

HOLY CURIOSITY

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DIVINE

TESTING GOD'S VOICE | Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell with Angela Aguilar

January 16, 2022

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

Share with your group about a time when you were "testing God's voice." What was that experience like for you? What impact did this "testing" have on your relationship with God?

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time.

And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." ' So Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'

1. How do you "hear" God's voice? How do you know it's God's?
2. What expectations do you place on yourself regarding your own spiritual life and practices?
3. What aspects of your prayer life give you joy? What aspects are a struggle for you?
4. Can you think of a time in your life where you heard God's voice or felt God's leading? What was the process like? What was the outcome?

Respond

What action or commitment did Charlene's and Angela's conversation inspire you to make?

Pray

Allow ample time to not only hear from one another how we can hold each other in our prayers during the coming week but also to pray together for God's grace to flow over each concern.

HOLY CURIOSITY

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DIVINE

LISTENING TO GOD | Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell

January 9, 2022

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

“Choosing to be curious is choosing to be vulnerable because it requires us to surrender to uncertainty. We have to ask questions, admit to not knowing, risk being told that we shouldn’t be asking, and, sometimes, make discoveries that lead to discomfort.” ~Brene Brown

Recall a recent time where you approached a situation or conversation with a posture of genuine curiosity. Was that a familiar or a less frequently practiced posture? When, and why, have you found yourself stifling curiosity?

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together 1 Kings 19:4-13

But Elijah went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: ‘It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.’ Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, ‘Get up and eat.’ He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, ‘Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you.’ He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food for forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’ He answered,

‘I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.’

He said, ‘Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.’ Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’

1. Read the section of the passage highlighted in bold, using the Lectio Divina prayer method. (See below).
2. How do you communicate / converse / talk with God?
3. What does the passage say about how God communicates with us?

The Movements of Lectio Divina:

Lectio: First Reading

Read the verses slowly twice and listen to God's Word, and in the words allow oneself to be drawn to a particular word or phrase that shimmers, grabs, leaps out at you, disturbs you, stirs, resonates with you....even if you do not know why. Be alert for it. Invite each person to share the word or phrase.

Meditatio: Second Reading

Read the text again, slowly twice, and let the word or phrase deepen within you, stirring you with images, feelings, memories, thoughts, and/or sensations perhaps which offer a deeper understanding of your lived experience and relationship with God, others, the world, and nature. The meaning will likely be different for different people. Invite each person to briefly share what was revealed.

Oratio: Final Reading

Read the text a third time slowly twice and invite everyone to listen for an invitation from your experience of prayer considering the word or phrase which leads you to a new awareness or action ...your response to God by expressing feelings, desires, changes in behavior...i.e. thanks, asking for help, surrendering, serving, etc. Again, invite each person to share briefly with the group, if one wishes to.

Close the prayer time in several moments of silent prayer:

And encourage each person to savor what God revealed and also pray silently for the others in the group.

Respond

What action or commitment did Charlene's message inspire you to make?

Pray

Allow ample time to not only hear from one another how we can hold each other in our prayers during the coming week but also to pray together for God's grace to flow over each concern.

HOLY CURIOSITY

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DIVINE

Community Group Covenant - Winter 2022

As we enter this new year together in community, we do so with the desire to grow in our understanding of Scripture and to pause before God to listen to and deepen our life with God and one another.

Values

We hold the following values as essential to our life together:

CURIOSITY | YES AND

We agree to be open to engaging others' perspectives through a posture of curiosity. "Yes And" allows us to be "both/and" rather than "either/or" and keeps us inclusive and compassionate toward everything. Our goal is to learn with and from each other.

ATTENTIVE LISTENING | TO ONE ANOTHER, AND TO GOD

We agree to respect and demonstrate loving care for one another by practicing attentive listening by paying full attention to the one speaking, without interruption, talking over others, and refraining from giving advice.

PARTICIPATION | ENGAGING WITH OTHERS

We agree to be mutual stewards of the life of our group, prioritizing our weekly gatherings and inviting every group members' participation, as they feel comfortable. We will be aware of group participation dynamics. If I am someone who tends to be a listener in group settings, I will consider leaning in to share my insights, perspectives, or questions. If I am someone who tends to talk a lot, I will consider practicing moderation to create space and time for others.

CARE | "OOPS" AND "OUCH"

We agree, in all of our conversations, to assume positive intent in others while also acknowledging potentially negative impact. Anyone can say "ouch" if hurt or offended to stop the process from continuing and explore what's happening and why. Anyone can say "oops" to acknowledge their assumptions and/or to respond to another's "ouch."

CONFIDENTIALITY | CREATING SAFE SPACE

We commit to hold in confidence the personal stories, concerns, and reflections, and requests for prayer shared in our community. Our bond of trust is essential to creating space for God's good work in each of us to take place.

Norms

We agree to meet on _____ (day of week) from _____ (am/pm) to _____ (am/pm)

We agree to discuss how our group can serve by

- Praying for our [Local](#) and [Global](#) Mission partners.
- Consider serving with our Mission Partners, check upcoming opportunities [here](#)