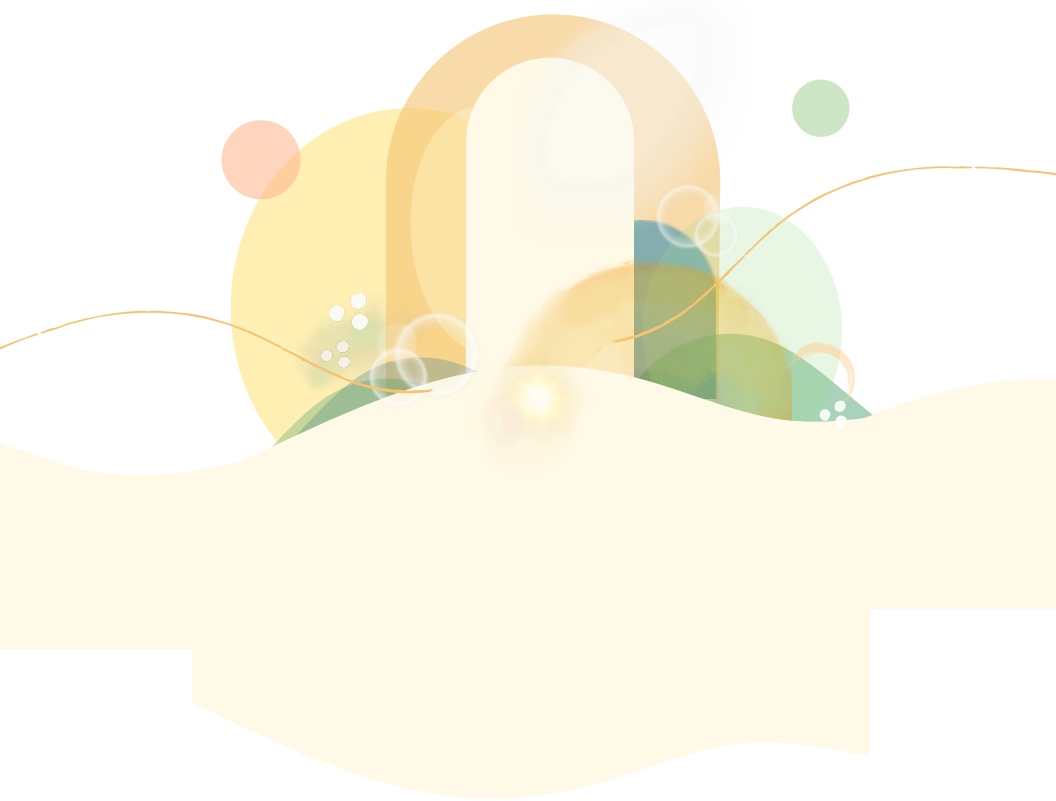




SCENE MAKER

THE MOMENTS THAT CHANGED THE STORY

STUDY GUIDE



How to Use this Study

Scene Maker

How to Use This Study

Life is made up of moments—some small, some defining. Most of the time, we don't realize which is which until later. This study is about learning to recognize the moments where God is at work—and how ordinary people step into those moments in ways that shape the story.

Each week, we will:

- Look at a key moment in Scripture
- Explore how someone stepped into that moment
- Reflect on what it means for our lives
- Take one simple step of faith

This is not about having all the right answers. It's about paying attention.

Come ready to:

- Listen
- Reflect honestly
- Learn from others
- Take one step forward

You don't have to change everything. Just be open to the moment in front of you.

Each Session Includes

The Moment (What's happening in the story)

The Tension (What's at stake or unclear)

The Shift (What changes in this moment)

Scripture Readings

Guided Questions

Take It Further (Group Discussion)

Why This Matters

A Practical Step

Closing Prayer

How to Use This Guide

- Come as you are—questions, doubts, and all.
- Read the Scriptures slowly and honestly.
- Answer what you can. Sit with what you can't.
- Try the weekly takeaway, not as a test, but as an invitation.

Week 1: When the Truth Changes the Direction (Huldah)

Main Idea

God uses truth-tellers to redirect the course of a story.

Icebreaker

What's a time someone told you something hard—but it changed your direction for the better?

The Moment

A forgotten book of the law is discovered. Everything feels uncertain.

The Tension

The leaders don't know what to do—or what God is saying.

The Shift

Huldah speaks with clarity, and the entire direction of the nation changes.

Scripture Readings + Questions

2 Kings 22:14-20

Why do they seek out Huldah? What does that reveal?

Psalms 25:4-5

What does it look like to ask God for guidance?

