Session One

What in the World Is God Doing?

God the Creator and Preserver
The First Article of the Apostles’ Creed

PARTICIPANT OBJECTIVES

- Recognize that God is working in the world at all times and in all places.
- Understand the relationship among Creator, creation and creature.
- Appreciate the greatness of God and God’s creation.
- Wonder about God’s power and the forces of the created world.
- Discover how their beliefs about God affect their daily lives.
- Articulate how God is working in their lives.

This opening sets the tone for the session. Participants may read this online before they gather for the session or the leader or a participant may read it at the beginning of the session. This material can also be shared with the broader faith community as a way to keep them connected to the activities of this Connections group. Participants can reflect upon this material before and between sessions face-to-face or through electronic communication. Look to the participant resource for the specific focus for this session.

Going to the Heart of the Matter

This section provides an opportunity for group members to become better acquainted with each other. Since the lives of the other participants and you are the basis for Connections, time spent on getting acquainted in this first session is very important.

Have participants pair with persons they know less well. Ask members of the pairs to talk with each other about themselves, using the questions in the participant resource.

If you have been through Unit One of Connections and the group members are the same, you may wish to shorten this activity. However, do not eliminate it altogether since it is important that group members become reacquainted with each other. Also, if there are any new people in the group, it will be important for them to be introduced to others and to Connections.

Give the pairs about 5 minutes to talk with each other.

Ask the pairs to rejoin the group. Have each person introduce his or her partner. These introductions should include the other person’s name and a brief description of that person. Allow about one minute for each introduction.
We usually ask how the three articles of the Creed apply to our daily lives. In this session we begin from the other direction by remembering particular times in our everyday lives and thinking about what the Triune God is doing there. Use the chart in the participant resource and ask the questions one at a time, “Where were you on Tuesday at 2:00 in the afternoon?” and so on. At first people may believe that they cannot remember, but with a moment to think, they usually can. In responding to the third question for each time period, “What was God doing there?” participants may at first think they need to use formal terms for God. Encourage people to use their own words, such as, “God was agonizing with me in my anxiety.”

When talking in pairs, they may want to focus on one or two that seemed the most significant. However, remind them that in conversation with their partner they may discover that the most ordinary has the most thought-provoking questions about the nature of God.

While they are talking with each other, write at the head of three columns on a board or newsprint these titles: CREATING–SUSTAINING, REDEEMING–LIBERATING, MAKING HOLY–MAKING US ONE. Invite the group back together and have some share their responses to the last question, “What was God doing there?”

Listen to their expressions of the activity of the Triune God in their own words. As you hear what they are saying, roughly place a summarizing phrase in one of the three columns. For example, an “agonizing God” might go in column two, the Second Article of the Creed, the work of Christ who agonizingly suffered for our redemption. The experience of a God who was “creating community” might go under the Third Article and thinking about God providing and protecting would go under the First Article.

Questions about the nature of God may arise naturally. Is God a God of judgment? In what way? When? Why or why not? Are their times that God is with us in our enjoyment? Do we have a God who laughs? How do our experiences and beliefs about God vary through the week? Were there some surprises? The goal is not necessarily to fill the three columns, but to see how our experiences and beliefs about God in the language of our everyday lives do relate to the Triune God of the three articles of the Creed. These conversations, beginning where we are, can shape the group’s conversation in this session and through the entire unit.

Discussion on the foundations of the Christian faith during this part of the session can be deep and invigorating. The Small Catechism section can be read in the session by one person or all together as prelude to The Large Catechism and the questions.

- Have one or more people read The Large Catechism aloud.
- Use the reflection questions to stimulate discussion.
- Refer back to words from the catechisms during the session to connect in additional ways.
- Ask participants to jot down brief responses to the questions at the beginning of this section in the participant resource. Note that this is for their reflection only. Give them about two minutes for this work.
A Mind’s-Eye Journey

Invite participants to sit back, close their eyes, and listen quietly as you lead them through a guided imagery experience. During this activity, read each sentence slowly, pausing briefly after each. Allow more time between paragraphs. While the time may seem long to you as you are reading, it will seem shorter to participants. The reading should take about 10 minutes.

Begin reading slowly:

Close your eyes. Settle yourself comfortably in your chair. Relax. Free your mind from all thoughts and concerns. Erase everything from your mind.

