

# God of the Bible:

A Study for United Methodists about  
How God Is Revealed in Scripture

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PARTICIPANT'S WORKBOOK



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LEADER'S GUIDE | **PARTICIPANT'S WORKBOOK** | APPENDICES

*All Scripture readings are from New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.*

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## Introduction:

How shall we speak of God? What language shall we use? What words will invite, embrace, nurture and strengthen people, loved by God?

The stained-glass windows in Parkers United Methodist Church — deep blue, rich red and strong gold — fascinated me as a child. The shepherd who is good to the sheep on the right side is the same as the one who knocks at the door on the left side. Swirls and triangles and ovals are beautifully interwoven around names of forebears of the church family. I did not know what they meant and yet I knew what they meant. They pointed me toward God who is gentle and strong, beautiful and mysterious, close by and far away. The windows fascinate me still. Many years later, I realize that my soul was shaped by the images of God that embraced me, week by week, year by year.

The Bible overflows with images of God. We have our favorites and love them well. My own spiritual journey is marked by the unearthing of scriptural images, one by one, sometimes multilayered: light in darkness, water in desert, guide in wilderness, rock that gives birth. For even the most seasoned reader of the Bible, there are images in the Bible unexplored.

Our speaking of God can overflow with the richness of Biblical imagery and the expansiveness of Christ's embrace.

God is big, beautiful, beyond our imagining. Therefore, we need this resource. I hope you will read it with eagerness. I also hope you will use it as you invite people toward God, as you help people grow in discipleship, as you engage in Christ's mission in the world.

— *Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, North Carolina Conference*

# Participant's Workbook

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## General Format for Participant's Workbook

### ALL SESSIONS

- » Introduction
  - » Order of worship/liturgy
    - Bible Study (Scripture and discussion questions)
    - Homework or activity
  - » Image(s) related to session (could also be closing activity of each worship service or it could simply be at the end of each session in the workbook for participants to reflect on/share about for a few minutes at the next session)
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## Introduction

This five-session study is an opportunity for people of faith to begin to explore our biblical heritage using a variety of images and metaphors for God. Because the intention of this study is not to promote one image or understanding of God over another, we have offered the term expansive as a way of recognizing the fullness of God. Expansive can also refer to the ways our language can grow and evolve as we recognize the beautiful fullness of God's nature.

The readings, liturgy and Scripture you will find in each session are open to your insights, experiences and wisdom. Whether you participate in this study as a student or a leader, we hope that you will fully engage in the topics and questions in each session. As United Methodists, we find value using the Quadrilateral: Scripture, tradition, reason and experience, in the interpretation of biblical passages. It allows us to bring all of who we are when we commit to learning together.

As you finish this study, we encourage you to continue these conversations within your faith community. The passages chosen for this study are a small offering from a vast and beautiful array of scriptural images. You may want to spend more time with other images or possibly incorporate them into a worship service.

We hope this study will help you in the ongoing process of faith formation. May the presence of God surround you and inspire you as you begin this journey.



## Study Overview:

### SESSION 1: IMAGINING THE MYSTERY AND LOVE OF GOD

How do we begin to understand the mystery and love of God? Scripture offers many metaphors for us to understand how God relates to us. These images teach us about God and ourselves; and by exploring this variety of images, we learn more about the nature of God.

### SESSION 2: LISTENING TO WISDOM

What does God's wisdom look like? The book of Proverbs offers a fascinating way of understanding Wisdom as a "person" who takes action and teaches us to identify wisdom in our own lives.

### SESSION 3: GOD WHO NURTURES, LOVES AND PARENTS

What does it mean when we call God father or mother? There are many passages that help us understand God as parent. Scripture also empowers us to explore ways this language can be limiting and ways to expand our language and understanding of God.

### SESSION 4: GOD OF ALL CREATION

The Bible is full of many different inanimate images of God! All these images teach us new ways of understanding God's nature. In what ways does nature influence your own understanding of God?

