

Put your hand up if you had a good half-term holiday. What was the best thing about it?

Take a couple of answers.

Ok, adults: put your hand up if you had a day off work on the Bank Holiday at the start of half-term. Does anyone know why we get a day off at this time of year?

Take answers.

Lots of countries give people a day off work at this time of year, to celebrate Pentecost. In this country it's sometimes called Whit Sunday, or Whitsun, because people were often baptised that day, wearing white clothes. Even though the Bank Holiday in this country was a couple of weeks ago, today is actually Pentecost Sunday.

So why is Pentecost so special? We don't have a day off work to celebrate every exciting event that ever happened.

Which special days does your family celebrate each year?

Take answers.

We celebrate birthdays because something completely amazing happened that day: a brand new person was born, and we give thanks every year for that person. And we celebrate Christmas, because ... well, whose birthday do we celebrate at Christmas?

Take answers.

Christmas is Jesus' birthday. And - this is going to sound a bit funny - but Pentecost is the church's birthday.

I'm going to need your help to tell the story of the first Pentecost.

Can you hold up your hands and wiggle the fingers like little flames of fire?

Great. I'll need you to do that during the story, when I hold my hand up like this.

Make flames sign.

Can you put your hand up if you know how to say 'Jesus is Lord' in another language as well as English?

Ok, I'm going to need you to do that during the story, when I hold up this sign.

Hold up the 'Jesus is Lord' sign.

And if you don't know how to say it in another language, then you can either say it in English or have a go at one of these.

Hand out the 'Jesus is Lord' translations.

Ok, now we're ready to start.

After that first Easter, when Jesus came back to life, lots of his friends saw him, and he spent time with them over forty days. Then, he went back to heaven. But before he went, he told his friends to wait in Jerusalem for a very special gift.

Ten days later, there was a festival called Pentecost. Many people came to Jerusalem, from all over the world, to celebrate together.

Jesus' friends were all together - like we are today - when suddenly they heard a sound like a mighty wind blowing.

Play the sound.

Can you hear the sound?

And they saw what looked like little flames of fire resting on each person.

Make the flames sign.

God's Holy Spirit filled each one of them. This was the gift Jesus had told them to wait for!

And then something amazing happened. They began to speak in languages that they didn't know!

Hold up the 'Jesus is Lord' sign.

The people who had come to Jerusalem from all over the world heard them. They all spoke different languages, from their own countries, and they were amazed, because they could hear Jesus' friends speaking in their languages, too.

'This is what God promised us,' Peter said, and he spoke bravely to everyone about Jesus. Many people believed in Jesus that day.

Hold up the 'Jesus is Lord' sign again.

Ok, so that first Pentecost was really exciting. It must have been amazing to be there. But what difference does it make to us today? Why did I say it was like the church's birthday?

[Helper's name]: can you play me a tune on [CD player, electric guitar, etc.]?

Machine makes no sound.

What's wrong? Why isn't it working?

Switch on the power - machine works.

The electricity gives [machine name] the power it needs. And God's Holy Spirit is like that for us. God knows that we can't manage on our own, so when Jesus went back to heaven he sent his Holy Spirit to give his friends the power to remember and obey everything that Jesus had taught them.

That's what happened, that first Pentecost. And the great news is that he's never gone away. The Holy Spirit still does the same for Christians today, and that's why Pentecost is like the church's birthday. It's the day when Christians first received the power to live our lives as God wants us to, and the church was born.

So let us pray:

Father God, we thank you for all the birthdays that we celebrate each year: thank you for the life of every person in our school and families.

Thank you for the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, that first Christmas.

And thank you for the coming of your Holy Spirit and the birth of your church, that first Pentecost.

May we know the power of your Holy Spirit working in our lives every day, for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

Bosnian:

Isus Krist je Gospodin!

Catalan:

Jesucrist és el Senyor!

Czech:

Ježíš Kristus je Pán!

Danish:

Jesus Kristus er Herre!

Dutch:

Jezus Christus is de Heere!

English:

Jesus Christ is Lord!

Finnish:

Jeesus Kristus on Herra!

French:

Jésus Christ est Seigneur!

German:

Jesus Christus ist der Herr!

Indonesian:

Yesus Kristuslah Tuhan!

Latin:

Dominus Iesus Christus!

Malay:

Yesus Kristuslah Tuhan!

Manobo:

Magboboot si Jesu-Cristo to tibo!

Norwegian:

Jesus er Herre!

Polish:

Jezus Chrystus jest Panem!

Portugese:

Jesus Cristo é o Senhor!

Romanian:

Iisus Hristos este Domnul!

Spanish:

Jesucristo es el Señor!

Swedish:

Jesus Kristus är Herre!

Tagalog:

Si Jesus Kristo ang Panginoon!

Jesus

is

Lord