Now imagine yourself sitting or standing in a place where you spend a great deal of your time. This may be your workplace, your home or your neighborhood. You are very familiar with this place. You know everything about it — what it looks like, who is here, who comes and goes, what is made here.

Picture the place. Look around the place. What does it look like? What furniture or objects are here? What is beneath your feet? Picture everything in the place. Notice where everything is located. Notice colors and textures. Let your mind picture this place completely and vividly.

Pause for a full minute, then continue reading:

Now think about all that is good about this place. What do you like about it? What is positive here? What gives you good feelings? Who makes you feel affirmed?

What or who is not good in this place? What is sad? What is incomplete? What hurts you? What hurts others? What might you call evil about the place? What would you change?

Pause again, then say:

Quietly leave your place now and rejoin our group here. Slowly open your eyes again to the people around you.

Now think about who is in this place. Whom do you see around you? Who is here when you are here? Who is here when you are not here? Who comes occasionally?

What are these people doing in this place? What is your relationship to these people? How do you feel about each of them? What do you say to each other?

What happens in this place? What is made or unmade here? What happens as a result of what takes place here?

Pause for a full minute, then continue reading:

Now think about all that is good about this place. What do you like about it? What is positive here? What gives you good feelings? Who makes you feel affirmed?

What or who is not good in this place? What is sad? What is incomplete? What hurts you? What hurts others? What might you call evil about the place? What would you change?

Pause again, then say:

Quietly leave your place now and rejoin our group here. Slowly open your eyes again to the people around you.

Tell participants that this section in their participant resource will suggest activities and questions for them to consider between sessions. Note the suggestions on how to explore another part of the world during the next week.

Allow participants to remain silent for a few seconds after opening their eyes. Tell them that they will be talking about their thoughts in a few minutes.

Have the group say together the first article of the Creed. Ask someone to read out loud again Luther’s Explanation from The Small Catechism.

Have participants form pairs and talk about the questions in the participant resource illustration. They might begin by describing (very briefly) the place they imagined. Suggest that they choose one or two questions to talk about in depth.

Use the material in the participant resource to guide this devotional time which provides a conclusion to this session. Participants may want to share leadership for this part of the session. The more integrated spiritual growth becomes to the experiences of the session, the more participants will connect daily life with faith and worship.
Session Two

Is Anywhere Safe Anymore?

God the Protector and Defender
The First Article of the Apostles’ Creed

PARTICIPANT OBJECTIVES

- Know God the Creator as both Protector and Defender.
- Recognize ways in which God works in a fallen world.
- Appreciate God’s ongoing work of caring for creation.
- Identify their fears about violence and evil at large in our world.
- Grow in trust that God is in control.
- Engage in activity that helps protect, sustain and preserve creation.

This opening sets the tone for the session. Participants may read this online before they gather for the session or the leader or a participant may read it at the beginning of the session. This material can also be shared with the broader faith community as a way to keep them connected to the activities of this Connections group. Participants can reflect upon this material before and between sessions face-to-face or through electronic communication. Look to the participant resource for the specific focus for this session.

Each time participants come back together they will have much to share, both from the reflection questions and tasks in the previous session’s segment “Experiencing Until Next Time,” and from other things that occurred during their week. “Beginning Where We Are” is a gathering time during which they may reconnect and focus on this session.

Ask participants to read this section in the participant resource and talk with another person about the questions there.

Discussion on the foundations of the Christian faith during this part of the session can be deep and invigorating. The Small Catechism section can be read in the session by one person or all together as prelude to The Large Catechism and the questions.

- Have one or more people read The Large Catechism aloud.
- Use the reflection questions to stimulate discussion.
- Refer back to words from the catechisms during the session to connect in additional ways.
Pause for at least 30 seconds so that people can return to their imagined place.

When you were in this place before, you thought about all that is good and all that is bad there. Today you are thinking again about the joys and the problems of the place. But you are also thinking about everything that is there: the air you breathe, the lighting, the sounds you hear, the smells, the textures, the feeling on your skin — everything.

Suddenly, something is happening. Imagine that God has stopped thinking about that place. God has stopped creating in that place.

What do you see happening? What does the place look like? What is still there? What is gone? What is different? Have the lights gone out, or are they still on? Are you still there? Or have you disappeared? Is anyone there, or has everyone disappeared? Are the bad things getting worse? Or has everything disappeared?

