

Lenten Study 2019

Exploring Faith



Workshop #4

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Open with short prayer *filai 'a Uhi gYh jgdUhf'cf'rai f'ckbt*

*Mti 'a UhiUgcUg YUWdMfgbhcVbhfjM hYtcH YdUhf Vhgjhj['ai h'ai X]b UkcfX'cf'ga d'Ys
d'fUgk\Uhf Yf'h YhUfYhUb_z `zcf\Uj YAbWfBgUbi hcf\Uj Y'adNgZf's*

Loving God, in this time together, we ask that you help us to explore what it means to express our faith and to see our journeys with fresh eyes. Where there are easy answers, grant us questions. Where there are tired stories, grant us imagination. Where there is sinful certainty, grant us holy doubt. Help us listen for you and listen to one another, that we may expand our souls and deepen our understanding, and that we might find rest in you. Amen.

Icebreaker/Open-Ended Questions (5/10 minutes)

*5`ck hja YZcf YUWdUhfjMUbhc'fYgcbX'=ZUMj]hUcfgk jg hc`YUXhY[fa d]bU[i]Xxs
VfYh.jb['a Y]hUjcbzh.jg]g]cb'a UhWg'cfh'vXhcU`ck hja Y's*

When you hear the phrase “Holy Spirit,” what comes to mind?

What is your earliest memory or first experience with the Holy Spirit?

Review Small Group Practices (5-10 Minutes)

*9UWdMfgbVbHU_Yhi flogjYUX]b[h Ya Uai X"8cYgY YfndBYU[fYtckcf_k]h h Yg'dfUMj]Mgs
5bnhcUXX3s*

S

Guided Breathing/Centering Meditation (Optional, 5-7 minutes)

~~bj jUjcb~~ In both the Hebrew Bible and Christian theology, the Holy Spirit has been closely associated with the breath (drawing from the Hebrew *fi UW*, “breath”). Drawing attention back to our breath can also become a way of drawing our attention to the movement of the Holy Spirit in scripture and in our lives.

Possible models for this activity: 5-minute breathing meditation at mindful.org.

s

8]gMg]cb f]gVXi `YdMfa j]j]b[What feelings/images arose for you during this exercise?

Scripture and Discussion -- 20 minutes

Have one or more participants read the passages aloud.

Allow a minute of silence afterwards to consider the text before discussion

Luke 3:15-16, 21-22: 5gH YdNcdYk YfYZ`YXk]H Yi dMMU]cbzUbXU` k YfYei Yg]db]b[]bH Y]fs
\YUfhgMbMfb]b[>cbzk \YH Yf\Ya]\hMYH YA YggUz>cbUbkg YfXU` czH Ya Vhg]h]b[žs
=Vub]hYrai k]H k UYf/M hcbYk \c]ga cfYdbk YfZ `hUb =]gMb]b[/ =Ua bchk cfAnites
i bh]YH YH db[`cZ \ggubXUg` < Yk]` Vub]hYrai k]H hY < c`nG]f]h]ubXZ]fY s

S

Bck k \YbU` h YdNcdYk YfYUub]h]XzUbXk \Yb >Yj gUg: \UXVYb Vub]h]XUbXk Ug]dU]b]b[žs
hY \YUj Ybk Ug]dMbYzUbXhY < c`nG]f]h]XgMbXxi dbb \]a]b VbX]nZca `LYUXg Y`5bXs
Uj c]MMa YZca \YUj Ybz Mti UYanibz h Y6Yg YXk]H rai `=Ua kY`dYUgX" s

Acts 2:1-8: K \YbH YXUhcZD]b]h]h] \UXVb] YZ h Yhk YfYU` h c] YH Yf]bcbYdUW`5bX`g XXb`ns
Zca \YUj YbH YfYMa YUgi bX`]YH Yfi g `czUj]c`Ybkh]bXzUbX]h]`YXh Yb]h]fY`ai g]s
k \YfYH Yhk YfYg]h]b["8]]X]h]b]i Yg]Ujcz]f]zUbbMfYXUa db[h Ya zUbXU]h]b]i YfYg]Xs
cbYUWczH Ya "5` czH Ya k YfYZ`YXk]H hY < c`nG]f]h]ubXV]Ub]h]g]MU_]b]h]Yfs
`Ub]i U]Yg]Ug]h]Yg]f]h]]Y YH Ya U]]h]s