### SESSION 5: KNOWING THE UNKNOWNABLE

Names are very significant in Scripture. What does it mean to you when God says, "I am who I am?" Is it possible to know the unknowable God?

## About the Authors

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is a deacon in the Northern Illinois Conference who received her Master of Divinity from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary with extensive study in Christian education. She currently serves Holy Covenant UMC as director of education & administration and has previously served in a number of cross denominational settings, including congregational, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and interfaith ministries. As a member of the Port Gamble S'Klallam nation of Kingston, WA, Adrienne is passionate about Native American theology and cultural competency in the church and serves as the chair of the Committee on Native American Ministries for the Northern Illinois Conference.



## Imagining the Mystery and Love of God

### Session 1: Introduction

Our language about God often expands as we learn and grow. Scripture itself enables us to embrace a variety of images of God. You may be familiar with the more well-known images of God that are used most often in church, but there are several that may be new to you. We find ourselves favoring a few of these images over others and see this reflected in the language that churches find most comfortable or acceptable. Our intention in offering this variety of images from Scripture is to use these images as starting places for fruitful conversation and worshipful ways to experience the fullness of a relationship with God.

As you begin this time together with your class or small group, you may find yourself struggling to describe the nature of God accurately. The goal of this study is not to provide exposition from years of theological study, but to explore our relationship with God in response to the variety of images of God presented throughout Scripture. In this session, you will have the opportunity to explore metaphors for God found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). For our purposes, we understand a metaphor as a figure of speech that resembles a circumstance or situation in life that we would understand. One example is “the church is the body of Christ.” A metaphor can also be understood as a symbol that points to another truth. Although metaphors have a “textbook” definition in the way they function, metaphors are no more than a grammatical tool. When metaphors function well, they connect us to a truth about ourselves, the world and even God. Put differently, metaphors help us “make meaning” together. Metaphors are often used in the Hebrew Scriptures in explaining God’s relationship to humanity and the world. In the Christian Scriptures, we find that Jesus often uses parables for a similar purpose: to teach us about God’s relationship to humanity and the world.

In the world of theology (the study of God), some believe that it is impossible or somehow irresponsible as human beings to describe God in “partial” ways (ie: by affirming characteristics or traits of God), since no one trait fully encompasses all of God. Similarly, some may hesitate to use metaphors as a way of learning about God’s nature for fear of “simplifying” God. Yet, we as United Methodists have the opportunity to acknowledge and explore the many images and metaphors of God presented in Scripture as ways that we can respond to God’s grace. After all, we are the people of a Creator who spoke us into existence and gave us voices. As the gospel of Luke reminds us, if we were to be silent about how we experience God, even “the stones would shout out!” (Luke 19:40)

Although metaphors are a helpful tool for us to make meaning and understand more clearly God’s relationship to humanity, they are not perfect. Oftentimes, they evoke emotion because the metaphors you will be exploring are relational. This can sometimes be unexpected or surprising, and your first response may be to shy away from certain metaphors that trouble you in some ways. Since you bring all of who you are to this study – your experiences, stories, beliefs and deeply-held convictions – we invite you to live into whatever emotions arise for you and engage in honest conversation with your group about how you understand these images of God.

In this session, you will be invited to approach a variety of metaphors found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, and explore the nature of God in new ways. You may also begin to identify images you can embrace in your personal relationship with God so that you can see and experience the transcendence (vastness) of God in new ways.

## Session 1: Images



The “immortal” jellyfish, *Turritopsis dohrnii*, is a species of small jellyfish which is found in the Mediterranean Sea and in the waters of Japan. This small hydrozoan can revert back to the polyp stage after reaching adult medusa stage through a process called transdifferentiation. This is the only animal known to do so. How vast and mysterious is God?  
<http://ocean.si.edu/jellyfish-and-comb-jellies>.

