

**SCHOOL-DEVELOPED
SAMPLE UNIT
FOR LEVEL 2**

THE SPIRIT AT WORK

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD HELPS PEOPLE BY THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
YEAR: **FAITH STATEMENTS:** ① ② ③

DURATION OF UNIT: 10 – 11 hours **DATE OF USE:**

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

**1. THE HOLY SPIRIT
GIVES PEOPLE
POWER TO BELIEVE
AND TO LIVE AS
GOD'S PEOPLE**
1a investigate the role of the Holy Spirit in the life and work of Jesus

1b explore the Christian belief that God's word is the means by which the Holy Spirit converts people

1c explore the New Testament teaching on the tension which exists between the 'flesh' and the 'spirit' in a Christian's life

**2. THE HOLY SPIRIT
GIVES NEW LIFE IN
BAPTISM**
2a investigate the practice and teaching of baptism in the New Testament and the early church

2b compare baptism as an initiation rite with other initiation rites in society and different religions

2c compare and contrast the Lutheran understanding of baptism with that of other Christian denominations

2d explore baptism as the power for a new way of life

**3. THE HOLY SPIRIT
USES GOD'S WORD
AND HOLY
COMMUNION TO HELP
GOD'S PEOPLE GROW**
3a investigate the understanding and use of sacraments in the Christian church

3b compare the Lutheran teaching on holy communion with the teaching of other Christian denominations

3c explore the Christian belief that the Holy Spirit uses God's word to help people grow as Christians

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Give an oral report on the role of the Holy Spirit in one particular event in Jesus' life. (1a)

Write a personal reflection on the way the Holy Spirit works through the word of God. (1b,3c)

Complete a work sheet about the battle between the Holy Spirit and the sinful nature as depicted in Bible texts. (1c)

Find points of agreement between the Lutheran understanding of the Holy Spirit at work through the sacraments that of other Christian traditions. (3a,3b)

Report or poster on role/work of the Holy Spirit. (1a,1b,1c,3a,3c)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

⇒ oral report

⇒ written personal reflection

⇒ TRS D2/3

⇒ observation of discussion

⇒ work sample

UNIT SUMMARY

Students find various meanings of the word 'spirit' and relate these to the work of the Holy Spirit. They look at how the Holy Spirit was with Jesus, Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit would be with his followers, the work of the Holy Spirit through word and sacrament, and evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit today.

UNIT NOTES

The Holy Spirit was present in the beginning when God created the universe, and he was intimately involved in God's redemptive activity: in the incarnation, life and ministry of Jesus Christ. In this unit we concentrate on the Holy Spirit continuing Jesus' work today, as he comforts and teaches people through God's word, the sacraments and human agents.

An optional ongoing activity for the unit is outlined on Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) D2/1.

INTRODUCTION

1. WHAT IS SPIRIT?

Before looking at the nature and work of the Holy Spirit, students look at the various ways the term 'spirit' (lower case) is used.

Students use a thesaurus (printed or electronic) to find synonyms for the word spirit. Make and display a list of spirit-synonyms.

Ask each student to write a sentence which contains the word 'spirit'. In groups, students share their sentences and determine which synonyms best indicate how the word spirit is used in each sentence.

3. SPIRIT AND HOLY SPIRIT

In small groups students skim read John 14 – 16 in several Bible translations and list the titles and jobs Jesus uses in relation to his promise of the Holy Spirit.

Beside each title and job, they write examples of people who have served that purpose in their lives and times when someone has (or has not) helped them, eg

- In what situations have they needed comfort?
- Who has been their comforter?
- How did it feel to need a comforter and not have one?
- How did it feel to need a comforter and have someone comfort you?

Compare this list with the list of spirit-synonyms from Section 1. What seems to be the relationship between the general meaning of 'spirit' and the nature of the Holy Spirit?

DEVELOPMENT

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH JESUS

Students look at the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus. Follow the outline on TRS D2/2.

Students compare the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus with the titles and job description of the Holy Spirit given by Jesus in John 14 – 16/

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH PEOPLE IN WORD AND SACRAMENT

Christians believe that the Holy Spirit works in people's lives through God's word and the sacraments.

NOTES:

1. The following sections can be quite brief. However, if this is the only time you are looking at baptism and holy communion, you may want to look at them in more depth. The LIFE concept *God helps people by his word* is a more complete development of Section C.

2. The use of Luther's Small Catechism as a primary resource provides the Lutheran understanding of three ways in which the Holy Spirit works. Students in your group may know, or have access to texts which explain, the beliefs and practices of other Christian traditions with regard to baptism, holy communion and the use of the Bible. Include in each section a discussion of different beliefs and practices. Look for points of agreement among the different groups.

A. The Holy Spirit works through baptism

Challenge students to find the answers to the following questions in the explanation of baptism in Luther's Small Catechism.

