

know, O God, that sometimes we are fearful and we feel alone. But just like that Pentecost long ago, we, too, are surrounded by your love and presence. Help us live in such a way that others see in us a reflection of your love. Help us have the courage to tell others about the difference it makes

in our lives to trust in your love and care. Help us see those around who want to be in the fellowship of Christians. Help us to witness to one another so that we grow in faith. Through the power of your Holy Spirit and the witness of your son, Jesus the Christ, we pray today. Amen.

## In Brief

### What is Peace with Justice Sunday?

On Sunday June 16, the United Methodist Church celebrates Peace with Justice Sunday. In a world plagued by war and terror, violence, and destruction, people of faith have a clear call to build peace with justice. Scripture is consistent in the



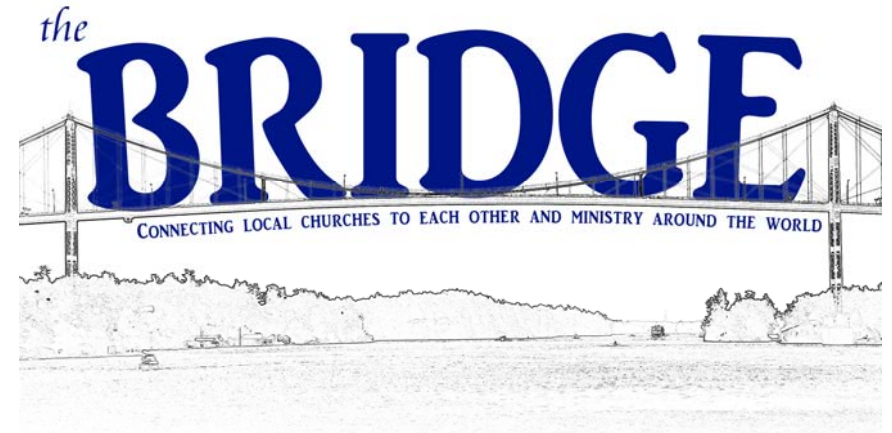
call for followers of Christ to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44-45a), forgive others their trespasses (Matthew 6:14-15), to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21), and to seek peace and pursue it (Psalm 34:14). Peacemakers are blessed and called the children of God (Matthew 5:9).

Always the first Sunday after Pentecost, Peace with Justice Sunday is a day for United Methodists to recognize efforts across the connection that are building peace. Visit <http://bit.ly/PWJSunday> to learn more about Peace with Justice Sunday.

*The Bridge is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York Conference and the world. For more news and stories visit:*

**[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)**

Due to Annual Conference coverage, the next issue of the Bridge will be available the week before the third Sunday in June. Go to [unyumc.org](http://unyumc.org) for continuing coverage of Annual Conference and other news.



The Upper New York Conference's vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God's love with our neighbors in all places.

## A look inside!

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# Some ideas for celebrating Pentecost at home

A UMC.org Feature by Joe Iovino

**Editor's Note:** Many of these ideas are adapted from a story by the Rev. MaryJane Pierce Norton, retired staff member of United Methodist Discipleship Ministries.

Pentecost, an important day in the life of the church, can be a wonderful opportunity for family worship, discussions about church and the Holy Spirit, and a celebration of our faith. Pentecost takes place 50 days after Easter, each year. This year it will be celebrated June 9.

On Pentecost Sunday, we remember the day the disciples received the Holy Spirit in a special way. There was a powerful wind and tongues of fire (see Acts 2:1-41).

With the gift of the Spirit, the disciples were able to tell people from all over the

world about Jesus in ways each could understand. The Bible reports that about 3,000 people were baptized that day, creating the first church.

Creatively celebrating Pentecost in the home can be a wonderful addition to your family's devotional life, as you give thanks to God for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the church.

Here are some ideas to help get you started.

**Wear red:** Red is the color of Pentecost, symbolizing the Holy Spirit's arrival as tongues of fire. Go through your closets and find red clothes to wear to church on Pentecost Sunday to join in the celebration!

**Tell the story:** Read together the story of Pentecost in Acts 2. Imagine the scene. Ask each family member what they will



try to remember from the story.

**Pretend to be Peter:** Peter was concerned that some people misunderstood the disciples' faith and the work of the Holy Spirit. If you were Peter today, what would you want to say to help others understand what it means to follow Jesus?

**Bake together:** Make a cake to celebrate the birth of the church. Red icing and candles serve as great reminders of the Spirit coming as individual flames and resting on each of the disciples.

**Enjoy the wind:** Make and fly a kite. Blow bubbles and watch the wind carry them away. Play with pinwheels. Talk about all the wind does, even though you cannot see it.

**Balloons:** Use balloons to celebrate. Some balloons rise, while others do not. The difference is the air inside. Helium is invisible, but we can see its effects on the balloon.

**Learn the story of your church:** Talk to

an older member of your church or research the history of your congregation. Ask what it was like when they started going to church. Share your own memories of Sunday School, church, and people who have been important in helping you grow in faith.

**Make decorations:** Make a banner, draw some pictures, or find another way to express the day artistically. Post your creations around your home as reminders of the gift of the Holy Spirit and the church.

**Pray together:** The Rev. MaryJane Pierce Norton shares the following prayer for families to use:

Gracious God. We are reminded again when the first believers in Jesus were given the courage to tell others about Jesus. We believe you give us that same courage to tell others about Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. You

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