

RHYTHM:

a weekly reflection guide for students

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What is Rhythm?

Rhythm is a weekly lectionary reflection guide designed with students in mind! Each week you'll find lectionary readings from the Old Testament, Psalms, New Testament, and Gospels, along with different types of questions and readings to reflect on. *Rhythm* will help students connect with God and each week's readings in various ways, challenging students to put what they're hearing into practice throughout the week.

Rhythm is broken up into five sections, each with a unique purpose. In *We Read*, students are guided in reflecting on an initial reading of the week's passages. In *We Think...* students are encouraged to engage scripture on a deeper level by asking questions about the text. *We Feel* invites students to engage their emotions, bringing their feelings into conversation with God's word. In *We Believe*, students are invited to connect what they've read in scripture to the larger Wesleyan theological heritage. Finally, *We Practice* guides students in discovering the practices they might use to help develop a rhythm of life shaped by scripture and the community of faith to which they belong.

Rhythm: A Weekly Reflection Guide for Students can be used in a small group setting, as a guide for youth group time, or even with adults! We hope you find *Rhythm* as something that leads you and your students into a deeper faith.

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We Read...

When we read scripture, there are a few things we want to consider: What does this passage say about God's character, and what does God's character tell me about how I need to live? Through this week's readings, you'll find that God is a God of deliverance. Through each passage, we find that God has a way of meeting people in their circumstances and sees where God's deliverance and grace are made possible.

God's deliverance is made evident in Jeremiah's call to be a prophet. Knowing that God has an intentional plan for Jeremiah in sharing messages of warning and hope to the people of God before they enter into exile, he reminds Jeremiah that not only will he have God's words of deliverance to share to the people of Israel and surrounding nations but God will be present with Jeremiah to defend and rescue as needed. God is present and faithful as we live in obedience!

God's deliverance is also made evident through the life and ministry of Jesus. Luke gives an account of this woman, who, after having lived in pain and suffering for 18 years, is delivered from her ailment merely because Jesus wanted to offer her freedom. While the religious leaders saw this as a moment that goes against the law, Jesus reminds those who are listening that God is someone who offers good gifts to the people of God. Jesus desires that his people would live in freedom!

Jeremiah 1:4-10

⁴ The LORD's word came to me:

⁵ "Before I created you in the womb
I knew you;
before you were born I set you apart;
I made you a prophet to the nations."

⁶ "Ah, LORD God," I said,
"I don't know how to speak
because I'm only a child."

⁷ The LORD responded,
"Don't say, 'I'm only a child.'
Where I send you, you must go;
what I tell you, you must say."

⁸ Don't be afraid of them,
because I'm with you to rescue you,"
declares the LORD.

- ⁹ Then the LORD stretched out his hand,
touched my mouth, and said to me,
"I'm putting my words in your mouth."
¹⁰ This very day I appoint you
over nations and empires,
to dig up and pull down,
to destroy and demolish,
to build and plant."

Psalm 71:1-6

- ¹ I've taken refuge in you, LORD.
Don't let me ever be put to shame!
² Deliver me and rescue me
by your righteousness!
Bend your ear toward me
and save me!
³ Be my rock of refuge
where I can always escape.
You commanded that my life be saved
because you are my rock
and my fortress.
⁴ My God, rescue me
from the power of the wicked;
rescue me from the grip of the
wrongdoer and the oppressor
⁵ because you are my hope, Lord.
You, LORD, are the one I've trusted
since childhood.
⁶ I've depended on you from birth—
you cut the cord when I came
from my mother's womb.
My praise is always about you.

Hebrews 12:18-29

¹⁸ You haven't drawn near to something that can be touched: a burning fire, darkness, shadow, a whirlwind, ¹⁹ a blast of a trumpet, and a sound of words that made the ones who heard it beg that there wouldn't be one more word. ²⁰ They couldn't stand the command, *If even a wild animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.* ²¹ The sight was so frightening that Moses said, "I'm terrified and shaking!"

²² But you have drawn near to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, to countless angels in a festival gathering, ²³ to the assembly of the God's firstborn children who are registered in heaven, to God the judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous who have been made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel's blood.

²⁵ See to it that you don't resist the one who is speaking. If the people didn't escape when they refused to listen to the one who warned them on earth, how will we escape if we reject the one who is warning from heaven? ²⁶ His voice shook the earth then, but now he has made a promise: *Still once more I will shake not only the earth but heaven also.* ²⁷ The words "still once more" reveal the removal of what is shaken—the things that are part of this creation—so that what isn't shaken will remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that can't be shaken, let's continue to express our gratitude. With this gratitude, let's serve in a way that is pleasing to God with respect and awe, ²⁹ because our God really is a consuming fire.

Luke 13:10-17

¹⁰ Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

¹¹ A woman was there who had been disabled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and couldn't stand up straight. ¹² When he saw her, Jesus called her to him and said, "Woman, you are set free from your sickness." ¹³ He placed his hands on her and she straightened up at once and praised God.

¹⁴ The synagogue leader, incensed that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, responded, "There are six days during which work is permitted. Come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath day."

¹⁵ The Lord replied, "Hypocrites! Don't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from its stall and lead it out to get a drink? ¹⁶ Then isn't it necessary that this woman, a daughter of Abraham, bound by Satan for eighteen long years, be set free from her bondage on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷ When he said these things, all his opponents were put to shame, but all those in the crowd rejoiced at all the extraordinary things he was doing.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

We Think...

- What stands out to you in these verses? Does anything confuse you or not make sense? How do these verses compare to your own experience in life or the church?
- What are you considering? What questions come to mind?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

We Feel...

- What emotions are you experiencing today? How are you making space for these feelings?
- Where have you seen God today or this week? What is pointing you to God (maybe it is something in creation, a friend or adult that cares for you)?
- What has God made new in your life? In your heart?
- How does it make you feel to know that God has known you so closely?
- How does it make you feel to know that you can depend on him?
- How does it make you feel to know that he is your deliverer?
- Have you seen his deliverance?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

We Believe...

Hebrews 12 gives us a full image of the character of the delivering God that we serve. While God is in the business of deliverance, God is also just. God sent prophets and came in the form of Jesus to share the good news of deliverance and freedom attached with the call to holiness. In hearing the freedom of the gospel through Jesus and his disciples, we're reminded that this God of deliverance is also holy above all else and calls the people of God to live in that holiness. We believe that our deliverance and our freedom are a direct result of his holiness!

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

We Practice...

When you think of it, read Psalm 71:1-6 as a prayer this week. Use this prayer to remember God's faithfulness, love, and deliverance. Maybe even writing this passage down and placing it somewhere where you'll see it frequently! As you pray through Psalm 71:1-6, remember that God is someone worthy of your trust, devotion, and praise. Once you've taken time to reflect on God's nature in your prayer, reflect on what areas of your life you can surrender to his control. As those things come to mind, find someone you trust and share this with them. Allow them the opportunity to pray with you and support you as you seek the Lord's deliverance in your life.