

## Pentecost Fire Sticks *by Emily Watkins*

### Why is this faith practice important?

Pentecost falls 50 days after Easter, when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit to the gathered followers of Jesus. “Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven... they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:2-4, NIV).

The symbols of Pentecost, based on the description from Acts, are wind and fire. The dove has also been a symbol of the Holy Spirit, based on the stories of Jesus’ Baptism.

Honoring Pentecost in your household helps focus on the gift and the work of the Holy Spirit, which fills us at all times and in all places (not just at church or churchy times). The Holy Spirit is the real presence of Jesus, as he told his disciples: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of Truth” (John 14:16-17a, NIV).



### What materials are needed for this practice?

- A stick, wooden dowels, or sticks from outside.
- Several long pieces of ribbon. Mostly red with a bit of gold and orange to look like flame.
- A short piece of ribbon.
- Glue, hot-glue, or other method of fastening the ribbons to the stick.

### How to do it

**Gather your household:** consider inviting friends and neighbors, too.

**Read scripture:** Try the passages from Acts 2 and/or John 14, (included on the next page

**Make your fire sticks:** Glue or fasten the long pieces of ribbon to one end of the stick. Then use the shorter piece of ribbon to wrap around the glued ends so that everything looks tidy.

**Take your fire sticks outside:** Watch the wind bring them to life. Remember that like wind, we cannot see the Holy Spirit, but we constantly see and experience its movement and effects.

**Enjoy:** Leave your fire sticks out for the season after Pentecost, which lasts until Advent.

## Resources for this practice

### A reading from Acts 2:1-4 (NIV)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

### A reading from John 14:15-20 (NIV)

'If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.'

## About the author

*Emily Watkins lives in Richmond, VA with her husband, Jim, and four little boys, all of whom happily journey the church year with her. Emily holds an M.A. in Applied Theology from Regent College and loves thinking and writing about the church year, Christian education, Godly Play, and the role of imagination in the Christian life. Emily keeps a blog chronicling a few of these thoughts [watkinseveryflavorbean.blogspot.com](http://watkinseveryflavorbean.blogspot.com).*