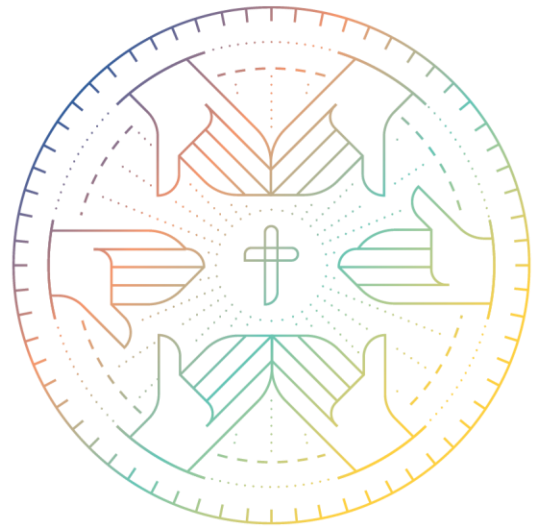


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

This week we continue our series *Even If*. As Elijah confronts the prophets of Baal facing incredible odds, we see God is trustworthy.

Don't forget to take attendance via the attendance reminder email.

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Who is the person you trust most in your life and why?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

This week we will be in 1 Kings 18:1-40. At the command of the Lord, Elijah reemerges on the scene to confront Ahab and the prophets of Baal displaying that we serve a God who not only hears us but also answers. In spite of the odds, God is still trustworthy.

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

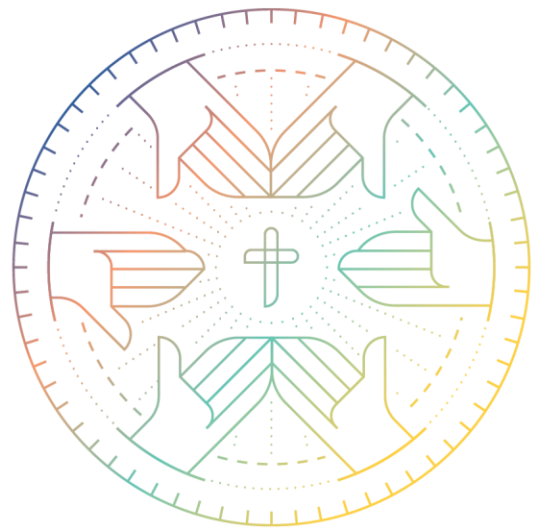
- 1. Read 1 Kings 17:20-24 and 1 Kings 18:1-2. Elijah's faith was built over time as he trusted God and saw God show up in his life. How have you seen God be faithful in your life and how has it helped your ability to trust Him in the future?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Elijah's faith was strengthened as he was forced to rely on God for his practical needs. Though at times he struggled with believing God (1 Kings 17:20) ultimately, he put his trust in God and he saw God provide over and over again. Elijah was able to be courageous in confronting Ahab in chapter 18 because his faith had been strengthened throughout the events of chapter 17. The courage to follow God often starts with preparation. Elijah was able to have confidence in God because of the way he had seen God show up in his life in the past.]

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2. Read 1 Kings 18:3-16. Obadiah was a loyal follower of God but had trouble following Elijah's request because it might cost him his life. Where in your life do you find it hard to follow God fully?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Obadiah had served the Lord since he was young and had risked himself in the past keeping the prophets of God hidden and alive. He struggled to understand why it seemed that the Lord was sending him to die after his faithfulness. Sometimes what we fear may not be the issue at all, but a test that reveals our weakness, and shows us our need to put our trust back in God. Look at Elijah's response in v. 15, "Elijah said, 'As surely as the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, I will surely present myself to Ahab today.'" Elijah reassured Obadiah and calmed his fears. God exposed the fear in Obadiah's heart – a fear that was not the fear of God, but the fear of death. Even though our fears may cause us to doubt and question God, God is always faithful and will work things out for His glory. Whenever we fear, we need to turn our hearts back to Him and trust in Him.]