- What do Christians believe the Holy Spirit does for people in baptism?
- What makes baptism 'work'? (God's word)
- Students identify how these beliefs are expressed in a Lutheran baptismal service.

Students compare Luther's answers with the teachings and practices of other Christian groups. What are the points of agreement among the different groups?

B. The Holy Spirit works through holy communion Challenge students to find the answers to the following questions in the explanation of holy communion in Luther's Small Catechism.

- What do Christians believe the Holy Spirit does for people in holy communion?
- What makes holy communion 'work'? (God's word)
- Students identify how these beliefs are expressed in a Lutheran Service with holy communion.

Students compare Luther's answers with the teachings and practices of other Christian groups. What are the points of agreement among the different groups?

C. The Holy Spirit works through God's word Form small groups. Give each group one of the following Bible passages to read and find answers to the questions:

- What do Christians believe the Holy Spirit does for people through his word, the Bible?
- How does God's word work in people's lives?

Passages for students to examine:

Psalm 119:97–105	Isaiah 55:10,11
John 5:39	Colossians 3:16
2 Timothy 3:15–17	Hebrews 4:12
James 1:22–25	

After all groups have reported to the class, each student writes a personal reflection on the ways in which Christians believe the Holy Spirit works through God's word.

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN BATTLE WITH THE SINFUL NATURE

Review with students what is meant by 'sinful nature'. Use TRS D2/2 to explore the Christian understanding of the struggle between the Holy Spirit and people's sinful nature. TRS D2/3 can be used as an individual Bible study or as a teacher-directed whole-class activity.

6. EVIDENCE OF THE SPIRIT AT WORK

Students read the explanation of the third part of the Apostles' Creed and underline or highlight the words (verbs) which denote the work of the Holy Spirit.

Groups of students each take one of the actions of the Holy Spirit referred to in the catechism:

- calling people by the good news
- leading people to Jesus
- making people holy (sanctifying)
- bringing people together in the church
- keeping people in the Christian faith.

Students interview at least three Christians in order to find out

- how the Christians recognise the actions of the Holy Spirit in their life;
- how the Christians recognise that the Holy Spirit is at work in the Christian church;
- how the Christians see the role of baptism, holy communion and God's word in their life.

From what they learn in the interviews, each group prepares a role-play showing an aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit.

After a role-play is presented to the class, discuss:

- Which of the spirit-synonyms is/are most helpful in understanding the Holy Spirit in this role-play?
- What evidence is there to support the Christian belief that the Holy Spirit is with people today?

RESPONSE

7. REFLECTION, REPORT OR POSTER

Choose one of these options for responding to the unit.

- Settle the students in a quiet, comfortable reflective mood. Read the poem *Footprints*. Students use the poem as a model for writing their own poems, reflecting on how God the Holy Spirit has been with them in their life.
- Students write a report about Christian beliefs concerning the work and role of the Holy Spirit.
- Students create a poster describing what Christians believe about the Holy Spirit and his work/role.
- Students write a short biography that tells about the work of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life.

YOU WILL NEED

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Luther's Small Catechism

- ☐ TRS D2/3 for students

INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

Find out what students are doing in other curriculum areas in relation to topics and skills dealt with in this unit.

Topics

- lifestyle.....
- support structures.....

Skills

- interviewing.....

UNIT EVALUATION

What main outcomes were achieved?

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the variety of students' awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

What main learning skills were engaged by students?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?

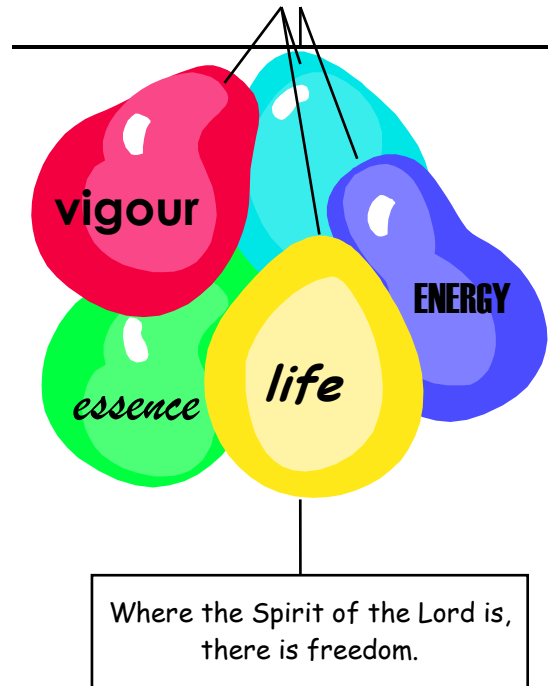
OPTIONAL ONGOING ACTIVITY

Begin each session (after the first) by looking at a different Bible reference relating to the Holy Spirit. Discuss:

- Which of the spirit-synonyms on our list help us to understand the nature and work of the Holy Spirit in the verse?

