

FAITH FOUNDATIONS

WHAT WE BELIEVE AS
UNITED METHODIST
CHRISTIANS AND WHY
WE BELIEVE IT...



Questions We Will Answer

Week 1 (9/15 & 9/17): WHO IS GOD?

Week 2 (9/22 & 9/24): WHAT IS SALVATION AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Week 3 (9/29 & 10/1): WHY HAVE A CHURCH?

Week 4 (10/6 & 10/8): WHAT IS THIS BIBLE?

Week 5 (10/13 & 10/15): CAN GOD BE MY FRIEND?

Week 6 (10/20 & 10/22): WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Week 7 (10/27 & 10/29): WHY LIMA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH?



WHO IS GOD?

STARTING AT THE BEGINNING



Children's Letters to God...

In Sunday school they told us what you do. Who does it when you are on vacation?

Jane

A hand reaches down from the top of the frame towards a mountain landscape. The landscape features a river in the foreground, a rocky cliffside, and a dense forest of evergreen trees under a bright sky with a sunburst effect.

Children's
Letters to God...

How did you
know you were
God?

Charlie He



Magic

Children's
Letters to
God...

Dear God,
Are you really
invisible or is
that just a
trick?

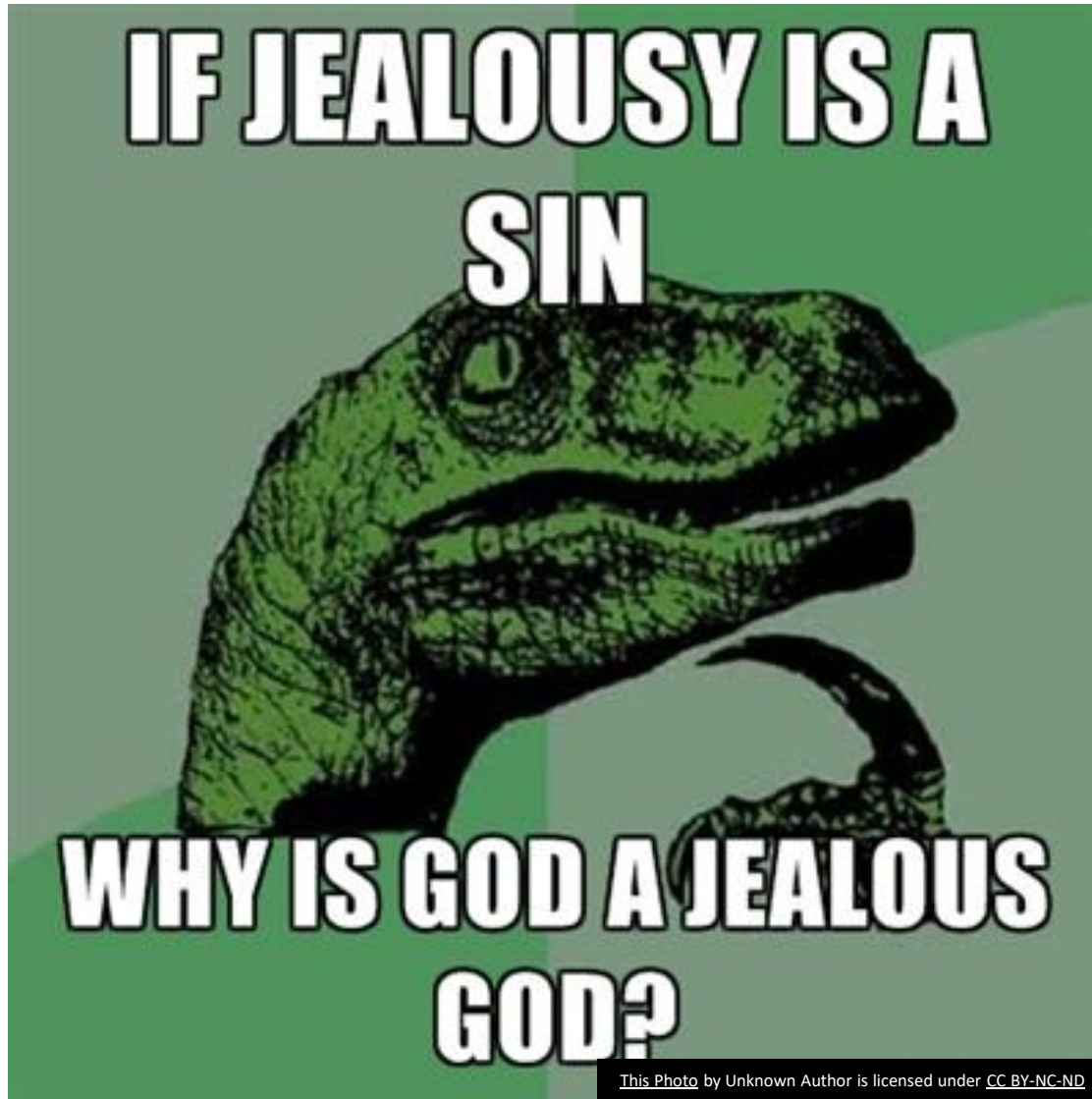
Lucy

Children's Letters to God...

Dear God,
Do animals use
you or is there
somebody else
for them?

Nancy





Children's Letters to God...

Dear God,

What does it mean
you are a jealous
God? I thought you
had everything.

Jane



Children's Letters to God...

Dear God,
Is reverend Coe a friend
of yours, or do you just
know him through
business?

Donny



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What would you say to an alien?

An alien lands its spacecraft in your yard and says: "I hear that many of you earthlings believe in someone called God. Who is this God? What is God Like?"

WHO GOD IS

