

Exodus 3:1-5

(Lectionary Year A, Proper 17)

By Beth Barnett

You will need:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Image 'Unburned bush' by Chris Booth• Sandpaper• Unpolished riverstones,• sand tray. <p>Write the following phrases/words on some of the stones and torn strips of sandpaper: Moses, flock, wilderness, Horeb, Mountain of God, flame of fire, blazing, turn aside, not burned up, God called, sandals, Holy ground, hid his face, misery of my people, I know their sufferings, deliver, good broad land, cry, oppress, send, bring my people, Who am I?, I will be with you, sign, what is God's name?, I am, forever.</p>
Time required:	7-10 minutes



Today we pick up the story of Moses. Born into a family of Hebrew slaves, but grew up in the Egyptian royal family as the son of the Princess. As a young man, he witnesses the oppression and violence against the Hebrew slaves by the Egyptians, and lashes out and kills an Egyptian. Now the Pharaoh wants to kill him and so he flees into the wilderness.

Already his life has taken more unusual turns than the average, from slave to prince to murderer to fugitive.

So we find Moses here in the wilderness today. Let's take a look...

Show frame 1 - grey wilderness with Egypt in the Distance

Hmmm...not very interesting.
Let's look a bit further...

Show frame 2 - more grey wilderness

...still very boring

Show frame 3...grey wilderness with sheep

Well, this is looking to be a bit boring. I was sure this was going to be a story in which God shows up and speaks to Moses - which sounds dramatic.

Still - let's have a go at making our own wilderness landscapes, using rocks, and sand, and sand paper, and as we do, tell the people around you about the time you were the most bored ever!

Instructions for creating wilderness scenes:

Divide into 3 or 4 groups with a collection of resources for each group, but use these to create one large wilderness on a large tarp or sheet on the floor. As the groups construct their wilderness topography - remind them that it can include mountains and valleys, not just a flat landscape.

Explain that all of the materials need to be used, and the rocks and sandpaper strips with words written on them should be placed face up so the group can see the words.

Move around the groups and make sure people are finding comfortable ways of participating.

After about 5 minutes of construction time, begin to ready the groups for continuing, inviting those who are happy to sit on the floor around the landscape to do so, and those who prefer chairs to draw them closer to the landscape and get ready. then continue...

It's time for us to get back to the Bible! Our wilderness is ready. And like Moses we are going to discover God's words to us in the midst of the wilderness. As we read from Exodus chapter 3 together, if you hear a word in the story that you can see written on your landscape, pick it up and begin placing it in order across the



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landscape, so that by the end of the story, all the words are in order. You will need to work together on this as there are lots of words to sort!

Read Exodus 3:1-15, slowly, clearly and expressively. Pause to let the groups sort the words if necessary, but try not to lose the thread of the story as you do. Repeat words or phrases if needed to create extra time.

When you have finished invite the groups to recount the story to one another using the order of words on the stones and sandpaper as prompts.

To Finish...view the entire image by Chris Booth.

Turns out that the wilderness isn't as boring as we thought. For Moses, in the boring everyday of taking care of sheep, God had something to say - something dramatic for Moses to do, and a way of showing Moses that he God was powerfully present still in his boring wilderness life.