<http://frenchtribune.com/teneur/1423721-newly-identified-leaky-galaxy-helps-astronomers-understand-origin-light-universe>



## Session 1: Worksheet

Look up each passage and read it aloud to your group. Answer the following questions regarding each passage. Brainstorm answers and record them on this handout.

A. Midwife:

Isaiah 66:6-9

Psalms 22:9-10

B. Vinegrower:

Isaiah 5:1-7

John 15:1-6

C. Shepherd:

Ezekiel 34:1-16

Psalms 23:1-4

Luke 15:1-7

1. How is God portrayed in the passage? Pick out words or phrases from the scripture that are important to the passage. What are the central nouns, verbs or adjectives that describe God's activity in this passage?
2. Paraphrase the central idea(s) of the passage. Restate the image in your own words.
3. What kind of relationship between God and people is communicated by this image?
4. What seems important to you about the way this passage characterizes God? What insight into God's character does it have to offer?

## Session 1: Homework

Next week, we will be talking about God as wise. Each person is encouraged to bring a picture, drawing or object that represents God's wisdom.

## Listening to Wisdom

### Session 2: Introduction

Within the larger biblical story, the Book of Proverbs is placed in the Writings section, and it offers a variety of sayings, instructions and traditions related to living in community and honoring God. While the many instructions offered in Proverbs were collected over many years and cover many topics, its primary message is to identify the ethical and moral priorities related to human life and action among believers.

In addition to these instructions about life together, the author of Proverbs presents a fascinating and unique way that God communicates with humanity: through the concept of Wisdom. The biblical concept of Wisdom (Proverbs 8) is a distinct way of seeing and understanding God's nature. Wisdom in this sense is not to be confused with what we often understand as general wisdom; lessons learned from experience, age or excessive study. Proverbs presents the Wisdom of God (in Hebrew חֵכְמָה, "chokma") in a way understood by scholars as feminine. In so doing, Wisdom is considered one of the feminine "attributes," or truths about God. Thus, Wisdom is referred to as "she" in the biblical study of this lesson.

Throughout Proverbs, the concept of Wisdom is personified. That is, Wisdom is given the attributes of a person so that we can understand God more clearly. This literary application invites us to consider how action and relationship to humanity teach us about the nature of God.

For some, thinking of Wisdom as a feminine attribute of God may be a challenge but others may find Wisdom to be a compelling way of understanding God's nature. In the larger biblical story, as well as in many churches, feminine images of God have not been the primary way of communicating about God's nature. This reality means that when women – or those who identify with having feminine attributes - hear feminine language about God for the first time, they may feel empowered, surprised or a variety of other emotions. Since God is beyond gender and the ways we understand gender, it is important that we allow space for these emotions to surface.

Since Wisdom is treated like a person in Proverbs, it may be challenging to distinguish between Wisdom's actions and God's actions. As you will learn, Proverbs 8:22-36 explains that God created Wisdom to communicate and function in specific ways and that her "presence" has existed since creation. In this way, Wisdom was an intentional part of God's design and one of the ways that God communicates with creation; Wisdom, in a sense, is the planned goodness of God's creation in ways that we can understand.

This may be a new way of exploring the nature of God for you. In studying Wisdom, you may begin to identify other ways that God takes initiative, either in Scripture or in your own life. Although this session focuses only on Proverbs 8, you may look for the presence of Wisdom in other biblical stories so you can create a broader picture of Wisdom and the way God communicates through her.

In this session, you are invited to explore the actions and nature of God's wisdom. As you participate in worship together, you will have the opportunity to begin to identify "wisdom moments" or experiences in your life.

## Session 2: Images



<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=images+of+wisdom+of+god&qpv=images+of+wisdom+of+god>

The Dance of Creation: <http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=the+dance+of+creation+painting>



## Session 2: Worksheet

### Proverbs 8:1-21

1. Read Proverbs 8:1-5 and discuss the following questions.
  - i. What does it mean to you that God's wisdom calls out to people?
  - ii. What does Wisdom's role say about the character of God?
  - iii. Where does Wisdom stand when she calls? What do you think these locations represent?
2. Read verses 6-11.
  - i. What kinds of things does Wisdom want people to learn?
- ii. How is Wisdom described? List some of the phrases from the passage.
3. Wisdom describes herself in verses 12-21.
  - i. What are her important attributes?
  - ii. What does it mean for Wisdom to do these things?

