



Week 1 Small Group: God is On the Move

OPENING PRAYER:

God, we are waiting for you. Guide our thoughts and prayers so they may increase our faith. When we are weary, give us strength; when we want to give up, help us to be resilient. Direct us in ways that we can care for each other. Give us courage to move out in faith. We trust in you. Amen.

The creation of the world did not take place once and for all time but takes place every day. Samuel Beckett

BREAKING THE ICE:

Discuss the different things you find amazing about creation.

Youth Connection: What have you seen that God has created (rainbows, flowers, pets)?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

Read: Genesis 1:1-8, 26-27 NRSV

- These scriptures paint a powerful picture of God's creating power. Share what stands out to you in this text.
- Think about the difference between the "formless void"/"darkness covering the face of the earth" and the creating work God does in verses 3-8 and 26-27. How does God's creating work make our lives possible?
- God created two people at the beginning because human beings are not meant to be alone. Like Adam and Eve, we are not created to be alone, but rather to thrive in community. How can we participate in God's work differently as a community than we can as individuals?

NEXT STEPS:

- God did not just create the world and then sit back and let it run, which means that God is still moving today! Where do you see God moving in your life, your community and the world?
- We are called to get on board with God's movement in the world. How can you participate in what God is doing?
- On day 6 of creation humanity was created in the image of God and tasked with "dominion," or in other words, stewardship over the earth. How are you being a faithful steward of creation?
- Creation was spoken into existence; how can we use our voice to bring new life into our communities?

CLOSING PRAYER:

God of creation, you swept over the darkness and gave us light. You spoke, and all of universe leapt into existence. You formed us in your image and directed us to be fruitful. We ask that you sweep over our darkness and shine your light. Give us a voice to speak words of love and life into world. Amen.



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Week 2 Small Group: Mountains Can Seem Like Obstacles

OPENING PRAYER:

God, we are waiting for you. Guide our thoughts and prayers so they may increase our faith. When we are weary, give us strength; when we want to give up, help us to be resilient. Direct us in ways that we can care for each other. Give us courage to move out in faith. We trust in you. Amen.

...new life starts in the dark. Whether it is a seed in the ground, a baby in the womb, or Jesus in the tomb, it starts in the dark. Barbara Brown Taylor

BREAKING THE ICE:

Briefly describe some characteristics of a mountain; what does it look like? What does it feel like? What are things in life that can seem like mountains?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

Read Genesis 12:1-9

- What was Abram's response to God's outrageous message? How do we respond when God tells us to do something that seems outlandish?
- Abraham was seventy-five and Sarah was beyond child-bearing age when God said to Abraham "to your offspring I will give this land" (v7). What does this say about God's ability to "move mountains"?

NEXT STEPS:

- What are the things that challenge us from stepping out?
- God prepares us for the journey. Who would come along and what would you bring with you?
- Think about some of the journeys that you have taken in your life; how has God shown up in those journeys?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Purposeful God, you set us on journeys and offer us new life. Help us to bring our faith in your promises as we set out. Remind us that sometimes we will face challenges, keep us faithful in following your lead. Amen.



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Week 3 Small Group: Mountains as Opportunities

OPENING PRAYER:

God, we are waiting for you. Guide our thoughts and prayers so they may increase our faith. When we are weary give us strength, when we want to give up help us to be resilient. Direct us in ways that we can care for each other. Give us courage to move out in faith. We trust in you. Amen.

The mountains themselves call us into greater stories. Donald Miller

BREAKING THE ICE:

Do you have a “go-to” person who you reach out to when times are hard? What makes that person special to you?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

Read Luke 1:39-45

- The people of Israel have waited for a messiah for a very long time. Both Mary and Elizabeth knew God’s promise. How did they faithfully respond to being part of God’s plan?
- We see this as an opportunity because we see the end result. However, each woman faced difficult consequences of their faithful decisions. What might be some of the challenges Mary and Elizabeth both faced?
- How can an encounter with the Holy Spirit move mountains?

NEXT STEPS:

- Both the Angel Gabriel and Elizabeth mention the power of the Holy Spirit. How has the Holy Spirit touched you?
- How do you make yourself open to God’s purposes?
- How do you offer support and encouragement to others?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Holy Spirit, we open ourselves to your work and will. Allow us to graciously say yes, even in the face of obstacles. Send us companions for the journey. Amen.



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Week 4 Small Group: You Move Mountains

OPENING PRAYER:

God, we are waiting for you. Guide our thoughts and prayers so they may increase our faith. When we are weary, give us strength; when we want to give up, help us to be resilient. Direct us in ways that we can care for each other. Give us courage to move out in faith. We trust in you. Amen.

You're off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way! Dr. Seuss

BREAKING THE ICE:

Have you ever run a race? What do (or would) you find the most difficult about running a marathon? Would you rather run a marathon or series of sprints? Why?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

Read: Hebrews 12:1-2

- Who is the great cloud of witnesses for the Hebrews' audience?
- What is meant by laying aside the "weight of sin"? How does this make a difference in running the race?
- What does the finish line look like?

NEXT STEPS:

- How will you join the movement of running with perseverance?
- What has the finish line looked like in your life? Will that change?
- As we close this series, let's consider our original passage, *He answered. "For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."* Mat 17:20 Do you have any new insights? How will your faith journey change?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Jesus, you have set before us a race to be run. We trust that you have given us the endurance to reach the finish line. Remind us to lean on your promises in times of challenge and support one another in our lives of faith. Amen.



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