

# The Promise of the Holy Spirit – school age

John 14:15-21

May 14, 2023

## Opening Activity

*Ahead of class, make an acrostic poem using your name. write your name vertically- one letter each line- then think of a word that begins with each letter in your name that describes you.*

*For example*

*Mother  
Eager  
Laughing  
Adoring  
Nice  
Intellectual  
Eco-Interested*

**Say:** Hello everybody! It is good to see you this week! While we settle in today, we're going to make acrostic poems. Does anyone know what an acrostic poem is? Here is my acrostic poem. *Show kids your poem.* Can you figure out what an acrostic poem is by looking at mine? *Give hints as needed so they can figure it out.* Here is some paper and some part supplies for you to create an acrostic poem using your name. write your name down the length of the paper and then think of a word that begins with each of the letters in your name and describes you in some way. If you need help, let me know or ask another kid or adult.

**Say:** In today's Bible story, Jesus tells his disciples that their love for him will lead to works of love. That's how it works – faith leads to love. "If you love me," Jesus says, "you will keep my commandments." Jesus' commandments were these: Love God and love your neighbor. What do you think Jesus means when he says, "keep my commandments"? Sometimes we think that "keeping commandments" means obeying them perfectly. But none of us can do that! And Jesus knew that. Some days we do better than others, but we never manage to love God and each other perfectly. And when we royally mess up, Jesus calls us to try again. What do you think that words keep means? What does it mean to keep a secret? What does it mean to keep someone in your prayers.? What do you think if might mean to keep commandments? *Enjoy a good discussion on this. Keep means to "hold dear." To think important, etc. It is more nuanced than obey.*

### Prayer:

Let's give ourselves thirty seconds to come up with a list of what we are called to do as followers of Jesus. You can shout out things like "tell others about Jesus" or "love one another." Ready, set, go! *Make a list on the white board. When you're done, write "Help us, God to..." at the top of the list.* Good job, now we're going to use those ideas for our prayer.

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I'll start and say, "Help us, God, to...love one another." And then I'll bounce this ball to someone else in our prayer circle and they'll continue the prayer the same way but with something different from our list. Or think of something up on their own. Let's try it

After the ball has been to everyone the last person gets to bounce it in the middle and say, Amen.

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### Open the Bible

*Pass out paper and pencils*

**Say:** We are coming to the end of the Easter season and today's story gives us a hint at the next season. Today's Bible story is part of a speech Jesus gives. Jesus knows he will soon be killed and won't be with his disciples anymore. He makes a long speech in the Gospel of John and tries to tell them everything they need to know before he dies. Then he prays for them. Our text today comes from that speech. Jesus is promising his disciples that he will soon be gone but God's Holy Spirit will be with them. The church's next season is Pentecost, the season in which we celebrate God's Spirit with us.

I am going to read it to you a couple of times and I want you to draw what you hear. It may be a certain word you hear or something you think Jesus is trying to say.

Read John 14:15-21 twice.

Discuss:

- What did you hear in Jesus' speech that you were able to draw?
  - Jesus says, "If you love me" What? What will we do? (*Keep his commandments*)
  - When John wrote his gospel, he used a Greek word for advocate that also means comforter, helper, or encourager. How are ways we experience God's advocate, comforter, helper, or encourager today?
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### Activate Faith

#### The Spirit Moves – Craft

Kids create a mobile to remind them of the presence of the Spirit.

**Supplies:** copies of Spirit, scissors, colored pencils, construction paper, glue or tape

**Set Up:**

Cut or draw a spiral out of construction paper, print out copies

**Instructions:**

When God's spirit comes, it moves us to faith. Faith always leads us to love. We are going to make a mobile out of the letters of the word Spirit. Decorate the letters using colored pencils. Be creative!

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When your letters are decorated, put a piece of clear tape at the top and bottom of each letter. Punch a hole through the tape and letter with a sharp pencil. String the word Spirit together and hang it in your room at home. When the spirit moves, remember that faith leads to love. (The kids can choose from a heart or other shapes to put at the top of their mobile to hang the letters).

## **Alternate Activities**

### **Random Acts of Love – Activity**

Supplies: Paper and pencil

**Say:** Jesus' commandments were these: Love God and love your neighbor. Those two things are what Jesus wants us to do. When we believe in Jesus, we're called to love others-he loved us so much that we have love to share!

When Jesus talks about love, he isn't talking about love as a feeling. He talks about love as an action-love is something you do what do you think random acts of love are? (Nice things, kind actions, helping hands, fun surprises, etc.). Let's see if we can make a list of things we could do. Do you think we could pick one to do together as a class? *Try to pick a random act of love to do together as a class (or family) or at least make plans for one at another time.*