Think about it for a minute. Please keep your eyes closed for a few moments.

After a full minute of silence, invite participants back to the present, saying quietly, “Now gradually start coming back. Come back to the world God is creating for us in this room at this moment.” Remain quiet a few seconds until all have rejoined the group.

Invite participants to describe the minds-eye world they saw. What happened to the place when God stopped thinking about it? Give participants several minutes to describe their experience. As they talk, be aware of whether they describe the place as slipping back into nothing if God did not act, or moving into a state of greater evil.

Notice in the participants’ imagined places whether the world suddenly becomes totally evil or whether it disappears altogether. Both views have an element of truth, because God is redeeming the world from evil at the same time as God continues creative and redemptive work. This activity helps participants distinguish between God’s work of creation and redemption. It also gives them personal insight about their own deepest fears as they struggle with reliance on God.

Activity Two: Hearing a Creation Story Backwards

Ask participants to relax, close their eyes again and follow in their minds as you read a story. Tell them that you will be reading the creation story from the first chapter of Genesis backwards so that they can see how the creation would look if God were withdrawing.

And God no longer said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures.” And there were no longer fish in the sea or birds flying.

And God no longer said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens,” and there was no sun, no moon no stars.

And God no longer gathered the waters together to be seas, or the land to be land.

And God no longer said, “Let there be light.”

And the Spirit of God no longer moved over the face of the waters. And there was no darkness. There was no form, no void, no earth. God was not creating the heavens and the earth. There was no beginning.

Again, give participants a full minute to reflect on this scene, then ask them to open their eyes and rejoin the group. Invite them to describe the impressions they had during the reading, using questions in the participant resource as a guide.
Ask participants to read this section in the participant resource and note the suggestion for an activity to do before the next session. Distribute paper and ask participants to summarize their most-likely schedule for the next week. Invite them to consider the challenge in this activity, to note one place in this schedule where they might be working to protect, sustain or preserve creation through their work, leisure, relationships or influence. The questions in the Connections resource help focus their thoughts.

With the participants, plan for the visit that will take place as part of the third session. Arrange for a time, if other than the regular meeting time, and other details. Invite the host to say a few words about the place to be visited and his or her role there.

Use the material in the participant resource to guide this devotional time which provides a conclusion to this session. Participants may want to share leadership for this part of the session. The more integrated spiritual growth becomes to the experiences of the session, the more participants will connect daily life with faith and worship.

Use the participant resource for the specific passages from St. John's Gospel, the Book of Romans and the Psalm. The questions there help participants connect their Bible readings to the themes of this session. Refer back to the Introduction for various ways to use “Connecting with Scriptures.”
Session Three

Who Is This Jesus to You?

Jesus the Christ
The Second Article of the Apostles’ Creed

PARTICIPANT OBJECTIVES

- Explore who Jesus is.
- Understand how the names and actions of Jesus Christ reveal his purpose.
- Appreciate the fullness and the richness of the Incarnation.
- Feel the presence of Christ in their lives.
- Notice the ways Christ is present in the worlds in which they live.
- Develop further skills in connecting faith and world.

This opening sets the tone for the session. Participants may read this online before they gather for the session or the leader or a participant may read it at the beginning of the session. This material can also be shared with the broader faith community as a way to keep them connected to the activities of this Connections group. Participants can reflect upon this material before and between sessions face-to-face or through electronic communication. Look to the participant resource for the specific focus for this session.

When all participants have arrived, invite them to tell about carrying out their plan from the last session. What had they planned to do? Were they able to carry out their plan? If not, what got in the way? How might you connect with a group that is working on local and global issues to preserve and sustain the earth?

This session focuses on Jesus the Christ. To introduce this topic, write JESUS at the top of the posterboard, whiteboard or newsprint. Then ask participants to call out names they think of for Jesus. (Some are mentioned in the opening paragraphs of the participant resource.) Invite them to say what each name reveals about Jesus. What adjectives or characteristics would they use? List these words as well.

Turn to the “Beginning Where We Are” section of the participant resource. Ask participants to form pairs and discuss the questions in that section. Give the pairs about 10 minutes for this, then in the total group invite several people to talk about their conversations.

Discussion on the foundations of the Christian faith during this part of the session can be deep and invigorating. The Small Catechism section can be read in the session by one person or all together as prelude to The Large Catechism and the questions.

