



Exodus 33: 12-23

(Lectionary Year A, Proper 24)

By Jude Waldron

An opportunity for us to pray together, to encourage each other to see a bigger picture of God.

You will need:

- A large print out of art (preferably a portrait of a person) and a larger piece of paper with a hole cut out of it;
- OR a series of powerpoint slides that reveal only sections of a larger artwork.
- A slide or large card with Exodus 34:6 written on it.

Time required:

5-6 minutes

Connect

When Moses was leading the people, he must have felt lonely.

It's not easy to be in the front and making decisions, and telling everyone else what to do. The people were trusting him...but they were not good at trusting him. It wasn't so hard for them, because they were able to see Moses. But Moses was trusting God, and he couldn't see him.

Moses had seen things that had shown him a bit what God was like. It's like this portrait – you can only guess at what bits you can see. Moses saw the burning bush when God first spoke to him (reveal one piece of the portrait); and then he saw plagues (move the cover to reveal a different piece of the portrait); and then saw the sea parted (another different piece); and water coming out of a rock (another piece); and food falling from the sky (another piece). But he never saw all of God, all at once, getting the full picture.

I wonder if you can guess what the whole picture that I've shown you is like?

Moses asked God "Please tell me the full picture! Show me that you're with me, because without you, I'm sunk!"

God showed him...his back. Still not the full picture, but much more than he had shown before. And God told him who he was.

He said:

**“The LORD, the LORD,
a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”**

And so today, when we can't see God, what do we do?

We are going to tell each other our pieces of the picture.

In small groups, look at these words (on the powerpoint or on a large card) and see if you can tell each other when you have seen something this week that was:

- merciful or gracious
- slow to anger
- steadfast and faithful.

When one of you tells the story, the rest of the group can say:

**“The LORD, the LORD,
a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”**

Finish the time by bringing all the groups together to sing a song about being able to see God: “Wonder” from Hillsong; “Open the eyes of my heart Lord”; “Be thou my vision”.

Prayer led from the front:

God, we struggle to see the full picture of who you are, but you see us fully. May we be pleasing in your sight, as you are mysterious in ours. Amen.



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