

Week Nine: God Is Like ...



Scripture Text: Deuteronomy 32:4, 10-12, 18

Focus Statement

The Bible gives us many images of God. God is seen as a strong, faithful rock, as an eagle hovering over its nest, and as a mother hen gathering her brood of chicks.

Song Suggestions

HWB 41	<i>Come, Thou Almighty King</i>	STJ 1	<i>We Sing to You, O God</i>
HWB 77	<i>God of Many Names</i>	STJ 19	<i>I Will Call upon the Lord</i>
HWB 165	<i>A Mighty Fortress Is Our God</i>	STJ 28	<i>We Worship God the Rock</i>
HWB 482	<i>Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth</i>	STJ 118	<i>Thy Holy Wings</i>
HWB 590	<i>The Care the Eagle Gives Her Young</i>	STS 2	<i>Maranatha Come</i>

GATHERING

Call to Worship

Leader: God our rock,
Side 1: who has stood with us through the realities of life this week,
ALL: stand with us now,
Side 2: that we may let go of fear that hinders us
from exploring the many images of you in Scripture.
ALL: In the name of Jesus—restorer, healer, all-encompassing Holy One—Amen.

Theme Psalm

PRAYING

Prayer of Confession

STS 150

Leader: Jesus, you are the Great Questioner.
Side 1: Keep our questions alive,
that we may always be seekers rather than settlers.
Side 2: Guard us well from the sin of settling in
with our answers hugged to our breasts.
ALL: Make of us a wondering, farsighted, questioning, restless people.
Give us the feet of pilgrims on this journey unfinished. Amen.

Prayers of the People

(Option: use the gestures of “cupping hands, lifting, releasing”)

Holy and healing God, we come before you this morning with thankfulness for all you have done for us this week:

for walking with us when we were scared,
 for phone calls from friends when we felt lonely,
 for good food and the promise of spring.
 Thank you for the church, for this building where we can gather to worship,
 for these people with whom we can worship.
 Most of all we thank you for Jesus Christ
 and for the love that carries us from day to day.
 We take a moment to pray for those sitting around us—in front, behind, beside us.
(pause)
 We bring before you our prayers for ourselves and those we love.
(extemporaneous prayer)
 We bring before you our prayers for our neighbors and communities where we live.
(extemporaneous prayer)
 We bring before you our prayers for our country and for our world.
(extemporaneous prayer)
 We come before you as a church, as a people, as a community
 and gather all our prayers together to pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:
 Our Father . . .

LISTENING

Children's Worship

Sermon Seeds

Explore the image of God as a rock. God is also portrayed as a mother bear. How can we set all the different images together into one being? How does using images in nature hinder or help us understand God? What are the metaphors your congregation typically uses to describe God? What new metaphors would help broaden your awareness or perception of who God is? Which ones scare us? Why? This might be a good Sunday for an interactive sermon. Invite persons in the congregation to either look up verses that give different images of God and/or Jesus and speak them out, or one could hand out slips of paper with verses and invite people to come up and read them one by one to show the vastness of the images for God. What causes us to focus on one or two of them and ignore the rest?

RESPONDING

Benediction

Leader: Eternal Spirit,
 Life-Giver,
 Pain-Bearer,
 Love-Maker,
 Source of all that is
 and that shall be,
 Father and Mother
 of us all,
 Loving God,
 in whom is heaven:

ALL: *the hallowing of your name
 echo through the universe.
 The way of your justice
 be followed
 by the peoples of the world.*

*Your heavenly will be done
by all created beings.
Your commonwealth
of peace and freedom
sustain our hope
and come on earth. Amen.*

Week Ten: We Are Like ...



Scripture Text: Psalm 1; Ephesians 3:17; Psalm 23; 42:1-5

Focus Statement

The righteous are like trees that flourish; like plants rooted in God's love. We can be like sheep cared for by the Shepherd. We need God as a deer thirsts for water.

Song Suggestions

HWB 42 *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*

HWB 495 *O Let All Who Thirst*

HWB 511 *God, Who Touches Earth*

HWB 514 *Lord, I Am Fondly, Earnestly*

HWB 589 *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need*

STJ 49 *Rain Down*

STJ 54 *Longing for Light*

STJ 88 *Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona*
("Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises!")

STJ 114 *As Morning Breaks*

STS 116 *I Saw a Tree by the Riverside*

"Prayer of Agur" by Bryan Moyer Suderman
(*My Money Talks* CD)

GATHERING

Call to Worship

Leader: God of steadfast love and mercy,

Side 1: who knows us, calls us, and yet at times is silent,

ALL: *stand among us this morning
as we wrestle with this tension of your presence proclaimed
but not always experienced,*

Side 2: that we may know you more deeply,
love you more fully, and follow you more faithfully.

ALL: *In the faithful name of Jesus we pray. Amen.*

Theme Psalm

PRAYING

Prayer of Confession