- Have one or more people read The Large Catechism aloud.
- Use the reflection questions to stimulate discussion.
- Refer back to words from the catechisms during the session to connect in additional ways.
Three activities are suggested for this part of the session. One of these is a visit. If the visit is scheduled for another time, use the first two activities below. Plan to do those at the visit site before taking the tour.

You may also want to augment the session with a Bible study using the material in “Connecting With Scriptures” from Session One or Session Two.

Activity One: Who Is Jesus to You?

This activity focuses on the relationships between childhood and adult understandings of Jesus. Refer participants to this section of their Connections resource.

Provide drawing paper and markers or lumps of modeling clay or playdough. Allow five minutes to draw or mold the childhood figure. Then participants should share what they have made.

After a few minutes of sharing, repeat the activity from an adult perspective. Again, discussion and sharing follow using the questions at the end of this section in the participant resource.

Discuss (in pairs or small groups) who they consider Jesus to be and how their image of Jesus has changed from their childhood. Use the questions in the participant resource as a guide.

Activity Two: Taking a Different Perspective of Jesus

The instructions for this activity are in the participant resource. You may want to have Bibles and Bible dictionaries available to help participants learn more about biblical persons close to Jesus.

Activity Three: A Visit to a World of a Participant

A “world” and “faith” visit is a new kind of experience for many people. You and the participants may struggle to find ways of joining faith words to the secular words that come naturally in the “world” setting. That struggle is important to the process of making connection between faith and life.

If the discussion drifts to the visited world’s interesting features, keep asking, “How is God a part of that feature?” Notice the importance of everything they say, but also work at making the faith connections.

The end result of the visit is not just learning how faith connects in general with a person’s daily world. It is also learning how the visit’s host connects the faith with this particular world. Participants will learn things about the visited world that will help them appreciate the host in a different way. Invite them to express these observations.

For other elements of a successful visit, see further directions about visits in the Unit One Leader’s Guide.

Keeping a journal is an activity that some people find easy and enjoyable. The suggestion of keeping a journal until the next session should be presented as broadly as possible. Note that this may be in the form of an actual journal, or as simple as two or three sentences or phrases written on Post-It Notes™ that describe how participants’ faith in Christ affected their perceptions and decisions. Some may journal best by posting on their blog or Facebook page. The purpose of this activity is to help participants reflect on their daily experiences.

Use the participant resource for the specific passages from St. John’s Gospel, the Book of Romans and the Psalm. The questions there help participants connect their Bible readings to the themes of this session. Refer back to the Introduction for various ways to use “Connecting with Scriptures.”
Session Four
How Can We Live in a Death-Defying Culture?
From Death to Life
The Second Article of the Apostles’ Creed

PARTICIPANT OBJECTIVES

- Recognize the ways death affects the goodness of creation.
- See connections between redemption and their stations and vocations.
- Share their feelings about beginnings and endings.
- Acknowledge common fears of death.
- Witness through their vocation to Christ’s redeeming work.
- Speak to one another of the hope they have in Christ in facing death.

Going to the Heart of the Matter

This opening sets the tone for the session. Participants may read this online before they gather for the session or the leader or a participant may read it at the beginning of the session. This material can also be shared with the broader faith community as a way to keep them connected to the activities of this Connections group. Participants can reflect upon this material before and between sessions face-to-face or through electronic communication. Look to the participant resource for the specific focus for this session.

Invite participants to talk about the happenings and events in their lives since the last session. Focus on this session by using the questions at the top of the page in the participant resource.

Move on to the questions about new beginnings and endings they foresee. Suggest that they talk about some of the matters in this section in pairs or groups of three or four.

Participants are generally more comfortable sharing personally in a smaller group. They also have more opportunities to talk when fewer are in the group. While pairs are most often suggested for in-depth discussions about the issues and questions, you may want to divide into groups of four. By now participants should know and trust each other enough to feel comfortable in a group of that size, and it will offer a broader range of conversation.

Invite participants to share with the total group summaries of their conversations. What changes excite them? What changes frighten them? Allow ample time for this conversation.

Discussion on the foundations of the Christian faith during this part of the session can be deep and invigorating. The Small Catechism section can be read in the session by one person or all together as prelude to The Large Catechism and the questions.

- Have one or more people read The Large Catechism aloud.
- Use the reflection questions to stimulate discussion.
- Refer back to words from the catechisms during the session to connect in additional ways.

