



A Song to Sing

Why Do You Choose This Faith?

The two previous conversations were designed to lead towards the question that sits at the heart of not only our time together today, but perhaps too of our celebration of the Advent season. Indeed, parts of the previous conversations in this group have already addressed part of this question. That said, rather than asking how you identify yourself, this conversation seeks to help us unmask why being in a Christian community is so important to us, and why we continuously choose to be a part of one.

Tone Setter: Map Making

Flip to the last page of this packet. During the next 5 minutes, think about your faith journey. If you drew it, what would look like? Think about the peaks and valleys. Or, the diversions and rerouting. Can you pinpoint a moment where you chose the Christian faith?

Discussion Questions:

- **Why do you choose this faith?**
- What distinguishes Christianity from other traditions?
- How do those distinguishing factors support or challenge your journey?
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Ways to Engage

Every participant should feel as though they have an open invitation to participate in this journey, regardless of the format they choose. The below are a handful of practices that may be helpful for the group or paired discussion.

Safe: We will do our part to create and sustain a space where everyone can be open and honest about their responses to this conversation.

"I" Statements: Although we are taking this journey together, our experiences are ours alone. We want to hear your thoughts and reactions. To this end, try to use "I" statements, rather than "them," "they," or "the church."

Listen: Listen to the conversation with the intent to understand, rather than the intent to respond or immediately speak next.

Step Up, Step Back: Be mindful of how often you speak. If you notice that you're speaking a lot more than other participants, think about "stepping back" and allowing others to engage in the conversation. If on Zoom, you may also use the chat function to participate in the conversation.



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Below are four "meanings of faith" presented by theologian Marcus Borg in his book, *The Heart of Christianity*. These four meanings may be helpful as you think about your understanding of "faith."

Assensus/Assent

This is faith as belief.

I believe x therefore, I am x.

Faith by assent has taken a connotation of believing "even when you have reasons to think otherwise."

Visio/Vision

This is faith as a way of seeing.

In its most true expression, this is seeing reality as gracious.

Visio & Fiducia pair well together.

Fiducia/Trust

This is faith as trust in God.

It can be understood as a sense of faith without anxiety or worry.

Fidelitas/Fidelity

This is faith as faithfulness, loyalty, or allegiance. More pointedly, it is a deep sense of commitment to and centering in God.



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Why Do You Choose This Faith?

Use the space below to draw or describe your faith journey. There's not a correct way to illustrate your journey. But it may be helpful to think about times in your life where you've experienced a clear sense of faith or anxiety and doubt. It may also be helpful to think about any particular experiences or practices that been significant in your understanding of your faith.

