

# Themes in Exodus

## God Desires to Live with God's People

### Warm-up exercise and prayer

*Think about a place in or around your home where you have felt God's presence. Go around and share with one another, as you feel comfortable. When everyone has had a chance to share, pray:* God, thank you for coming down from heaven to be with us here on earth. Help us to continue to make room for you in our homes and workplaces, in our schedules and calendars. Be with us as we study your word. Amen.

**Read Exodus 19: 20-25** and **Exodus 25:1-9** and discuss the following questions

- What difference does it make that God intends to reside in the tabernacle, rather than Mount Sinai?
- Is there anywhere that you don't feel like God permits you to be?
- What are modern-day Mount Sinais and Tabernacles?

**Read Exodus 29:42-46** and discuss the following question

- What was stopping God from living among the Israelites while they were slaves?

**Read Exodus 35:1-22** and discuss the following questions

- What other time in Exodus did the people offer their own gold in order to make something?
- How would you describe the process of building of the Tabernacle and its furnishings?
- What are God's priorities in this story?

**Read Exodus 39:32-43 and 40:16-38** and discuss the following questions

- Why is it necessary for the Tabernacle to be so elaborate and to have all these things?
- What parts of our faith lives seem too elaborate? Not elaborate enough? How are we living in the Spirit of Exodus, or not?

## Tabernacle

Tabernacle sounds like a fancy word, but it just means "place to settle in" or "dwelling place." The Hebrew word is

מִשְׁכָּן

(*mishkan*) and comes from the Hebrew noun (*shakan*) which means to "settle down," or "abide." The word "tabernacle" comes from a Latin word meaning "tent." It's true that the tabernacle was a tent, but it was much more than that.

The completion of the Tabernacle is the highest goal of the book of Exodus. It allows God to be among God's people. It allows their dwelling place to be portable.

Where is God tabernacling (dwelling) today? How has this idea evolved over time? How are we messing up or getting right God's goals in Exodus?

