The Mystery of Pentecost

Scripture
Acts 2

Material
The material for The Mystery of Pentecost is on one of the New Testament shelves.

It is a red parable box that contains:
- red felt underlay
- 12 tan felt strips
- 6 plain wooden blocks
- small box containing 12 shields with symbols
  - Andrew - white X-shaped cross on blue background
  - Bartholomew - three knives
  - James (son of Zebedee) - three scallop shells and a sword
  - James the Less (son of Alphaeus) - saw
  - John - cup and serpent
  - Jude - sailboat
  - Matthew - three money bags
  - Phillip - cross with two loaves of bread
  - Thomas - builder's square and spear
  - Simon Peter - upside-down cross and crossed keys
  - Simon the Zealot - book and fish
  - Matthias - sword and book

Movements
Watch carefully where I go so you will always know where to find this material.

Walk slowly to the shelf and pick up the box with the materials for The Mystery of Pentecost.
Carry it carefully to the circle and set the box beside you. Sit quietly while you feel the story forming in you.

Pick up the red box with mystery and amazement.

Move the box to your side with the lid propped up on the side

Words
This is the Mystery of Pentecost.

I wonder what could be inside? This looks like a parable box, but it is red. It must be like a parable and yet not be a
facing the children so they won’t be tempted to peek at what is coming out of the box next.

Take out the underlay. Leave it crumpled in the middle of the circle for a moment and then smooth it out.

Pause and begin.

Place the first block down in the middle of the underlay.

Put the second block down on top of the first.

Slowly build up the blocks as you tell the story.

Keep building block by block, in such a way that the tower becomes more precarious.

The blocks now need to fall of their own weight.

Slowly pick up the blocks and put them back in the box. Sit back and pause. Reflect silently on what has happened.

Lay out the tan felt strips in a rectangle, leaving an open space for a doorway.

parable. I have an idea. Let’s look inside and see what is there.

There are some things inside to tell the story, but there is nothing else to put down to help us get ready. I guess all we can do, then is begin.

There once was a great tower.

Everyone working on the tower spoke the same language and worked together.

But as the tower grew taller and taller, they began to talk in different ways.

The tower came close to God, but the people forgot why they were building it. They grew so proud of themselves that they began to think they were greater builders than God. Each group thought they were better than any of the others.

A huge noise replaced their talking. It made no sense. Everyone was babbling.

Soon the tower fell down, so it was called the Tower of Babel. The language of the people of the earth was shattered and broke into splinters. Each one was beautiful, but it was broken.

Thousands of years passed. Then Jesus died on the cross, but somehow he was still with the people around him as he is with us. They kept seeing him, and they couldn’t let him go. Then one day something amazing happened.

The disciples were in Jerusalem.
Place all the symbols of the Twelve, except the symbol for Matthias (the sword and book), inside the rectangle. There is no symbol for Judas.

Move the symbols for the disciples outside Jerusalem and place them in a circle.

With your hands turned up, raise your hands upward together.

Turn your hands over and hold them over the circle of disciples and then allow one hand to move slowly down and lightly touch the disciples. Move the symbols back into the rectangle of Jerusalem.

Add the symbol of Matthias to the group, which is now inside "Jerusalem." Crowd them together in the center of the rectangle made form the brown strips.

Here they are: Peter, James, John, Andrew, Phillip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the Less, Simon, and Jude. There are only eleven disciples because Judas had already killed himself.

Jesus took them outside Jerusalem to a Mountain called Olivet, or as far as Bethany.

Jesus then went up, and soon the Holy Spirit would come down.

The eleven disciples went back into the city. They were full of joy and went to the Temple to pray.

They then went to the upper room and, with God's help, decided that Matthias would take Judas' place.

On Sunday the Twelve were together again. Suddenly there was a sound like a mighty wind rushing in to be with them. It was the Holy Spirit. They became so full of its power that they seemed to be on fire. Their tongues burned in their mouths. They were so excited that people wondered what was going on.

When the disciples went out on the street, there were people there from many different countries. They spoke many different languages.

Everyone could see that the Twelve had come close to God - and God had come close to them - in a new way. It no longer mattered that they spoke different languages.

The disciples had become apostles! They went out into all the world to tell this story.

Ever since, Pentecost has been celebrated to remember that day.
Sit back and look at story for a moment, then begin the wondering.

- I wonder what part of the story you like best?
- I wonder what the most important part could be?
- I wonder where you are in the story? What part is about you?
- I wonder if we can leave out any part of this story and still have all the story we need?
- I wonder if you have ever come close to something like this?
- I wonder if there is anything in our church that reminds you of this?

After the wondering is over, put the story away carefully. Return the lesson to its spot on the shelf. Then return to your spot in the circle and dismiss the children one by one to do their work.