

GOD IS LOVE

Knowing God through Uncertainty

Whether you are joining for the first time or you have been in a Connection to Christ small group for a while, welcome! We find ourselves in the midst of many challenges today. COVID-19 has affected us in a variety of ways, causing fear, anxiety, depression, loss, and uncertainty about the future. Recent events have made us acutely aware of the profound effect racism still has on our culture. As the upcoming elections approach, disunity, anger, and lack of charity abound. We might wonder where God is in the midst of all of this and what we can possibly do to make a difference.

Through our Fall Series, God is Love: Knowing God through Uncertainty, we will look at many of today's challenges and explore how God—who is Love—helps us experience hope and peace, enables us to walk in faith and trust, and equips us to “be” love to others. We hope and pray that this Fall Series helps you grow in your Connection to Christ, now in this time of uncertainty and always.

Gather:

Father in Heaven, throughout history you have filled your people with your Holy Spirit, equipping them to face challenges and uncertainties of their times. As we face the anxieties of our times, help us lay them at your feet. Pour out upon us your Spirit, that we may become witnesses of your Divine Love. Remind us, Father, that we are “in the world but not of the world.” We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1. What challenges, changes, losses, and blessings have you experienced during the pandemic?
2. For you personally, where is God or faith in all of this?

Watch:

Julie Colman welcomes us and Deacon Chris Hulburt talks about God's love.



Discuss:

1. Why do you think people sometimes struggle with the statement, “God is love”?
2. Is it easy or difficult for you to accept that you are a beloved child of God?
3. What do you think it means that we are made in the image of God?



Mark 1:9-11

9 It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. **10** On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. **11** And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Explore:

1. Why do you think Jesus underwent baptism by John?
2. Why do you think the Holy Spirit was manifest in bodily form?
3. What is the purpose of the crowd hearing a physical voice proclaiming Jesus to be God's beloved son? Why is the voice "well pleased" with Jesus?
4. What would your life look like if you truly believed that you are the beloved child with whom God is well pleased? How might your relationships change? How might your view of the world differ? How might your view of yourself be different?
5. This occurs in the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry. What does this tell us about the necessity of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our mission? How have you experienced the Holy Spirit?

You are My
beloved Son
[Daughter]:
with You I am
well pleased.

Mark 1:11

Weekly Challenge:

Do one or more of the following:

- Reflect on and memorize Mark 1:11.
- Find an image of God that speaks to you: maybe it's on a prayer card or is a piece of art. Looking for ideas? Click [here](#).

Prayer:

Father, we thank you for being love. Help us to understand, accept, and embrace our identity as your beloved children, today and always. Amen.

Go Deeper:

Additional Bible passages about God is Love:

- John 3:16
- Romans 8:31-39
- Genesis 1:26-27
- 1 John 4:7-19
- Isaiah 43:1-2, 4

Songs:

- "[Belovedness](#)" by Sarah Kroger
- "[How He Loves Us](#)" by David Crowder

Reflection Exercise:

"[Sense-Making](#)" by [Becky Eldredge](#) and [Stephanie Clouatre Davis](#)

Video:

"[Reminder: God Loves You](#)" by Fr. Mike Schmitz (6:31 min)

Book:

[Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World](#) by Henri J. M. Nouwen