



WEEK 1: A Picture of the Divine

Lent is a special time of reflection and contemplation of who we are and how we live as God's people. For Lent this year, we will consider how the Biblical Narrative Begins with a stunning picture of human beings claiming they are "the image of God." This is our first and foundational identity. It is an identity that is easily forgotten in our world today - by the way we view ourselves and by the way we view others. But, how might we be transformed if we considered the weight and the glory of this identity? As we consider our identity as "the image of God" in our Lent Groups this year, our prayer is that all of us will root ourselves in God's love, so that we can become who we were created to be. Let's begin this journey!

Since this is the first week, here are a few things to know about what we'll be doing. Each week, the Lent Group material will have the same general outline. We will start with **Knowing Each Other**, a time to let everyone briefly share with the group their thoughts in response to a question or two provided in the material.

Next, will be **Beginning the Discussion**, a short summary of the previous Sunday's teaching along with some additional insights, Scripture or information relevant to the teaching.

The next section is **Questions for Reflection**, and the name describes it – some questions for group discussion and reflection. Don't feel like you have to answer every question, and maybe you have some other questions you would rather discuss. Please use all of this as you see fit.

The last part of the Lent Group time together is the **Spiritual Practice**. Life transformation often happens more through experiences than through just accumulating more knowledge. So, each week there is a spiritual practice for you to experience together as a group through our Spiritual Formation Podcast, which can be accessed at denverchurch.org or through the DCC App.

The last section is called **Final Thoughts**, and this part is for you to use as a way to close things out with an opportunity for final reflections and thoughts.

Knowing Each Other

Before you begin, since this is your first time together, take some time to get to know each other a bit. Here are some suggestions:

1. Go around in the room and give everyone a chance to introduce themselves. Let everyone describe:
 - How did you get connected to DCC?
 - Why did you want to be involved in a Lent Group and what do you hope to get out of the six weeks?
2. If you want to take a bit more time to share, go around the room again to answer this question:

- What part Lent has played in your faith journey, if any, up until this point? In other words, what has Lent meant to you?

Beginning the Discussion

1. **Listen to the Teaching** : Listen to the teaching [online](#) or on the DCC App. (Please note that teaching Podcast will be available Sunday, the video teaching will be posted Tuesday).
2. **Background for our discussion:** We talked about the perspectives of the ancient cultures regarding “image” and what it implied to those who were citizens of those countries. And then ask questions about how we see ourselves and others and what that may reveal about how we think of God.
3. **Scripture:** read Genesis 1.26-27

Questions for Discussion

(There are probably more questions here than you can cover in the time you have, so feel free to only use one or two, or ask the group what question or questions they would like to discuss and go with that.)

1. What stands out from this week’s teaching? Did anything specific catch your attention as you listened?
2. What does it mean to you to believe that humans (each one of us) are made in the image and likeness of God?
3. The teaching discussed that the author of Genesis was drawing from the belief of other ancient cultures that “the image of God” was a title reserved for kings and rulers... And, in fact, God has given this special designation to all of humanity. Can you believe this?
4. This concept is powerful to believe for ourselves, but what about our enemies? What about people who are not like us, who don’t share our values or ideological views? Or, this who have hurt us?
5. Is there such a thing as bad people and good people? If everyone is made in God’s image, is anyone inherently bad?
6. Please take a look at the EVAC Brazil Pathway website - <http://evacoperation.org/brazil> Check out the other families who are in need. Say a prayer for them and that enough money will be raised to help them all to be evacuated safely!

Spiritual Practice: Lent Week 1

This week for our formation practice, we invite you to listen to our guided time of reflection for the first week of Lent on our DCC spiritual formation podcast. You can listen to this guided prayer by clicking on the link below. You can also access the spiritual formation podcast through the DCC App.

[Spiritual Formation Podcast: Lent Week One](#)

Final Thoughts

Often as we spend time discussing and reflecting, we gain new insights about ourselves, others and God. A few things you might do as a group before you leave to "seal this time" in a sense, so those new insights don't slip away:

Spend a few minutes yourself writing in a journal or recording on your phone: What are one or two takeaways that you want to consider more or make a part of your life as you walk through this next week? Is there anything specific that you felt like the Lord was bringing to your attention that you want to record — you might know what it means and what to do with it or you might have no idea yet — write it anyway.

Spend a few more minutes before you go sharing with each other (whatever you can or feel comfortable with) from what you wrote.