Ancient Jews (and later, Christians) understood God's wisdom as a way God communicated with people. If God is invisible and immortal, how can mere humans know or understand God? For many, the answer was through God's wisdom. The idea that God spoke creation into being suggested that Wisdom was present at creation—and because of this, should be visible in creation. God's wisdom was also communicated in God's law—and later, in Jesus.

### Proverbs 8:22-31 These verses speak of Wisdom's relationship to God.

1. List the actions of God regarding wisdom.
  - i. When did these things happen?
  - ii. Wisdom was present when God did what things? [list]
2. What other words and phrases that describe Wisdom seem important?
  - i. Why does Wisdom's claim that she was brought forth before creation seem important to you?

## Session 2: Homework

Next week, we will discuss God as a nurturing parent; write a letter to someone who has been a mentor, a teacher, a source of God's wisdom in your life.



## God Who Loves, Nurtures and Parents

### Session 3: Introduction

The use of human language for naming God can evoke strong emotions. These names become deeply personal as our own identity and experiences in the human community are caught up in the interpretation of these names. When we consider new images and names for God, we must remember that our relationship with God is based on God’s unchanging nature; therefore, learning new images is about experiencing God’s sanctifying grace and invitation to discipleship.

Christian comedian Tim Hawkins offers a good example of familiar language for God in a short segment from his comedy DVD, *Full Range of Motion*. In this segment, Hawkins offers an exaggerated prayer that is often similar to what you may have heard in church that ends comically in a very fast-paced plea with God: “Just, just, Father, Father, Father, just FATHER!” At the end of this skit, the audience is laughing almost hysterically. What makes this skit so entertaining is that so many Christians identify with this way of communicating with God that we are often unaware of what it sounds like to outsiders. Whether Hawkins intended this or not, the segment speaks to the larger truth that our language becomes a part of us, and our perception of the world.

In a similar way, images and understandings of God have the potential to form us, even to the point that it becomes hard to separate God from a particular image or function that feels the most “true” for us. Part of growing in faith and being in relationship with each other means that we give space for others to voice their truths about God, even (especially) when they differ from our own. The exciting thing about making this space is that we lose nothing by providing it. In fact, when we expand our exposure to different understandings God and share our experiences, we learn more about each other without losing anything. In the beautiful diversity of humanity, we can affirm that we have different preferences for referring to God without feeling our own convictions are threatened.

The Scripture in this session’s Bible study may evoke many emotions as we explore God as parent. You may be more comfortable or familiar with thinking or hearing of God as father, or perhaps you understand and relate to God more as mother. This may be the first time you have had the chance to explore feminine language about God, specifically God as mother, or in the mothering roles of Isaiah. Regardless of how you identify or describe your primary language about God, there are many passages to inspire and guide you.

It is also important to remember that, as with any metaphor or image, seeing God as parent may be painful for some, while liberating others. For example, someone who was abused by their father as a child may not find it comforting to view God as father, but find it comforting to experience God as a mother. A person whose mother abandoned their family might not resonate with the idea of God as mother, but find the image of God as father supportive. Likewise, seeing God primarily as a parent may also feel limiting or difficult for a woman unable to bear children or for a man who longs to be a father but has not had the opportunity.

In addition to viewing God as Mother or Father, some indigenous traditions understand God as Grandfather or Grandmother. Still others include gender-ambiguous names or expressions of God.

The good news for all of us is that we are all made in the diverse, transcendent image of God. As we study and relate to God as father or mother — or in other roles that we find are true to God’s relationship with us — we are empowered to see our actions and the way we care and provide for others as a way we claim God’s nature within us as people of God.