“When we say the Apostles' Creed, we join with millions of Christians through the ages in an understanding of God as a Trinity—three persons in one: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God, who is one, is revealed in three distinct persons. ‘God in three persons, blessed Trinity’ is one way of speaking about the several ways we experience God.”

God the Father...

- **God *creates*.** “In the beginning God created the universe, and the Creation is ongoing. From the whirling galaxies, to subatomic particles, to the unfathomable wonders of our own minds and bodies—we marvel at God's creative wisdom.”
- **God *sustains*.** “God continues to be active in creation, holding all in ‘the everlasting arms.’ In particular, we affirm that God is involved in our human history—past, present, and future.”
- **God *reigns*.** “God is the Lord of all creation and of all history. Though it may oftentimes seem that the ‘principalities and powers’ of evil have the stronger hand, we affirm God's present and future reign.”
- **God *judges*.** “All human behavior is measured by God's righteous standards—not only the behavior itself but also the motive or the intent. The Lord of life knows our sin—and judges it.”



God the Son...

- **God *loves*.** “God loves all creation. In particular, God loves humankind, created in the divine image. This love is like that of a parent. We've followed Jesus in speaking of God as ‘our Father,’ while at times it seems that God nurtures us in a motherly way as well.”
- **God *suffers*.** “Since God is present in creation, God is hurt when any aspect of creation is hurt. God especially suffers when people are injured. In all violence, abuse, injustice, prejudice, hunger, poverty, or illness, the living God is suffering in our midst.”
- **God *redeems*.** “Out of infinite love for each of us, God forgives our own self-destruction and renews us within. God is reconciling the individuals, groups, races, and nations that have been rent apart. God is redeeming all creation.”

God the Spirit...