S

Bck h YfYk YfYX] ai h>Yk gZca Y] Yf]b]h]b]i bXf \YUj Yb `]]b[]b >Yfi g]Ya "5bXU]h]]g
gi bXh YV]k X[U]h YfXUbXk Ug]V]k]XfYzVMM g]YUWcbY \YUfXh Ya g]MU_]b[]b h Ys
b]h] YUb]i U] YczYUW`5a U]XUbXU]h]b]g YzH Yh]g Yz 5fYbchU` h Yg]k \cU]s
g]MU_]b[; U]YUbg]5bX \dk]g]h]h]U]k Y \YUfZUWcZi g]b]ai fdk b]b]h] YUb]i U]Y3

Discussion

Gca YdMcdYa [[\hifYgbbXWHM]ZH YmUj Yhja Ylck f]Yh.Y]f Ubgk YfgZfghUbXh Yb [J] Yj YfUs
fYgbbg]g' 5 ``ck hja YZcf k f]h]b[cf h.]b _]b[UMi hifYgbbg]gei]hrt's

1. What phrases or images in these passages jumped out at you? Why?
2. Have you ever seen or heard the Holy Spirit depicted as a dove? What memories or questions does this depiction of the Holy Spirit evoke in you?
3. What do you think it means to be “baptized” in the Holy Spirit?

4. Have you heard this story of the Pentecost in your own life? How has it shaped (or not shaped) your image of the Holy Spirit?

5. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit helps us hear God “in our own native language?”

S

S

S

Some Expressions of the Holy Spirit

“Did you know the word ‘conspire’ means to breathe together? Take a breath. Now blow it out again. There! You have just launched a conspiracy. You can hear the word “spirit” in there too – to conspire – to be filled with the same spirit, to be enlivened by the same wind... What happens between us when we come together to worship God is that the Holy Spirit swoops in and out among us, knitting us together through the songs we sing, the prayers we pray, the breaths we breathe...” -Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor, Author



; fY_CfAxd =Ab 8YVJp[8YVbhzAY< cncGf]rb 5dghYubXA UfuhDvMtgjs

“I love the Holy Spirit. She is like the wild child of the Trinity, anywhere and everywhere moving, calling forth, and stirring things up.” -Dr. Zaida Maldonado Pérez, Latina Liberation Theologian

“The Holy Spirit is the kind of energy that helps you to be compassionate, to be healed of your ill being...In Buddhist circles, we say very much the same thing to describe mindfulness. To us, mindfulness is the energy that can help us to be there, in the here and the now. Mindfulness helps us to be alive, and since we are there, we are capable of touching life deeply, of understanding, of accepting, of loving. If we continue to develop that energy of understanding and loving, then we will get the healing and transformation that we need. That is why the Holy Spirit is exactly what we call the energy of mindfulness.” -Thich Nhat Hanh, Zen Buddhist Monk



ግዛታዊ ልምድ ለሕይወት ማሳደግ ነው

“Come down, O Love divine,
 seek thou this soul of mine,
 and visit it with thine own ardor glowing;
 O Comforter, draw near,
 within my heart appear,
 and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.”
 -Bianco de Siena (14th Century)

Further questions for Discussion (time permitting)

Some of the traditional themes/images associated with the Holy Spirit include breath, fire, wisdom, wind, and a dove. Do any of these images stand out for you? Why?

The Holy Spirit is referred to with “he,” “she,” and gender-neutral pronouns in different parts of the Bible. What role does gender play in how you understand God and express your faith journey? Where does the Holy Spirit fit in?

The Holy Spirit seems to astonish and surprise us every time she shows up. When was the last time you were surprised by your faith?

Concluding Time

Use this free time to reflect, journal, doodle, sing, etc. in response to today’s discussion and questions. How would **ni** express your faith in the Holy Spirit?

Take Home Questions

How has your understanding of the Holy Spirit changed along your faith journey? How has it stayed the same?

How does your expression of the Holy Spirit compare with your expression of God and Jesus?

Close in Prayer *fi'ni 'a Unig'ni'gd'Unif'f'ni f'ck'bl'*

Loving God, we have come together to explore our faith and to draw closer to you. Bless us in our Lenten journeys, and help us find time for soulful moments in our week. Remind us of your presence, we pray, that we may sense your constant place in our lives. Turn our eyes and hearts toward the kind of world you imagine. In gratitude, we say, Amen.