Verses to use include:

Genesis 1:2 (creation)
Judges 13:24,25 (Samson)
1 Samuel 10:10 (Saul)
1 Samuel 16:13 (David)
2 Kings 2:9 (Elisha)
Nehemiah 9:16 (the Israelites)
Job 33:4 (Elihu)
Psalm 51:11 (David)
Ezekiel 11:19 (promise to Israel)
Joel 2:29 (promise to all people)
John 4:23,24 (God is spirit, worship)
John 6:63 (Spirit gives life)
John 20:21,22 (disciples)
Romans 8:15 (Spirit of sonship)
2 Corinthians 3:17 (freedom)
Philippians 1:19 (Paul)



Instead of simply listing spirit-synonyms (Section 1) you might consider making a display using real balloons, or a poster featuring balloon-shaped paper cut-outs. Balloon imagery can lead to discussions of people 'filled' with the Spirit.

THE SPIRIT WITH JESUS

Form seven (or nine) small groups and assign one of the listed events from Jesus' life to each group.

Each small group prepares a short presentation for the class in which they

- show an illustration of the event (page references in two possible sources of illustrations, *According to Plan* and *The Great Bible Discovery* series, are keyed in the chart below);
- briefly tell what happened in the event, based on their reading in the Bible or in Bible story books;
- briefly explain the role of the Holy Spirit in the event as recorded in the listed Bible verse/s.

When the groups are ready, work through these Spirit-related events in Jesus' life in sequence. The teacher will provide any continuity required to link the stories. If you have a time line chart of Jesus' life, you may use it to help locate each event in time and context.

EVENT	SPIRIT VERSE	Plan	Discovery
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Continuity: *Isaiah prophesied that the Holy Spirit would be with Jesus.*

Note: There is little 'story' content to this first event. The teacher may want to present it.

(1) Prophecy	Isaiah 11:2	p 56,57	12/38
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Continuity: *The Holy Spirit was involved in Jesus' life from the very start.*

2 Jesus' birth announced	Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:18	p 71	19/5,6
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Continuity: *There is no point in speculating on exactly how these things happened. What the Bible does tell us is that the Holy Spirit was involved in the start of Jesus' life on earth. The Bible is pretty sketchy about Jesus' childhood and youth. The story of his work as an adult begins with his baptism.*

3 Jesus' baptism	Matthew 3:16,17	p 81	19/23,24
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Continuity: *From this point on, the Holy Spirit was 'on' Jesus in everything he did. And Jesus knew it.*

4 Jesus preaches at Nazareth	Luke 4:18	p 83	19/31,32
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Continuity: *Jesus needed the Holy Spirit to do the things he went on to do.*

5 Jesus teaches and heals	Acts 10:38	(select examples)	
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Continuity: *The Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John have many stories about Jesus doing these things. Can you think of any of them?*

Note: the following event does not have any 'story' content. John's gospel contains the words of Jesus to his disciples right after Jesus washes their feet. Jesus predicts his suffering and death, comforts his disciples and promises to send them the Holy Spirit. The teacher may want to do this event.

(6) Jesus comforts his disciples	John 16:6,7,13		21/28
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Continuity: *The things that Jesus said would happen, really did happen.*

7 Jesus' death	Luke 23:46	112,113	21/45
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Continuity: *The death of Jesus is not the end of the story. Jesus came back to life and he sent the Holy Spirit to his disciples and through them to many other people.*

8 Jesus' ascension	Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18–20	p 119	22/16
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Continuity: *What Jesus promised did happen.*

9 Pentecost	Acts 2:17; John 15:26,27	p 120	22/19
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Continuity: *In coming lessons we will be looking at what happens when the Holy Spirit takes control of people.*

THE HOLY SPIRIT VS THE SINFUL NATURE

Galatians 5:16–26

Galatians 5:16–26 speaks of a battle that goes on in Christians: the Holy Spirit striving to control, teach and comfort; the sinful nature striving to control.

➤ **Read Galatians 5:16,17.** Then describe in your own words what the battle is like. _____

➤ List the characteristics of a person whose life is controlled by the Holy Spirit. (**Galatians 5:22,23**)

➤ List the acts of a person whose life is controlled by their own sinful nature. (**Galatians 5:19–21**)

➤ Which of these two lists would have the best chance of selling movies or novels? _____

Why do you think this is so? _____

What does this say about the battle between the sinful nature and the Holy Spirit? _____

➤ **Read Ephesians 6:14–17** and list the weapons the Holy Spirit provides for the battle. _____

Select one of the weapons and describe how a person could actually use it. _____

➤ **Read Philippians 4:4–8** for some practical advice for the person who wants the Holy Spirit to be the victor in their own life. What can they do? _____