In this session, you will have the chance to explore Scripture that relates to God as mother and father. It may be meaningful to explore a passage with a term that is less familiar or comfortable for you. As you explore these passages, you are invited to allow them to shape your understanding of God. In worship, you may choose to name any significant experiences that relate to how you understand God as parent.

In this session, you will have the chance to explore Scripture that relates to God as mother and father. It may be meaningful to explore a passage with a term that is less familiar or comfortable for you. As you explore these passages, you are invited to allow them to shape your understanding of God. In worship, you may choose to name any significant experiences that relate to how you understand God as parent.

## Session 3: Images



## Session 3: Worksheet

1. Answer the following questions for your assigned verse:  
 Restate the imagery in your own words.  
 What does the image suggest about God's relationship to humankind?  
*Isaiah 49:15*  
*Isaiah 66:13*  
*Isaiah 42:14-17*  
*Psalms 103:13*  
*Deuteronomy 32:6*  
*Galatians 4:6-7*
2. Some images from scripture are specifically gendered male or female. Others are not. Read the following passages together and discuss whether you think the action described is that of a mother, father or both.  
*Deuteronomy 8:4-6*  
*Hosea 11:1-4*  
*Deuteronomy 32:18*
3. Is God as mother or father an important image for you personally? If so, what elements of parenting do you find most important to your idea of God?

## Session 3: Homework

Take a brief moment every night during the week to write the ways in which God has nurtured and cared for you that day. When you finish writing, read this as a prayer and conclude with the prayer that Jesus taught, adapting the address every night... Our Father, Mother, Creator, Source of Life, Beloved...who art in heaven, holy is your name...

## God of All Creation

### Session 4: Introduction

The Hebrew Scriptures are filled with many creative ways of expressing joy, wonder and thanksgiving as how God's people experienced God's presence in their lives on a regular basis.

Images from the Book of Psalms (such as rock and light) are heard in many churches and used in prayer. The distinctions that naturally exist in creation teach us that there are many ways we as humans can relate to the world around us. The biblical story reminds us that we can recognize all of creation as an expression of God's relationship to us through symbols that hold meaning for us and shape our understanding of God.

These images may come as a welcome relief for people who experience their spirituality or find an attitude of worship more easily in nature than in church pews. Because creation enlightens our senses and returns us to our place in the universe, using creation images to understand God is somewhat innate to who we are as humans.

Traditional Native American Sweat Lodge Ceremonies are a powerful example of encountering and understanding God through creation. A sweat lodge is a short, dome-shaped structure made out of branches and covered with blankets to create a concealed space. Large stones are slowly heated over several hours in the sacred fire (usually located in front of the lodge) and brought in one by one into a hole dug into the center of the lodge. These stones are often referred to and welcomed with the title "Grandfather" because they represent the earth's wisdom. The host of the sweat lodge leads the participants in a time of prayer and often shares words of wisdom as songs are sung in a round. As the stones are brought in with each round, the keeper of the lodge pours water over the scalding stones and steam rises up to heat the lodge. Because the blankets conceal all the light, the glowing rocks are the only objects participants can see.

As the heat intensifies, participants to lower themselves as close to the ground as possible and find some relief in the coolness of the earth. Close to the ground, the strong scent of soil mixes with the smell of sage, which signifies cleansing and blessing in the Native American tradition. Some sweat lodge hosts give participants pieces of tobacco to toss onto the steaming rocks as physical symbols of their hopes and prayers. Women are sometimes offered pieces of lavender to bring freshness and "new life" to the ceremony. As more rocks are brought in and the steam increases, the sound of the herbs sizzling on the rocks, the scents of the soil, sage, tobacco and lavender mix together and become wrapped up in the songs and prayers of the ceremony. In the act of being uncomfortable in intense heat, participants are reminded of their own limitations, their dependence on God for life and their responsibility to all of creation. The Sweat Lodge Ceremony reminds us that prayers come in many forms and can even be embodied with physical elements.