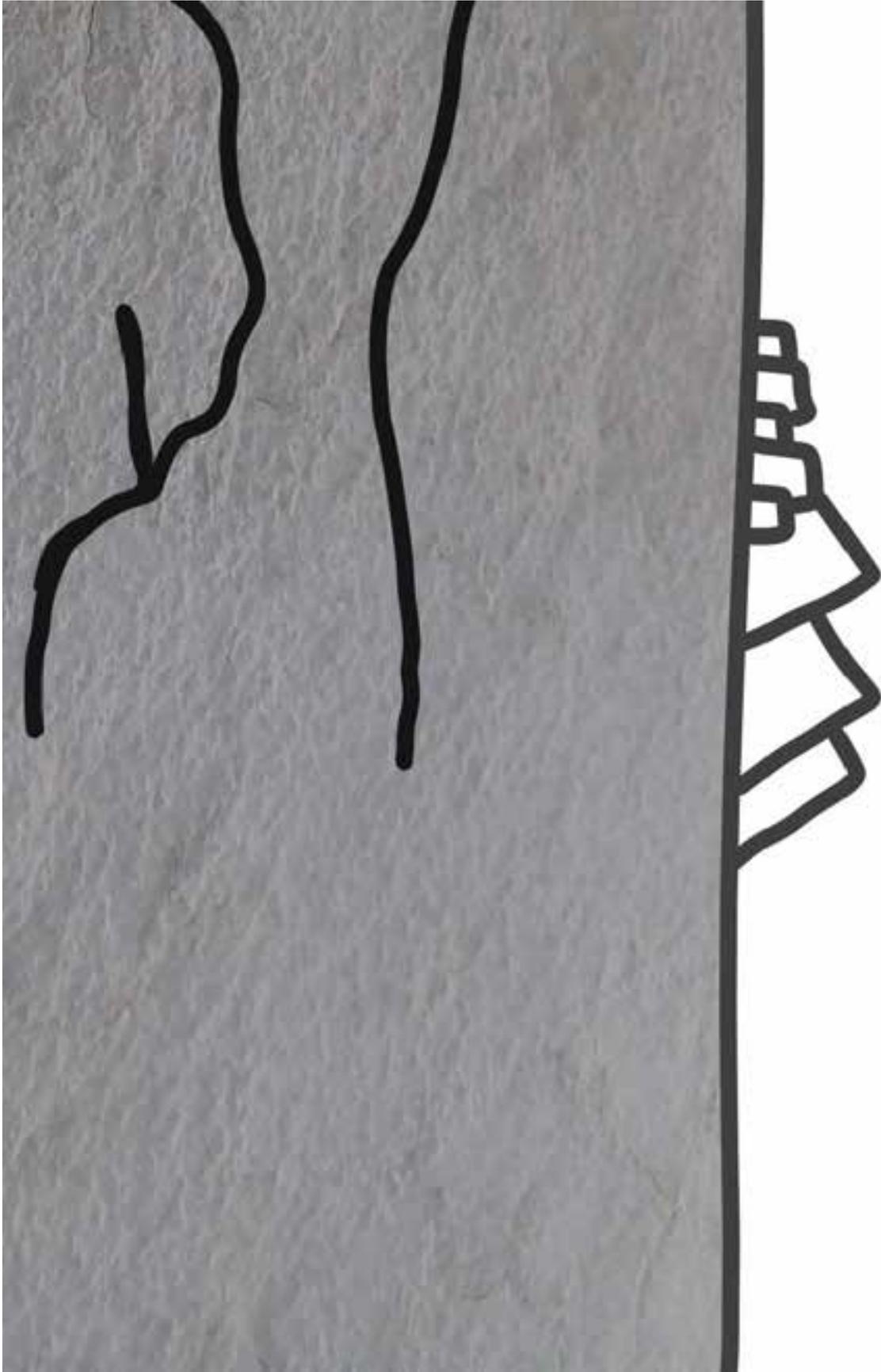
I don't expect that any of us are likely to have God speak to us from an unburned burning bush, to tell us what he wants us to do. Because God has done something even more astounding, to show us what he wants us to do about suffering and injustice. God has come as a human, as Jesus, and lived life in the midst of suffering and injustice, and calls us to follow his example.

The whole life of Jesus blazes with God's message to us.



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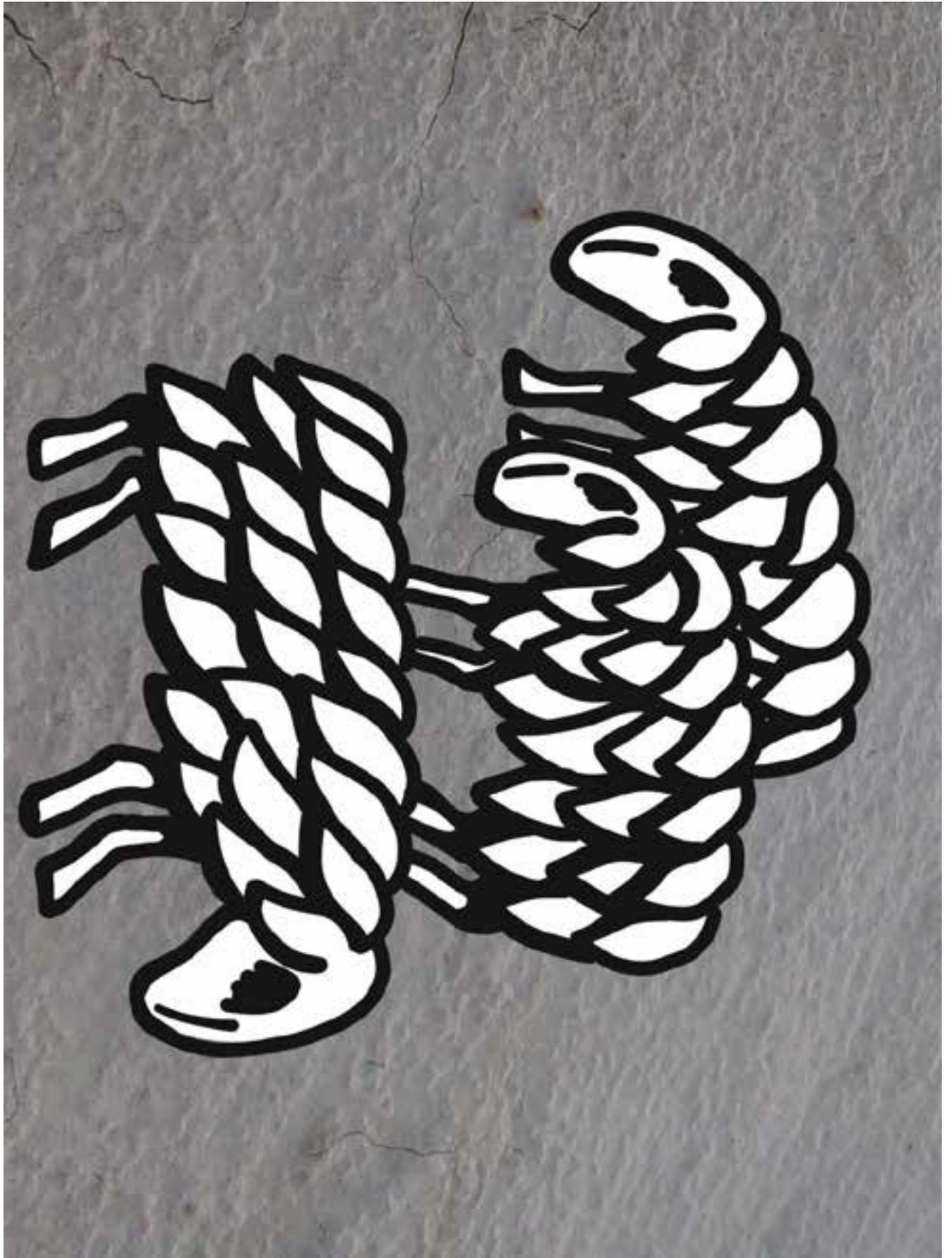


