

Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



Series: Any Questions

What is the will of God? Why do bad things happen to good people? How can I face the future? Does prayer really work? Asking questions and having doubts is a normal part of the human experience. We do not have to be ashamed of our doubts or hide our questions before God. In fact, God fully welcomes them and welcomes us. It is even possible that we are closer to God when we are asking questions than when we think we have all the answers.

This Lent, join us as we bring some of our biggest questions and doubts to God. We will practice embracing this deeply human part of ourselves of asking, wondering, and wrestling in the mystery of faith as we move together toward the great and joyous hope of the Easter resurrection.

Message Description:

Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." We believe that the Bible is the divine Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit in its authorship and interpretation and holds everything necessary for our salvation. But the Bible is also very confusing. It was written in ancient languages and passed down throughout the generations that now comes with a long history of varied interpretation. It is hard to understand, it seems antiquated at times, and holds some confusing contradictions. Some say it is irrelevant. So, is the Bible reliable? How are we supposed to reconcile the violence and wrath of the Old Testament with the peacemaking message of Jesus? If the Bible it is not an instruction manual for Christianity, basic instructions before leaving earth (B.I.B.L.E.), a magic eight ball, or a textbook... then what is it? **Scripture is the story of God's love from creation to new creation, culminating in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.** It is the story of salvation, compiled over time, passed down, and told in different forms, genres, stories, literary devices, and languages. To read and interpret it today, we must approach it contextually, seriously, and through the heart of Jesus.

Key Scripture

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Questions based on this week's teaching:

1. How have you heard the Bible be described? Do you encounter many people who think it is irrelevant to their lives today? Why or why not?
2. What are your favorite ways to study scripture? What do you find difficult or intimidating about studying scripture?
3. Did you know that the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Old Testaments were different? What questions do you still have about the canon or how the Bible came to be in the form we see it today?
4. What would you like to learn more about when it comes to scripture? (Tell Rachel!)
5. Where do you desire to grow in your scripture study right now?

Guidelines for approaching Scripture:

1. **Read contextually, not literally.**
2. **Read seriously and expectantly.** *Set aside space to not be interrupted, pray for the Spirit's guidance, expect God to show up and move, and create safe space for healthy dialogue and discussion.*
3. **Read through the heart of Jesus.** *1 Corinthians 13-14:1, "So let love guide you."*
4. **Start reading!!**
 - a. Wesley Study Bible: <https://www.amazon.com/NRSV-Wesley-Study-Bible-Standard/dp/0687645034>
 - b. Bible Recap Podcast: <https://www.thebible Recap.com>
 - c. Lectio 365 App: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewiG1tHXtOqEAXVsokEHadHDmQQFnoECBMQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fapps.apple.com%2Fus%2Fapp%2Flectio-365%2Fid1483974820&usg=AOvVaw22dpR_3sZIDDIGbkf06icx&opi=89978449
 - d. The Bible for Normal People Podcast: <https://thebiblefornormalpeople.com>
 - e. Book study with Rachel on "How the Bible Actually Works" starting April 9/11!!! https://www.amazon.com/s?k=how+the+bible+actually+works&i=stripbooks&hvadid=580693270312&hvdev=c&hvlocphy=9052432&hvnetw=g&hvqmt=e&hvrnd=2067746732732784667&hvtargetid=kwd-525129601092&hydadcr=19711_13380244&tag=googhydr-20&ref=pd_sl_7np4mq75yo_e

Please be intentional about praying together!

Consider joining us as a house group for one of our Thursday nights of prayer and worship throughout Lent.

Starting February 1 at 7pm, the pastoral team will meet in the lower level at MUMC (enter building A their main sanctuary building) for an intentional time of prayer and worship as we seek God's presence and guidance in this season.

Let us not underestimate the power of our community coming together in an hour of need to pray!

Close in prayer:

Pray together. Create intentional time and space to offer prayers for one another, that we might share in the comfort of Christ together and experience the Spirit's presence.

Consider the simple acronym of ACTS to guide your time of prayer together:

- A- Adoration.** *Share praise reports or reasons to praise God. (Reading a psalm together can help)*
- C- Confession.** *Leave space to pray silently or individually to confess sins.*
- T- Thanksgiving.** *Share something in the group that you are thankful for this week.*
- S- Supplication, or petition.** *Share concerns and prayer requests you have.*