

# Belong

Where do you feel like you really belong and can be yourself? .....

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## Faith Share:

Who shared with us today? .....

What did I learn? What inspired me? What questions do I have? .....

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# Become

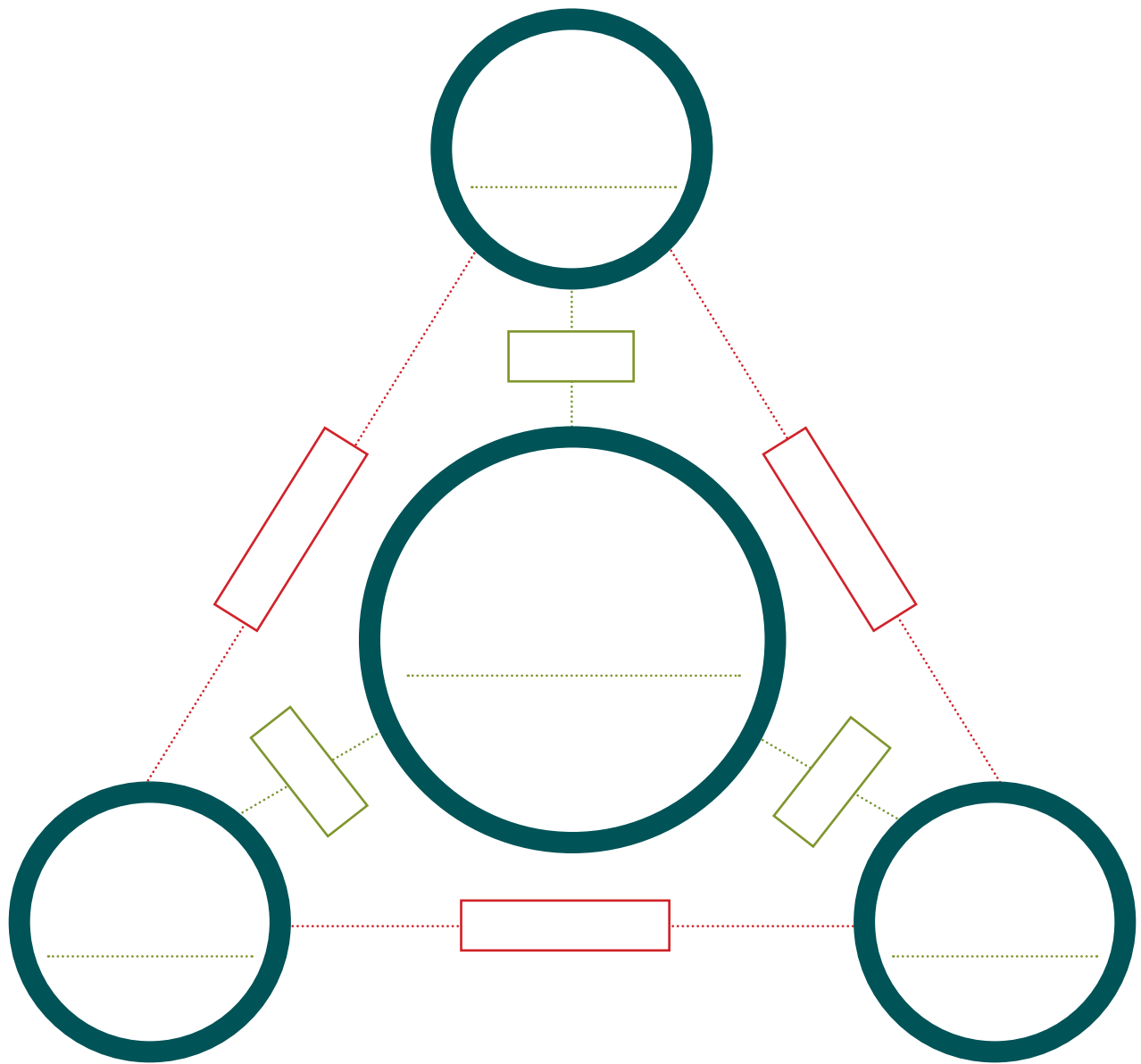
## Who is God?