Hebrews 4:12

How does truth shape us?

Week 1: When the Truth Changes the Direction (Huldah)

Take It Further

Where do you need clarity right now?

What makes it difficult to seek or accept truth?

Why This Matters

Ignoring truth doesn't protect us—it delays transformation.

Why This Matters Question

What would change if you trusted that truth leads to life?

Practical Step

Pay Attention to Truth

Ask each day:

"God, what are you trying to show me?"

Closing Prayer

God of truth,
give me courage to see clearly
and respond with faith.
Amen.

Week 2: When You Step Forward Anyway (Junia)

Main Idea

God calls people to step into roles they may not expect—but are prepared for.

Icebreaker

When have you been asked to step into something you didn't feel ready for?

The Moment

Paul names Junia among the apostles.

The Tension

Her role is easy to overlook or misunderstand.

The Shift

We see that God has been calling leaders in ways people didn't always recognize.

Scripture Readings + Questions

Romans 16:7

What stands out about how Junia is described?

Acts 2:17

Who does God say He will use?

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

Week 2: When You Step Forward Anyway (Junia)

Take It Further

Where do people hesitate to step forward? Why?

Why This Matters

Many people wait for permission when God has already given calling.

Why This Matters Question

Where might God be inviting you to step forward?

Practical Step

Take One Step Forward

Do one thing this week that aligns with your calling—even if it feels small.

Closing Prayer

God who calls,
Give me courage to step forward
and trust your leading.
In Jesus name,
Amen.

Week 3: When you Help People Remember (Miriam)

Main Idea

Leaders help people remember what God has done.

Icebreaker

What's a song that brings back a strong memory?

The Moment

God delivers Israel through the Red Sea.

The Tension

Will the people remember—or move on?

The Shift

Miriam leads the people in celebration and remembrance.

Scripture Readings + Questions

Exodus 15:20-21

Why does Miriam respond with worship?

Micah 6:4

Why is she remembered as a leader?

Psalms 77:11-12

What does remembering do?

Week 3: When you Help People Remember (Miriam)

Take It Further

Why do people forget what God has done?

Why This Matters

What we remember shapes how we live.

Why This Matters Question

What would change if you actively remembered God's faithfulness?

Practical Step

Daily Remembering

Write down one way God showed up each day.

Closing Prayer

Faithful God,

Help me to remember your goodness

So I can trust you with more.

In Jesus name

Amen.

Week 4: When You Shape Someone Else's Story (Priscilla)

Main Idea

God uses ordinary relationships to shape extraordinary outcomes.

Icebreaker

Who has influenced your life in a quiet but meaningful way?

The Moment

Priscilla and Aquila meet Apollos.

The Tension

He is gifted—but incomplete in understanding.

The Shift

They invest in him, and his impact grows.

Scripture Readings + Questions

Acts 18:24-26

What is unique about how they teach Apollos?

Romans 16:3-5

What does partnership look like?

Galatians 6:9

Why does perseverance matter?

Week 4: When You Shape Someone Else's Story (Proscilla)

Take It Further

Why do we underestimate relational influence?

Why This Matters

Most impact happens in conversations, not platforms.

Why This Matters Question

Who might God be inviting you to invest in?

Practical Step

One Intentional Investment

Encourage, teach, or support one person this week.

Closing Prayer

God of relationships

Use me to help to others grow
in faith and truth.

In Jesus name,

Amen

Week 5: When You Story Through The Hard Part (Mary Magdalene)

Main Idea

Faithful presence positions you to witness what others miss.

Icebreaker

Who is someone you admire for staying when things got difficult?

The Moment

Mary remains present through the crucifixion and resurrection.

The Tension

Everything feels lost and uncertain.

The Shift

She becomes the first witness to the resurrection.

Scripture Readings + Questions

John 19:25

What does her presence reveal?

John 20:1-18

Why is she chosen to share the news?

Romans 5:3-5

What does perseverance produce?

Week 5: When You Story Through The Hard Part (Mary Magdalene)

Take It Further

Why is it hard to stay present in difficult moments?

Why This Matters

God often works in the moments we're tempted to leave.

Why This Matters Question

Where might God be inviting you to stay instead of withdraw?

Practical Step

Stay Close

Choose one situation this week where you remain present instead of stepping back.

Closing Prayer

God of promises,

Give me the courage to stick to
when I want to create distance.

Help me to see you at work.

In Jesus name,

Amen

Appendix A: Women in Ministry

Introduction

In the United Methodist tradition, we understand God's work through Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience. These four lenses help us see not just isolated verses, but the larger story of how God calls and equips people for ministry.