Connecting With the Faith
Discussion on the foundations of the Christian faith during this part of the session can be deep and invigorating. The Small Catechism section can be read in the session by one person or all together as prelude to The Large Catechism and the questions.

- Have one or more people read The Large Catechism aloud.
- Use the reflection questions to stimulate discussion.
- Refer back to words from the catechisms during the session to connect in additional ways.
Thinking About Stations and Vocations

Prepare the poster board, whiteboard or newsprint:

1. At the top of the left-hand column, write STATIONS.
2. Write VOCATION at the top of a right-hand column.
3. In the center, between the two column headings, write the word CALLING.
4. At the top center of the chart, as a title, write the word REDEEMING.

Using the material in the participant resource as a guide, talk about the concepts of stations and vocations. First ask participants to name some of the roles or stations they fill. List these in the left column. Next, invite participants to think of their vocation in the roles (stations) they listed. Write these below VOCATION. Note that all Christians are called in their Baptism to live out their vocation in whatever station they find themselves.

Engage the pairs or small groups in working through the chart in their participant resources. Ask participants to think about how the forgiveness of sins frees them from mere self-fulfillment for a vocation of serving others. For example, in which station(s) might they be involved in God’s action to move someone from the “death” of alienation to the “new life” of community?

After a period of time, invite individual participants to share their thoughts with the whole group, making sure that the problem (for example, alienation) is well-understood before describing how Christ worked through them as agents of God’s redeeming grace (for example, community) to a person or situation.

Be careful not to imply that everything in our stations is bad, or that creation is evil. Rather, in each of our stations the problems of the human condition of sin will be manifest. Participants know this only too well. This activity here is an opportunity to talk about the human predicaments which they experience in their lives and freedom for new life in Christ.

More on the topic of stations and vocations is found in Unit One, Session Three.
Session Five

What Makes Us Holy?

The Breath of the Spirit
The Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed

PARTICIPANT OBJECTIVES

- Understand the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
- Integrate the meanings of holiness into their daily lives.
- Notice ways the Holy Spirit surprises them.
- Become sensitive to the gentle power of the Holy Spirit.
- Encourage one another to live lives filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Be able to bridge the language of faith and the languages of daily life.

Beginning Where We Are

Going to the Heart of the Matter

This opening sets the tone for the session. Participants may read this online before they gather for the session or the leader or a participant may read it at the beginning of the session. This material can also be shared with the broader faith community as a way to keep them connected to the activities of this Connections group.

Participants can reflect upon this material before and between sessions face-to-face or through electronic communication. Look to the participant resource for the specific focus for this session.

Introduce the subject of “holy” from the list in the framed area in the participant resource. Note the questions in the participant resource that ask about “holy characters” in the film that participants watched during the week.

Help participants see that Christians are both saint and sinner simultaneously. Ask participants how they experience both in their lives.

Ask participants to describe some characteristics of “holy” people. These might be characteristics of people on the list or characteristics they think of when they hear that a person is “holy.”

Discussion on the foundations of the Christian faith during this part of the session can be deep and invigorating. The Small Catechism section can be read in the session by one person or all together as prelude to The Large Catechism and the questions.

- Have one or more people read The Large Catechism aloud.
- Use the reflection questions to stimulate discussion.
- Refer back to words from the catechisms during the session to connect in additional ways.

Connecting With the Faith
Activity One: The Languages of Faith
When we witness to Christ, we need to speak so that others understand. At Pentecost (Acts 2) the Spirit empowered the disciples to speak in the languages of those gathered in Jerusalem. Martin Luther translated the Bible into the vernacular. Likewise, we need to communicate with people in the language of their everyday life.

Activity Two: A Visit to a World of a Participant
If you will be conducting a visit, follow the suggestions in the participant resource for this visit. Review with participants the purpose of the visits (see Unit Two, Session Three, in the Leader Guide.) Two standard sets of questions (Nos. 1 and 2) are followed by a set of questions (No. 3) that get at the question of the Holy Spirit’s work in this place.
Where in the World is the Church?

The Communion of Saints
The Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed

PARTICIPANT OBJECTIVES

- Recognize that being part of a community is what is needed to be a believer.
- See how the church works as a community of faith to connect members.
- Enjoy and appreciate what the church means.
- Appreciate the need for the forgiveness of sins in the church.
- Observe the church as a strong resource for its members.
- Take specific steps to assist the congregation to support more fully its members in their daily lives.