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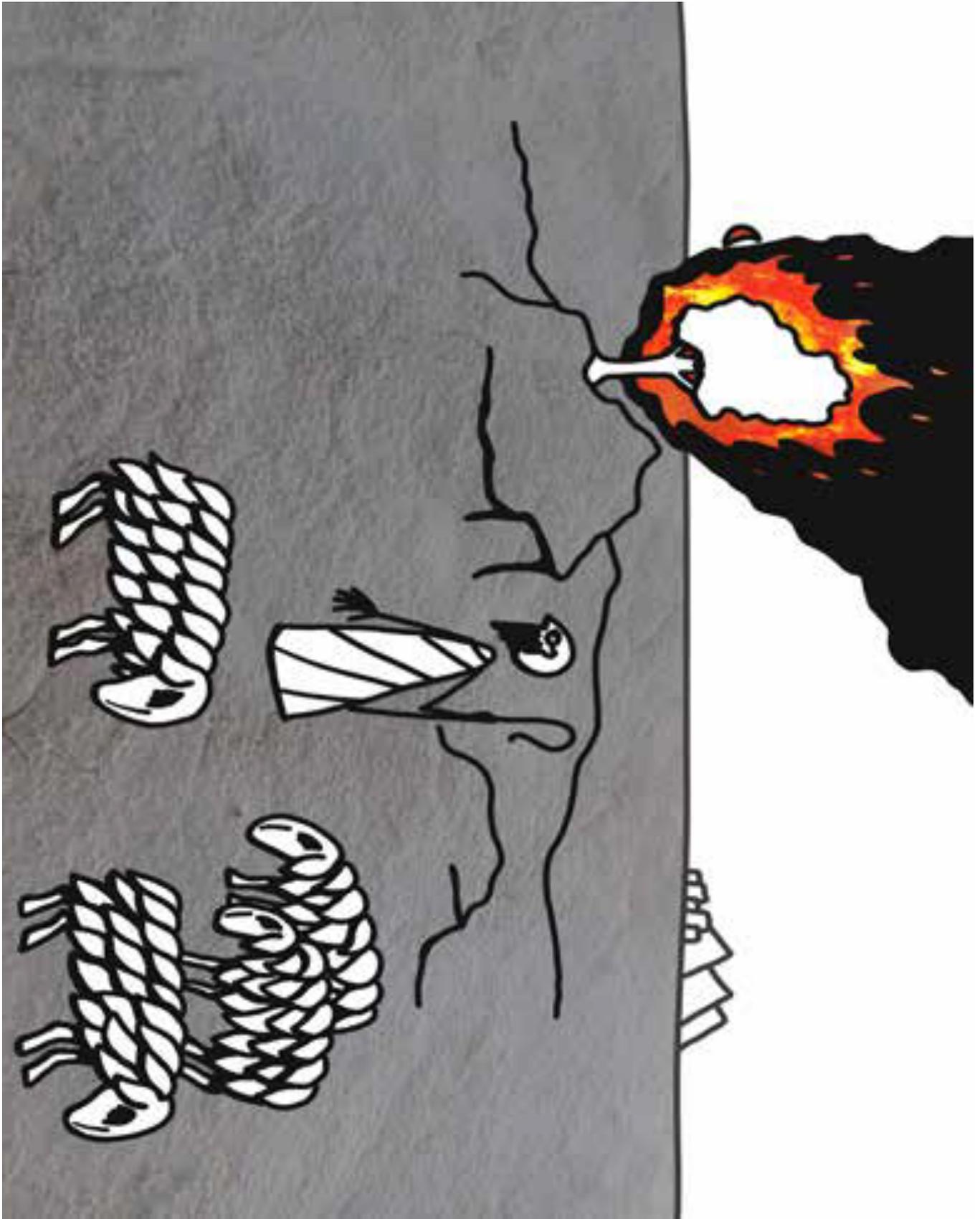
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