God

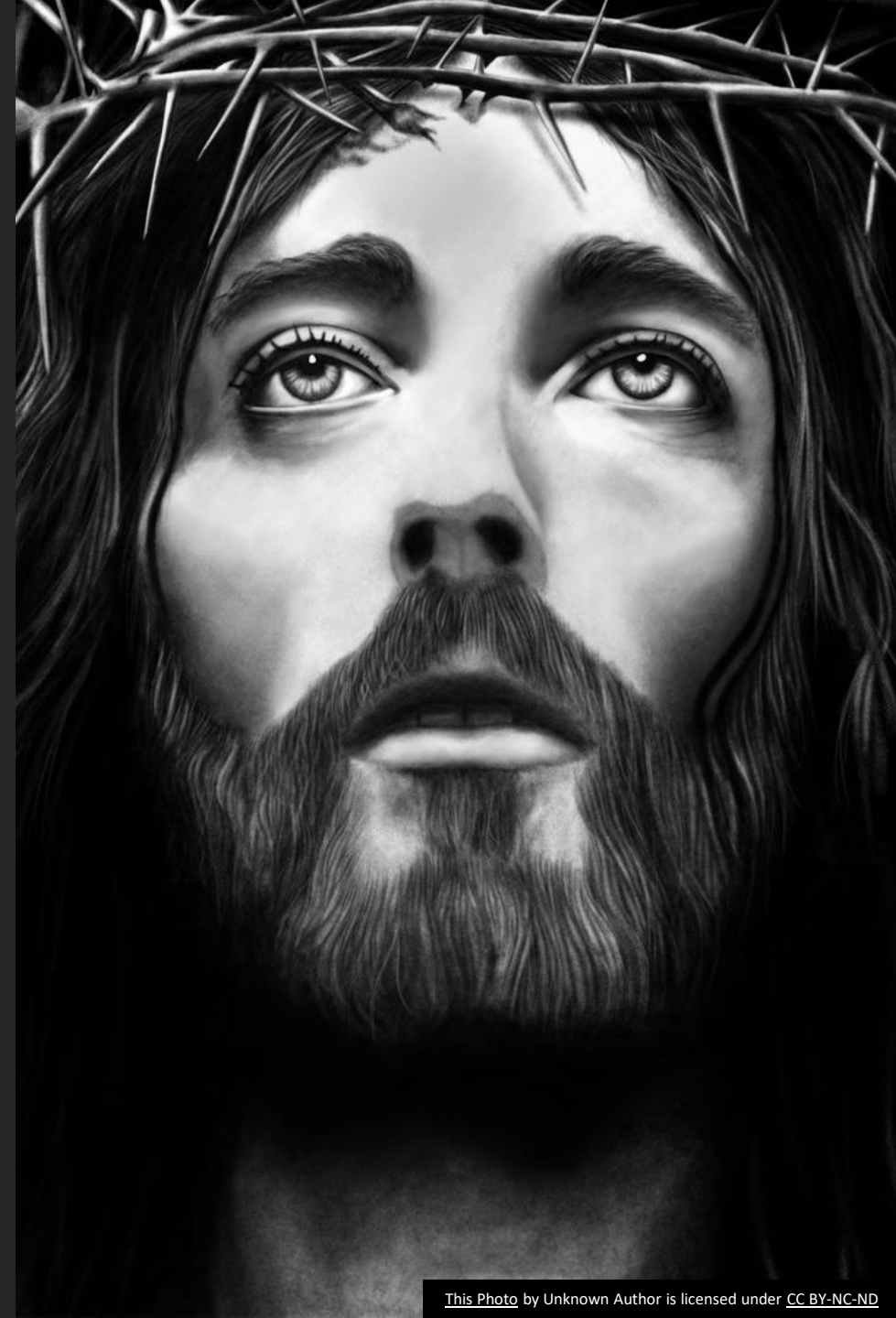
comforts/counsels/helps/advocates.

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” John 14:16-17 (NIV)



How do we know God?

“When all is done, if we have difficulty in imagining who God is or in relating to God, there's a simple solution: Remember Jesus—for in the New Testament picture of Jesus, we see God.”





What did John Wesley think?

John Wesley wrote that LOVE is God's "reigning attribute, the attribute that sheds an amiable glory on all his other perfections" (*Explanatory Notes on the New Testament*).

Wesley "prized the Apostle John's first epistle more than other books in the Bible. It offers the profound and central Christian claim, 'God is love' (4:8, 16)."

"The apostle John's first epistle also provides what Wesley thought was the sum of the gospel: we love, because God first loved us (4:19). God is the source of love creatures express. Wesley says 'love of our neighbour springs from the love of God.'"

God Is Love!

“No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” 1 John 4:12

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.” 1 John 4:16

Children's Letters to God...



Dear God,
I don't ever feel alone
since I found out about
you.
Nora

We'll let John
Wesley have
the last word...

**“The best of all is,
God is with us”**

John Wesley's last words

March 2, 1791

Sources:

- Children's Letters to God, ©1991 by Stuart Hample & Eric Marshall, Workman Publishing
- <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/our-christian-roots-god> (as viewed 9/13/2019)
- <https://www.catalystresources.org/god-is-love/> (as viewed 9/13/2019)
- <http://thomasjayoord.com/index.php/blog/archives/john> (as viewed 9/13/2019)
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