



Discovering God is a resource offering practical ideas for informal services and events. With a theme-based approach, this series can help create community and a sense of belonging.

Guidance on using Discovering God can be found at: [www.rootsontheweb.com/dg-intro](http://www.rootsontheweb.com/dg-intro) for leaders



# Wow!

## Finding beauty and wonder in the unexplainable

### Somewhere to start

Here's a way to introduce the theme.

- Show pictures of natural phenomena that make people say, 'Wow!' You can find a pdf on the [WEB](#), or search online. Give time for people to marvel and enjoy the pictures. In groups, ask people to share some wow moments they've experienced.

We don't know how the universe works,  
 but it fascinates us and fills us with wonder.  
 We don't know what beauty is,  
 but it changes us every time we meet it.  
 We don't know what lies at the bottom of the ocean,  
 but we love the mystery of it all.  
 May the mystery of God fascinate us,  
 change us and fill us with wonder. **Amen.**



### Somewhere to finish

Before you end, come together to gather your thoughts and, if appropriate, to pray.

- If you were going to another planet, what 10 things would you take to give a sense of the awe and wonder of the earth? Work in groups then pool your suggestions, or gather ideas and vote for the top 10.

God of glory,  
 may our faces and our lives light up  
 when we experience wow moments with you.  
 Be close to us and show us  
 new wonders and adventures to take. **Amen.**

### Explore... finding beauty and wonder

Choose from these ideas and activities to help people of all ages explore the theme together. Use the spiritual styles indicated by the coloured letters to help you plan and cater for the different ways in which people connect with God. Spiritual styles (as defined by Dave Csinos) key: **W**ord, **E**motion, **S**ymbol, **A**ction. Find out more [WEB](#) in Worship and learning support.

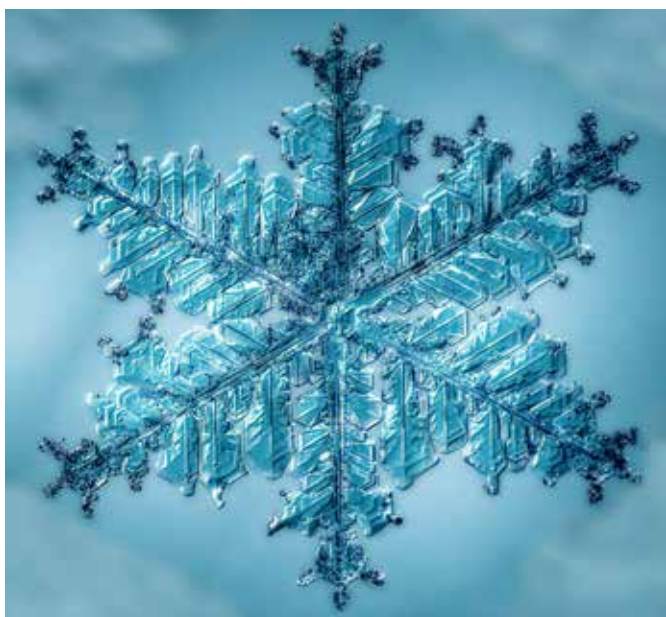
#### Patterns around us **E S**

Go outside, and in small groups, look for things with a natural or extraordinary, pattern in them, such as snail shells, leaves, flowers, bark, railings, bricks. Spend time exploring and marvelling at the variety and intricate details. Experiment with taking photos of them close up to share with friends, and as a reminder of the wow factor in things around us.



#### Mountain-top views **W E S**

If it's possible, go up a hill together, or to a local view point or beauty spot. Ask everyone to face the view and turn around very slowly, taking in as much as they can see. Then talk about what you noticed. Did others see different things? If you can't go outside to do this, watch a video together; search on BBC Earth, Primal Earth, etc. How do these landscapes make you feel?



### 'Wow' moments game WE

In your meeting space, designate one side as 'Wow, life-changing!', and the other as 'Meh, nothing special!' Name significant, potentially life-changing events, and invite people to move to one side or the other, depending on their reaction or experience; e.g. your wedding, holding a baby, a big sports event, starting a new school or job, getting a new toy, having a birthday party. Invite people to reflect on or share how certain events changed their life. What did they do as a result of the experience?

### Maths magic WS

Give out graph or plain paper, pens/pencils and rulers and show how to draw straight lines to produce curves. Find instructions on 1) Wikihow@ [https://www.wikihow.com/Draw-a-Parabolic-Curve-\(a-Curve-with-Straight-Lines\)](https://www.wikihow.com/Draw-a-Parabolic-Curve-(a-Curve-with-Straight-Lines)). This activity can be extended in many ways with colours, overlaying different shapes and with sewing on cards, etc. Or, draw a golden spiral 2) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zwg4d2p/articles/zqp37p3>.



### Everyday wonder WE

Invite people to write down their wow moments, and add the lovely things they see, hear, taste, do, experience, think and notice day by day, so that when they're sad or low, they can be uplifted by it and enjoy revisiting their memories. How has God been present in these experiences? This could also be done with the whole group or in households.

## Something from the Bible

### Mark 9.2-8

We have picked this passage to help illustrate and explore the theme from a biblical or Christian context. Read and share is a way to engage everyone with the Bible story. The notes that follow are designed to help the leader.

### Read and share

Tell the story as a guided meditation. Speak quietly and pace the telling to give time between sentences for the imagination to work. Find the script on the [WEB](#).

### Summary of passage

Jesus takes three disciples, Peter, James and John, away from the crowds who gather for his teaching and healing. They climb a mountain, but an ordinary walk suddenly becomes frightening and unexpected. Jesus' physical appearance is utterly changed by dazzling light. Two figures join them. A cloud descends and out of it the voice of God is heard, saying that Jesus is his Son.

### What could we learn from it?

In a time when we expect to know the reason for, and explanation of, everything that happens, we find it difficult to deal with total mystery. The disciples couldn't understand what had happened but it strengthened their sense that Jesus was unique. They were changed by their experience and knew they had had a 'heavenly moment' with God. We, too, can have heavenly moments of sensing God. We don't need to be able to explain them, but we can feel the wonder and joy that makes us say, 'Wow.' In our everyday, ordinary, lives, knowing there is something greater that we are all part of can be life transforming.

## Follow-up ideas

Encourage other people, especially older people who find it difficult to get out and about, to share wow experiences in their lives. Try to find a range of people with different life experiences. Find ways of helping them continue to delight in the awe and wonder of the world around us.

Write a poem or song, or create a picture about a wow moment, how it made you feel and how it changed you.

Where do you feel the presence of God close to you? Do you have a special place or memory to visit? Give yourself opportunities to be open to a wow moment with God.