Going to the Heart of the Matter

This opening sets the tone for the session. Participants may read this online before they gather for the session or the leader or a participant may read it at the beginning of the session. This material can also be shared with the broader faith community as a way to keep them connected to the activities of this Connections group.

Participants can reflect upon this material before and between sessions face-to-face or through electronic communication. Look to the participant resource for the specific focus for this session.

Invite participants to tell about examples of holiness and holy people they observed in the past week. In their opinion, what made these people holy? What characteristics of holiness do they see in themselves?

Participants may find it difficult to see holiness in themselves. Encourage them to name at least one example, or suggest that you will come back to this matter later in the session.

Turn to the vector diagram in the section “Beginning Where We Are” in the participant resource. Give participants a few moments to jot notes in response to any of the matters presented in the diagram. On posterboard, whiteboard or newsprint write COMMUNITY. Ask participants to share any of their responses to any of the portions of the diagram. Record their responses as they share them, without comment. Then engage the group in conversation about the work of the Spirit in faith communities.

Discussion on the foundations of the Christian faith during this part of the session can be deep and invigorating. The Small Catechism section can be read in the session by one person or all together as prelude to The Large Catechism and the questions.

- Have one or more people read The Large Catechism aloud.
- Use the reflection questions to stimulate discussion.
- Refer back to words from the catechisms during the session to connect in additional ways.
Activity One: Making Montages of Ministry

Divide the group into two smaller groups. Give each small group several colored markers, old magazines or newspapers, scissors, glue and a large sheet of newsprint or shelf paper (paper tablecloths also work well). Briefly go over the instructions in the participant resource with the groups, then assign one montage to each group.

To help the groups with the task, provide the first group with resources such as congregational web site, newsletter, annual report, and other materials that will remind participants of the many activities in and of the congregation. Be certain that they include activities that take place outside the church building but on behalf of the congregation, such as participation in the local food bank or ecumenical gatherings.

The second group might use the congregation directory, “time and talent” sheets and other resources to remind participants of the occupations or daily activities of members. Be sure the group includes members’ involvement in synod and churchwide functions as well as other volunteer activities.

Encourage participants not to forget the participation of congregation members who are young and old, who work without pay, who are retired or who are unemployed. This will stretch the value of the activity beyond quickly-recalled activities and features of congregational and individual lives.

Post the finished montages where all can see them. Ask someone from each group to describe the group’s montage briefly. Invite participants from the other group to comment and to suggest activities that may have been overlooked. As a total group, talk about ways to use the montages to make other members aware of the variety of ministries through which the congregation is the church in the world.

Look at the montages again. As a group, discuss ways in which the congregation recognizes, equips and supports the members in ministry. Use the following questions as a guide:

- How do our congregation’s programs — education, family, youth and stewardship — support people in their work and other activity in the world?
- In what ways do formal and informal groups in our congregation — womens, mens, youth, singles, couples, Bible study and small groups — help members connect faith and daily life?
- What opportunities are provided for congregational members and professional staff to visit members in their work worlds?
- How does our staff and congregation support one another in mutual ministry?
- How does our congregational web site and newsletter highlight the ministry of the members in the world as well as in the church?

Activity Two: Paper Cup Church

Follow the directions in the participant resource to engage in this group experience. Although it seems simple, the experience has the potential for being quite powerful, especially if this group has been together for awhile.

Allow ample time for follow-up reactions by participants. They might talk about how they felt when they received the cup or passed it on. They might share how what at first seemed meaningless suddenly took on deeply symbolic value.

Use the material in the participant resource to guide this devotional time which provides a conclusion to this session. Participants may want to share leadership for this part of the session. The more integrated spiritual growth becomes to the experiences of the session, the more participants will connect daily life with faith and worship.

The activities suggested in this section of the participant resource provide a way for Connections participants to share their experiences with other members of the congregation. As you continue with the next Connections unit, this may draw new members to the group. Be open to them. Or, it may spark the formation of a new Connections group. Think of people and places for such a group and help facilitate its formation.

Use the participant resource for the specific passages from St. John’s Gospel, the Book of Romans and the Psalm. The questions there help participants connect their Bible readings to the themes of this session. Refer back to the Introduction for various ways to use “Connecting with Scriptures.”