“United Methodists profess the historic Christian faith in God, incarnate in Jesus Christ for our salvation and ever at work in human history in the Holy Spirit.”<sup>1</sup> In a sermon about the Trinity, John Wesley said about the God the Creator, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, “These three are one.”<sup>1</sup>

## John Wesley

We will hear about John Wesley often in confirmation. John Wesley (1703-1791) is an important guy for Methodists. He was an ordained minister in the Church of England and a leader of a revival movement called Methodism. Wesley helped to bring Methodism from England to America when our country was just forming, and he wrote a lot of sermons and journals that have shaped what we believe about God and how we practice our faith.

<sup>1</sup> *United Methodist Beliefs, A Brief Introduction* by William H. Willimon



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Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. -Deuteronomy 6:4-5

### Scripture to read

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Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Matthew 22:34-40

# The Trinity

We believe in one God (which is called monotheism) in three parts (which we call the Trinity).

“In saying “these three are one,” we are trying to talk about the complex biblical testimony that:

- 1) God is the all-powerful Creator who is above and beyond us and our notions, *and yet*
- 2) Jesus, who lived among us, died and was raised by God, is also God; *moreover,*
- 3) the Holy Spirit, poured out on the church as a personally powerful, palpably near presence among us is also God, *and yet*
- 4) **God is one.**”<sup>1</sup>

Confused? Don't worry, its a mystery! We don't have to fully understand, and it is God's grace that allows us to believe. Even in our belief, we might have questions, doubts, or fears. “If we are able to say, ‘I believe’ that is a gift of God, something that God works in you, a result of what God, as father, son, and Holy Spirit does among us, not our intellectual achievement.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *United Methodist Beliefs, A Brief Introduction* by William H. Willimon

## Scripture to read

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**GOD THE CREATOR** | the all-powerful Creator who is above and beyond us and our notions

*God who Creates:* Genesis 1-3

*God of covenant promise:* Genesis 17:7-8

*God who delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt:* Exodus 6:7

*The Father to whom Jesus teaches us to pray:* Matthew 6:9-13

**JESUS** | who lived among us, died for us, and was raised by God

*The Son God sent because God so loved the world:* John 3:16

*Emmanuel, God with us:* Matthew 1:18-23

*Incarnation; God put on skin and lived among us, full of grace and truth:* John 1:14

*The teacher, through whom we know God:* John 14:6-13

*The resurrection and the life:* John 11:25-26

*The crucified Lord:* Matthew 27:27-44; Mark 15:16-32; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:16-27

*The Risen Christ:* Matthew 28:1-10, Luke 24, John 20

**HOLY SPIRIT** | poured out on the church as a personally powerful, palpably near presence among us

*The Companion who reminds us what Jesus taught us:* John 14:26

*Poured out on the church at Pentecost:* Acts 2:1-4

*The Giver of Spiritual Gifts:* Galatians 5:22-23

# Spiritual Practice: Prayer Walking

## What is prayer?

For John Wesley, prayer was the main way for us to strengthen our relationship with God and with other people. It is how we draw close to God. Sometimes we might think of prayer as something we do with her eyes closed and our heads bowed. That is one way to pray, but it is not the only way. Through our exploration of spiritual practices, we will learn a variety of ways different people have approached prayer, and hopefully experience prayer in new ways.

## Prayer Walking

Simply walking outside can be a spiritual practice when we engage God and creation through our imagination and senses. God wants to share with us and show us love even more than we think to look for God or ask for what we need.

“Take a break. Look at the clouds. Listen to the wind.  
Let the birds do the heavy lifting.”<sup>2</sup>

## Scripture to read

Matthew 6:25-34

## Practice

Go for a walk in nature and notice creation with your senses. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you feel? What do you smell? If you are anxious or worried, slow down to look at the birds; notice the lilies. In creation, pay attention for how God might be speaking to you.

## Reflect:

How was this spiritual practice for you? .....

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<sup>2</sup>Vitamin N: The Essential Guide to a Nature-Rich Life by Richard Lou.

*Prayer is not just another thing on our to-do list, but a way that we experience God's grace in the coming and going of our daily lives.*

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Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? *-Matthew 6:26*

# Bless

How were you a blessing this week? .....

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How were you blessed? .....

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