When we apply these lenses to the question of women in pastoral leadership, a consistent picture emerges: God calls and uses women in significant ways, and the church has gradually learned to recognize that calling.

Scripture

Throughout Scripture, women are not passive observers but active participants in God's work. Huldah speaks truth to a nation. Miriam leads worship and is named alongside Moses. Priscilla teaches and forms believers. Junia is recognized among the apostles. Mary Magdalene is entrusted with proclaiming the resurrection.

While a few passages appear restrictive, the broader narrative shows God consistently working through women in leadership roles. A Wesleyan approach reads these passages in light of the whole story, not in isolation.

Tradition

The history of the church shows a pattern of women serving in leadership, even when not fully recognized. In early Christianity, women led house churches and disciplined believers.

Appendix A: Women in Ministry

In Methodism, John Wesley initially hesitated about women preaching but changed his position when he saw clear evidence of God's work. Women like Mary Bosanquet Fletcher and Sarah Crosby became important leaders.

Tradition reveals not a fixed rule, but a growing awareness of God's calling.

Reason

Wesley emphasized practical theology: is God at work? Is there fruit? If a person demonstrates wisdom, leadership, and spiritual impact, reason suggests we should affirm that calling.

If God gives gifts and uses those gifts to build the church, it raises a simple but powerful question: why would we deny that calling based on gender?

Experience

The United Methodist Church affirms women in ministry because it has witnessed the fruit of their leadership. Women preach, lead, disciple, and transform lives. Experience does not replace Scripture—it confirms what Scripture already suggests: God calls people without regard to gender.

Conclusion

From a Wesleyan perspective, the question is not whether women can lead, but whether we are willing to recognize where God is already at work.

Faithfulness means paying attention to the Spirit, even when it challenges our assumptions.

Appendix B: History of Women in UMC

Susanna Wesley

Susanna Wesley is often called the 'Mother of Methodism.' Though not ordained, her influence profoundly shaped the movement.

She led spiritual formation in her home, taught theology to her children, and created structured practices of prayer and learning. Her leadership demonstrated that spiritual authority does not depend on formal titles.

Early Methodism

In the 1700s, women like Sarah Crosby and Mary Bosanquet Fletcher began preaching and leading.

John Wesley initially hesitated but affirmed their ministry after seeing its effectiveness.

Wesley's approach was simple: if God is clearly using someone, the church should not stand in the way.

19th Century Developments

Women continued to lead in Methodist and related movements, often without formal recognition. They preached, led small groups, and expanded the reach of the church.

This period highlights a key pattern: calling often comes before institutional approval.

Appendix B: History of Women in UMC

1956 Milestone

In 1956, the Methodist Church granted full clergy rights to women. This marked a significant shift, allowing women to be ordained and serve as pastors with full recognition.

Formation of the UMC

In 1968, the United Methodist Church was formed, fully affirming women in ministry. Equality in leadership became part of its identity and mission.

Today, women serve as pastors, bishops, and leaders across the global United Methodist Church.

This reflects a growing alignment between the church's practices and the broader witness of Scripture and experience.

Conclusion

The history of women in ministry is not a new development but a story of recognition catching up to reality.

God has always been calling women; the church has been learning to notice.

Appendix C: Common Questions About Women in Ministry

Introduction

Questions about women in ministry are important and deserve thoughtful responses. This section is not about winning arguments but about faithful reflection.

Biblical Concerns

Some passages seem to restrict women's roles. However, these are often situational and must be read alongside the broader biblical narrative where women lead, teach, and proclaim.

A Wesleyan approach prioritizes the full witness of Scripture rather than isolated texts.

Jesus and Women

Jesus consistently elevated women, teaching them, including them among his followers, and entrusting them with important roles.

Mary Magdalene, being the first witness to the resurrection, is a powerful example of this.

Church History

The church has not always been consistent in its approach. Women have led in many contexts, even when not formally recognized.

Methodism itself includes a history of women preachers and leaders.

Appendix C: Common Questions About Women in Ministry

Cultural Influence

Some argue that affirming women in ministry is influenced by culture. However, the presence of spiritual fruit suggests the work of the Holy Spirit. The key question is not cultural alignment but discernment of God's activity.

Affirming women in ministry does not diminish men's roles. Instead, it expands the church's understanding of how God calls people.

Leadership is not a limited resource; it is a shared calling.

Conclusion

The deeper question is whether we are willing to recognize the work of God when it appears in unexpected ways.

Faithfulness requires openness, humility, and a willingness to grow.

Study Guide