In this session, some of the passages express a clear, direct understanding of God through an inanimate object. Still, others use similes, employing "like" or "as." Both patterns express God's relationship in creative ways, but your response to the style of each passage may be distinct. For example, Psalm 62:2 states "He (God) alone is my rock." You may decide to give thought to the ways God has the qualities of a rock (strong, unmovable, etc.). In contrast, Deuteronomy 32:11 uses a simile: "As an eagle stirs up its nest...". In both passages, you are invited to explore how God's relationship is expressed but some expressions may be more meaningful for you than others.

Although there are other strong images and symbols in the Christian Scriptures that relate to discipleship and how humanity experiences God, these images from the Hebrew Scriptures can teach us about our own stories. Each of these images has timeless truth and simultaneously come from very particular passages. Therefore they might have been understood by their original readers in a way which is quite foreign to readers today. Since we are people who

bring our own experiences and realities of God, we can explore these images and metaphors as a way of discerning more clearly what the Scripture teaches about the Creator.

In this session, you are invited to use your imagination to express your relationship with God and to experience the ways God relates to humanity in new or different ways. You are also invited to be aware of the physical ways you experience God through creation.

### Session 4: Images



<http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/staffhome/ankelly/Farid/From%20Within%20Creation.jpg>



Rock fountain at the Mount of Olives in Israel (Aida Fernandez).  
God, the “fountain of living water.”



Horses at the Outer Banks beach under rainy day. (Aida Fernandez)

### Session 4: Worksheets

#### God of All Creation

- |    |  |    |  |    |   |
|----|--|----|--|----|---|
| 1. | Rock:<br><i>2 Sam 22:2-3</i><br><i>Psalms 62:1-2</i> | 2. | Eagle:<br><i>Deut 32:11-13</i><br><i>Exod 19:3-4</i> | 4. | Light:<br><i>Ps 27:1-3</i><br><i>Isa 60:19-20</i> |
|    |  | 3. | Lion, Bear<br><i>Hosea 13:4-8</i>                    | 5. | Fountain:<br><i>Jeremiah 2:11-13</i>              |

### Session 4: Homework

Write a brief prayer about how you have been touched by the reflections and personal stories shared during these past four weeks. If you wish to bring your prayer to the next session, you will have the opportunity to share it during closing communion.

## Knowing the Unknowable

### Session 5: Introduction

The names of people and places we find throughout Scripture are very significant, and often relate to the story of an important event, a birth or the hope a child would bring. This is especially true for humans. For example, the biblical patriarch Abram meant “exalted father” (Genesis 11) and Abram became Abraham – father of a multitude — after receiving God’s promise to be a father to many nations (Genesis 17). Isaac – the son of Abraham and Sarah – was born to Sarah when she was 91 years old. Isaac means “laughter,” to remember the disbelief and joyful surprise Sarah felt when she was told she would give birth (Genesis 21). Luke 16:19–31 tells the story of the poor man Lazarus who finally finds peace and provision with God; Lazarus means “God has helped.”