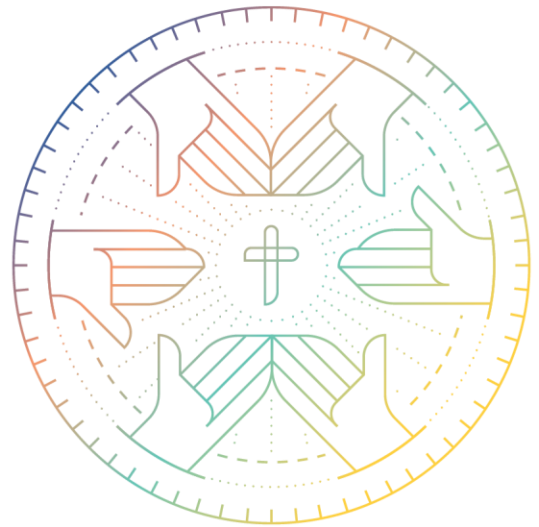
3. Read 1 Kings 18:17-22 and Exodus 20:3. The people of Israel refused to fully commit to God and their indecisiveness left them serving other gods. Where in your life do you find it hard to fully follow God?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. The Israelites couldn't worship both Baal and God, for to trust the former is to reject the latter. Often in our own lives, we want to trust God but look to money, fame, sex, and other things as objects of worship. "In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship... pretty much anything else you worship will eat you alive. If you worship money and things, if they are where you tap real meaning in life, then you will never have enough, never feel you have enough. It's the truth. Worship your body and beauty and sexual allure and you will always feel ugly. And when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths before they finally grieve you." David Foster Wallace. Not only were they not fully serving God they were unwilling to commit. Indecision is not neutral ground. According to Elijah, Israel was not living on morally neutral ground; in fact, their unwillingness to choose actually resulted in self-inflicted injury. This is also the case for us today. We must identify the areas where we are not fully trusting God and are instead putting our trust in other things.]

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APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. Read 1 Kings 18:23-29, 36-39. What sticks out to you from how the prophets of Baal prayed versus how Elijah prayed? How can this inform the way you pray?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Elijah's quiet, brief, and simple prayer stands in sharp contrast to the all-day yelling by Baal's followers. It is as if Elijah thought that God already knew what He needed to do (Matt 6:8). Elijah simply confessed God as God and asked for Him to reveal himself to the people. Perhaps we need to check our own prayers to see if they resemble the prayers of the Baal prophets more than Elijah's prayer. There are times of distress when we need to cry out to God from the depths of our being. Even in those times, we do not have to persuade Him to be God! Prayer that tries to coax God to action reveals more about the attitude of the one praying than it reveals about God. Prayer is not to convince God; it is to confess before God our faith in Him.]

2. From Elijah's experience we see four ways that we can trust God.
 - a. Trust God with our identity (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
 - b. Trust God to be our provision (James 1:17)
 - c. Trust God to be faithful (1 Kings 18:22)
 - d. Trust God to be our hope (Romans 15:13)

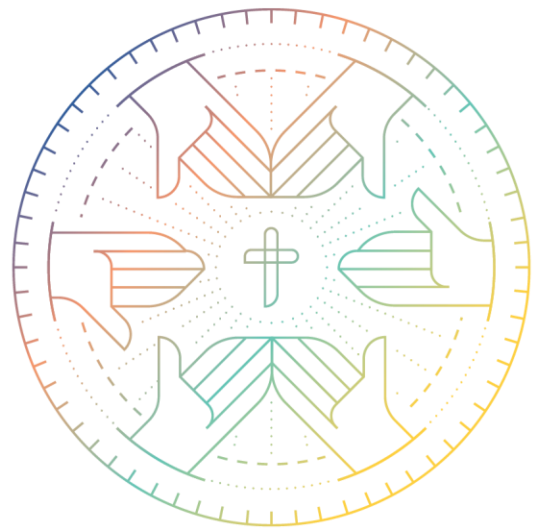
Of those listed, which way do you need to trust God most this week?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. When we trust God with our identity, we are deciding that the only thing that defines us is who we are in Christ. Not our job, family, socio-economic status, race, gender, sexuality, or anything else that we so often turn to define our worth. When we trust God to be our provision, we are stating that what God has for us is better than what we desire and that He will provide according to His will. When we trust God to be faithful, we take the outcome of the situation out of our hands, and no matter how impossible or stacked the situation might feel we rest in knowing that God will show up. When we put our hope in God, we trust that God is doing something in the midst of what feels hopeless. That we know God is working even when we don't feel or see He is active in every situation.]

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3. **Elijah has a real heart for the people to turn their hearts back to God v36-37. This week who can we be praying for to have a real “fire from heaven” experience so that they may know that the Lord is God?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Take some time as a group to pray for the people mentioned in the group. If you feel comfortable incorporate 1 Kings 18:36-37 into the prayer. It could look like this O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and in our lives, we are here as Your servants. Answer us, O Lord, that those mentioned by this group [insert names] may know that You, O Lord, are God and that You are turning their hearts to You. Amen,]

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear heavenly Father,

Thank you for who you are. As we face situations that feel difficult and overwhelming may we have courage knowing that you are working within each of us, preparing for what you have next. May we not limp between serving you fully and looking to other things to bring us peace. May we trust in you Jesus only knowing you are the God that answers us when we call upon you. Help us to trust you with our identity, provision, faith, and hope. May your word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. We pray all these things in your wonderful name. Amen.