

Prayer of Preparation: God of us all, we call you Creator, Abba, Almighty, Amazing, and Unknowable. Speak to us...call us by name. *Amen.*

O LORD, you have searched me and known me. We are still talking about faith; the Psalmist is talking to us about our faith in God...that God knows us and that we can place our faith in that knowledge. With the phrase *O LORD, you have searched me and known me*, the psalmist reveals who God is and who we are.

God, whom we know as Creator, created us...every part of us. God, who created heaven and earth and called it good, created us...and called us good. Creating God wants to know us...every part of us; *For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.* God, who created heaven and earth and called it good, is the same God who created us...and called us good.

God, whom we lovingly call *Abba*, Father, or more personally pappa or daddy, calls us into relationship with him in love, because of love...*Abba* knows us...every part of us. *Abba*, Father, *You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.*

We know God as Almighty...knowing all, seeing all, being all. The psalmist says it this way, *Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.*

God knows us by name; my children would say God knows our "government" names. The ones that come on our birth certificates, social security cards, and driver's license. God knows our name but prefers to call us beloved, loved, and children. God invites us to become family...yet closer than family.

God invites us to come closer. Come closer and lean our heads and hearts on God who knows us from head to toe and inside out. Come closer and lean our heads and hearts on God who knows us, seeks us, and loves us. That's what this psalm is all about...God who knows us, God who seeks us, and God who loves us. God knows our name and calls us beloved.

That's God's character. To search out every part of us. To know us: body, mind, and spirit. To look that those parts of us which are pleasing and beautiful and call us beloved. And then to look at those pieces of us that aren't pleasing and beautiful...the parts that need remolding, remaking, reteaching, and rethinking. God's character is to look at all the pieces and call us beloved. Every single part of us: the good parts, the bad parts, and the ugly parts.

God's character is to seek out all the parts and call us by name; call us beloved. What should be our response to such grace? We should hear. We should hear God calling us. We should hear God whispering, we should hear God shouting, we should hear God nudging...Dionne, beloved, come closer to me. Abide in me. Walk with me. Become a part of my family.

Here's the thing about God's calling: God knows everything about us. I know I keep saying this but it's true. From the moment we were conceived, God knows. And God calls us by name. When God calls us, God knows all our rough areas which cause us trouble. God knows our rough edges and God wants to use them. God wants to use our experiences, our knowledge, and our wisdom. God wants to give each of us a HUGE dose of grace, add all our short comings, and send us out into the world to be the gospel. Be the gospel, not as perfect people, but as a restored people completely searched and known by God...completely and wholly used by God to be Jesus to the world.

God knows our name. And calls us beloved.

Response to the Word: God of us all, we call you Creator, Abba, Almighty, Amazing, and Unknowable.
Speak to us...call us beloved. ***Amen.***