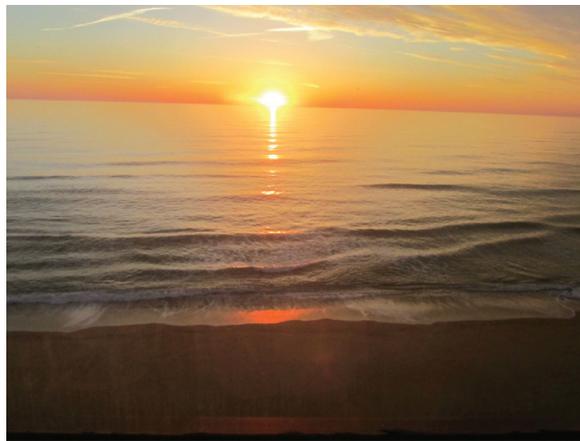
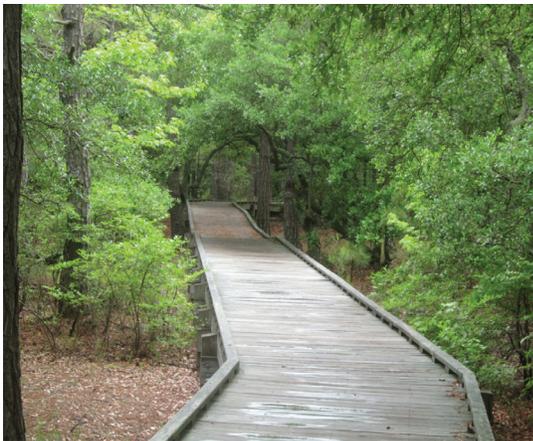
The scripture in Exodus 3 that you will encounter in this section is one the most famous and profound passages of naming: the story of Moses and the burning bush. This story continues to speak in powerful ways across generations. How many times have we wanted to clearly know God’s presence with us and hear God speak? Of course, we have no way of knowing what Moses might have wanted to hear if he had known he would encounter God in such a dramatic way. Would Moses want more clarity? Would he want a specific, definitive explanation of how to describe God? Moses was simply told “I am who I am.” What are we to do with this?

As you will see when you explore this passage from Exodus, the way that the word “Lord” can be translated relates well to how we continue to evolve in our understanding of the nature of God by using different expressions and images for God.

Could it be that God is offering us a genuine invitation to express how we understand God in new ways? It may be that, as disciples, it is not up to us to define God definitively with one or two images. We may never be able to find the perfect metaphor or the one clear symbol that we can all understand. If God is, as God suggests in Exodus, we have an open invitation to be and experience all of God in all of creation!

In this session, you will be invited to consider the significance of how God describes God’s self in Exodus and what this says about God, then reflect on the images you have explored in this study and imagine together what these biblical expressions about God can teach others in your life.

### Session 5: Images





## Session 5: Worksheet

Read Exodus 3:13-15.

1. In this story, God discloses God's name to Moses: I AM WHO I AM. This seems like an unusual name. What do you think it suggests for this to function as God's name? What does it say to you about the nature of God?
2. The Hebrew word that is translated can also mean "I am what I am" and "I will be what I will be." How do these multiple meanings affect the way you think about God's name? What does it mean to have a name with more than one meaning?
3. The name of God appears many times in the Old Testament but is usually replaced in the English translation word LORD (using small capital letters). (Exodus 3:16 and 18 are examples of this.) Open to any other page in the book of Exodus and look for the word LORD. Does it change anything to think that the Hebrew word used in these instances is the name of God: I AM WHO I AM? Given the historical uses of the word "LORD" is it helpful or harmful as an image for God?

## Session 5: Closing Worship

### KNOWING THE UNKNOWNABLE

God of the Bible, God in the Gospel, hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,  
 You are our center, daylight or darkness, freedom or prison, you are our home.  
 Hope we must carry, shining and certain, through all our turmoil, terror and loss,  
 Bonding us gladly, one to the other, till our world changes, facing the cross.

- "God of the Bible" by Shirley Erena Murray, verse 1 and 5

#### Gathering

*The Peace of God be with you*

**Centering**                      A Statement of Faith of the United Church of Canada                      **UMH # 883**

**Hymn**                              "The Care the Eagle Gives Her Young"                                      **UMH # 118**

**Bible Study**                      Knowing the Unknowable

#### Communion

**Creed and Confession**                      The World Methodist Social Affirmation                                      **UMH # 886**

#### The Modern Great Thanksgiving

**Closing Hymn**                      "As We Go"                                      **Worship & Song # 3183**

#### Sending Forth

Major crossroads,  
 Sharp turns,  
 Unexpected detours ... Don't panic, think  
 New vision has birthed  
 Deep well of imagination  
 Nascence of ideas...  
 Don't be anxious, greet  
 Possibilities lead you home  
 to the essence of God!