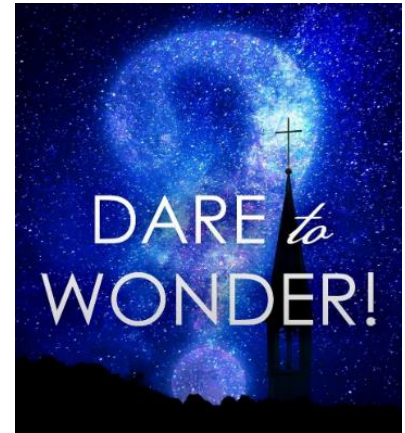


A Community as Wonder

Note: Be sure to leave time at the end for the application. You will need to provide everyone with a piece of paper to write down five names of people they commit to praying for until Christmas.

A Community as Wonder: Awe and wonder are profound emotional experiences that stir a deep sense of connection to something greater than ourselves. Awe is the overwhelming feeling of reverence and admiration in the face of something vast, powerful, or mysterious—often leaving us speechless or humbled. Wonder, on the other hand, is the spark of curiosity and fascination, the driving force behind exploration and creativity.

- Is there something you've experienced or learned recently that filled you with a sense of awe or wonder? (4 min. max)



Read John 1:43-51

The passage illustrates wonder through the way Nathanael encounters Jesus and is profoundly moved by His divine knowledge and promises.

Wonder at Jesus' Invitation (v. 43)

When Jesus invites Philip to follow Him with a simple "Follow me," Philip immediately follows, without hesitation, indicating that Jesus' invitation carries an inexplicable power. There is a sense of mystery and wonder in how people respond to His call.

In pairs, each chooses to answer one of the following question (5 minutes max):

- Share how you have responded to Jesus' invitation. This could be how you came to faith or a recent way you've followed His direction in your life.
- Can you identify a moment of mystery or wonder in your faith journey?

Wonder in Discovery, Wonder in Overcoming Scepticism (v. 45-46)

Philip, filled with excitement, tells Nathanael that he has found the one Moses and the prophets wrote about—Jesus of Nazareth. Nathanael initially reacts sceptically, saying, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" But instead of arguing, Philip simply says, "Come and see." Nathanael's scepticism is met not with logic or debate but with an invitation to witness something remarkable.

- Is your group a "Come and See" type of group? What can you do to change this? (spend no more than 5 minutes here)

Wonder at Jesus' Supernatural Knowledge and His Identity

The heart of Nathanael's wonder comes when Jesus says, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." Nathanael, astonished, asks, "How do you know me?" Jesus responds, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." Nathanael is amazed at Jesus' supernatural knowledge of him and so moved by this experience that he declares, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" The ultimate wonder is the realization of Jesus' true identity and majesty.

A Community as Wonder

Wonder is central to each step of Nathanael's journey, from scepticism to faith, as he encounters the depth of Jesus' knowledge, power, and promises.

Take a minute or two to prayerful and silently reflect on this question:

- Does wonder still fuel and guide your faith and service? If not, what might need to change? You may want to jot down some thoughts to reflect on later at home.



Before reading the next passage, make sure you have enough time (about 10 minutes) or, if needed, skip ahead to the application and prayer.

As you read **Colossians 1:3-14**, each one take note of one thing in the passage that stands out as particularly wonderful. After the reading, we'll share what we found meaningful

Listen to the responses (keep them short and sweet) and if needed add from the following list:

1. **The Wonder of the Gospel's Global Impact:** The gospel's power to bear fruit and transform lives worldwide is awe-inspiring (v. 3-6)
2. **The Wonder of God's Grace:** Understanding the depth of God's grace leads to amazement at His unmerited love and favour (v. 6)
3. **The Wonder of Spiritual Growth:** Believers continually grow in wisdom and godliness through the Spirit, which reveals God's ongoing work in their lives (v. 9-10)
4. **The Wonder of God's Empowering Strength:** God's mighty power strengthens believers for endurance and patience, evoking awe at His personal involvement in our lives (v. 11)
5. **The Wonder of Our Inheritance:** The inheritance of God's holy people, brought from darkness to light, inspires awe at His divine plan (v. 12)
6. **The Wonder of Redemption and Rescue:** The imagery of rescue from darkness and redemption through Christ fills believers with wonder at the greatness of God's love and saving work (v. 13-14)

Application

As we approach the Christmas season, there will be many opportunities to invite someone you know to one of our church events, such as Quiet Day, Carol Service, Christingle, Midnight Service, Crib Service, or one of our Advent Sunday Services.

Take a moment to make a list of five people you will be praying for until Christmas. Ask God to provide you with opportunities for conversation and invitations. Let's expect Him to do wonders!

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We come before You with a heart full of gratitude and wonder for the gift of Your Son, Jesus. We ask for Your guidance and strength as we seek to share our faith with those on our list. We ask for you Holy Spirit to prepare the hearts and lead our conversations. Please fill us with the confidence to speak boldly about the hope and love we have found in You. Thank You for the opportunities You are going to provide.