now as I did before. People who live like this will not receive God's kingdom.

22 But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful 23 and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed their sinful desires to his cross. They don't want these things anymore. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become proud. Let us not make each other angry. Let us not want what belongs to others.

Our Helper

Do you ever need help? (Possibly have the children make a list of things they need help with.) God sent us a special Helper – the Holy Spirit. When we stay connected to Jesus and walk with the Spirit as our Helper, we produce good fruit in our lives.

The Holy Spirit is our helper.

- He is our friend and is always with us. (John 14:16-18)
- He gives us courage and strength and love and helps us control our actions. (2 Timothy 1:7)
- He helps us pray when we don't know what to say (Romans 8:26)
- He helps us to understand the Bible and the deep things of God. (1 Corinthians 2:8,10)
- He helps us know God's love and to love one another. (Romans 5:5)
- He helps us use the right words to speak the Truth about what God has given us. (1 Corinthians 2:13)
- He helps us find the right friends.
- He helps us obey our parents.





When we are filled with the Spirit...

1. We choose to work hard for the Lord and do everything as if we were doing it for Him.
2. We want to do things that help us stay close to Him.
 - a. We pray often
 - b. We pay attention in the divine services and apply the message to our lives
 - c. We value Holy Communion
 - d. We value our congregation and the relationships God has given us
3. We use the gifts and talents that God has given us.
4. We count our blessings.

Visual Aids

Brown Bag Demonstration

1. Use 3 brown lunch bags. Place an object (familiar to children) inside each bag and fold over the top so the contents cannot be seen. Do this prior to the service.
2. Ask a volunteer to come and choose a sack. Let them shake the sack and try to guess what is inside.
3. When the children have made their guess, let them see what was in the bag.
4. Do this with each bag (be careful to watch your time).
5. Use this demonstration to explain to the children that when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, people shouldn't have to guess what's inside of us, because the FRUIT of the spirit should overflow from inside us.
6. Show the children a clear gallon sized plastic Ziploc bag. Inside the bag have strips of paper with the nine Fruit of the Spirit written on them, easily seen through the bag. (Review what the fruit of the spirit are, as written on the strips of paper.)
7. Explain that when we are filled with the spirit, we are loving and kind, patient and humble, etc.

Community project

Matthew 25:35-36

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

It is important for our children to learn to use the gifts God has given them to bring joy to others. It is equally important that they learn to live lives that overflow with the characteristics of the Fruit of the Spirit, and that they have experiences in which they learn to share the love of God and develop servant hearts. We need to give them opportunities to serve.





Children

Helpful Tips for teaching children how to show others the love of Jesus:

- Find a way to help fill a need
- Smile a lot
- Use kind words
- Pray with and for them

Some suggestions/ideas:

- Make cards and treats for a local nursing home and visit the residents there. Children can talk with, pray with and sing a simple song to the residents, just to let them know that Jesus loves them too and has not forgotten about them.
- Get a rake, some yard waste bags, and head off some fall and rake as many leaves as you can for elderly or disabled individuals in your community. If it's winter, shovel snow. If it's summer, mow their grass. Before you leave, pray together with and for the person you worked so hard for, and encourage the children to show "love" (hug/high-five) for that special person too.
- Get together with some friends and go grocery shopping for a needy family. Pitch in a few dollars each and see how far you can stretch the money. Deliver the food with homemade cards. Pray together with the children (let them pray too) for the family/person who is receiving the food.
- Go to a children's hospital in your area and visit the kids there. The children can make pictures or cards to bring with them to share. Encourage the children to just go out of their way to help those they visit to know they are loved and prayed for.





Further Bible reading regarding the Holy Spirit

John 14:16-18

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Romans 8:26

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us[a] with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1 Corinthians 2:8,10

which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

Romans 5:5

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

1 Corinthians 2:13

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy[a] Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Romans 8:14

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

