

Title: Ascension and Pentecost – the birth of the church	Year: Y1/2	Timing: Summer A
Links: QCA 1D Cambs. CFF1 CFF2 CFF3, P'borough: CRC1 CRC2, N'folk: CP, CKF, CW		
Learning objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recognise that Christians celebrate special occasions during the year which are linked to the life of Jesus • To explore some of the ways that Christians celebrate special days • To find out about the growth of the early church 		
Questions for reflection: Why do Christians tell stories about Jesus? Why did Jesus go away from his friends? Who is the Holy Spirit? How did the church grow so quickly? Is the church still growing?		
Activities and experiences: Go out on a nature walk and talk about the things you find that are alive/ were never alive/ were once alive and are now dead. Select some to use them for a small group activity. Explain that Christians (and those of many other faiths) believe that things that are/were alive have been created by God. Set up a carousel of group activities to explore this further ~ Group A works with the objects to place them in hoops labelled ALIVE, NEVER ALIVE and ONCE ALIVE NOW DEAD. Group B plants cress seeds in tiny cases with kitchen roll in the bottom placing them on a tray to look at growth over the week. Group C uses a range of resources to help make a list of the characteristics of an organism that is alive, including GROWTH. Read the story of the Ascension and link it clearly with the Christmas story as the two mark the end and the beginning of Jesus' life respectively. <i>The news in both cases was spread by eye witnesses of the events</i> (look at the role of the shepherds in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2, and verse 20). Choose an activity to help show how the news spread quickly, as the church grew. E.g. Use a large, shallow bowl of water and drop a small object into the centre. Ask the children to describe the way that the water ripples out from the centre right to the edges of the bowl. Anyone who can remember the connection between Ascension and cress can take a pot home! (GROWTH) The Holy Spirit came to give Jesus' disciples power to spread his word. Read the story from Acts chapter 2 and think about the symbols of the Holy Spirit that came from that incident ~ wind and fire. Use ping-pong balls and straws to have a race and to illustrate that we cannot see wind, but we can see its power by what it does. Make a display of a large 'fire' with everyone contributing a flame to the design using as many different art media as you can. Add the bible verse that Jesus spoke to his disciples at the end of Matthew 28:20 ' Go then to all people everywhere and make them my disciples ', writing the words on the flames, and making a 3D crown to go over the top as a sign that Jesus regained to his place in Heaven at Ascension time. Use www.request.org.uk/infants/festivals/festivals and then click Pentecost to help the children to remember the events. Ask the priest or lay reader to help you find out whether the Christian church is still growing today, and where the growth is fastest.		