



A LIVING FAITH Lesson ASCENSION

Theme: The Day of Pentecost - Happy Birthday to the Church!

Object: A birthday cake (or cupcake) with candles, some balloons

Scripture: "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability." Acts 2:4

Paree Looys!

What have we here? A cake covered with candles and balloons. What kind of a celebration do you think these things might suggest? Of course; a birthday party. Now, there might be someone here today who is having a birthday, but that is not why we are celebrating. Today is the day that we celebrate the birthday of the Church - the day that the Church really got its start. We call it the day of Pentecost and it is when we remember the day when God sent the Holy Spirit to his people just as Christ had promised that he would.

These items that we traditionally use to celebrate a birthday are also going to help us to remember what happened in the Church on the day of Pentecost. They will remind us that the Holy Spirit is still at work in the Church today.

Balloons can add a lot to any celebration, but, as you can see, these balloons are flat and lifeless. They need to be filled. They need someone to breathe some life into them. (*Blow up the balloons.*) The Bible tells us that on the day of Pentecost, the followers of Jesus were all together in one place when suddenly they heard a sound from heaven like a mighty rushing wind and it filled the whole house. We are here today waiting for the Holy Spirit to fill this place and to breathe new life into our Church.

Like any good birthday cake, our cake is covered with candles. As I light each candle, we are reminded that on the day of Pentecost tongues of fire came and rested upon each of the apostles and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability to teach about Christ. Just as on the day of Pentecost, we need the Holy Spirit to come and light our fire and give us the power to do things that will bring glory to God.

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit created the Church, by empowering people to preach and teach about Christ. That is still true today!

This has been a great birthday celebration, but it seems to me that there is something we have forgotten. Oh, I know what it is! We forgot to sing "Happy Birthday" to the church. Let's sing! "Happy birthday to you..."

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for sending the Holy Spirit. Help us to remember that the Holy Spirit still fills the Church with power today and calls people into it, just as he did on the day of Pentecost. Amen.