

artisan church

Awe

values exploration

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this kit is to help you to explore what Artisan's values mean to you, how you are living them out in your day-to-day life, and to foster collective re-engagement of the Artisan community to develop ways we can more fully embody our values.

This kit can be completed by individuals, friends, families, or small groups -whatever is right for you. You should complete the activities at your own pace, but we would suggest to try to work through one activity from each section (Define, Reflect, Immerse, Challenge, and Act) at a time.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Journaling activities can be done on an individual basis or in community. You can choose to write down your answers in a notebook, or share with others.

When practicing meditation, particularly if you are new to the practice, it is important that you forgive yourself for being distracted. We suggest meditating for 5-10 minutes, but an even shorter period will work, just find what works for you. Find a quiet place and set a timer to countdown so you are not distracted by the time. Sit in a posture that is comfortable, but still feels like you are alert. Take a few deep breaths to begin and consciously relax your shoulders and other tense areas. The meditations suggested will give you a focus, or you can focus on your breath. Every time you notice yourself distracted, gently guide your attention back to your focus, without judgement. Try to increase the amount of time you meditate as you go along.



Define

Activity 1: Journaling

How do you define awe?

Describe a time you recently experienced awe.

Ask two people what they think of when they hear the word awe.

Awe is defined by the Merriam Webster dictionary as:

Awe noun

1: an emotion variously combining dread, veneration, and wonder that is inspired by authority or by the sacred or sublime

2: archaic

a: dread, terror

b: the power to inspire dread

Awe verb: awed; awing

1: to inspire or fill with awe

How does this definition compare to or change how you define awe?

Activity 2:

Word Association Exercise

Write down the words that pop into your head as you consider the word awe. Alternatively, if you have access to the internet, visit Visuwords.com and type in the word "awe" or "awesome". By double-clicking on the connected words, you can expand the word network.

Did these connections make you consider awe in a new light? In what ways?

Activity 3: Bible Study - Lectio Divina

Artisan Church's value of Awe reads:

We humbly recognize the sovereign power, reverent mystery, and gracious wonder of God, who is worthy of our worship and full devotion.

*Psalms 118:23; Job 5:9; Job 26:1-14;
Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 13:12;
Hebrews 12:18-29*

Choose one of the verses above to study using the [spiritual practice of lectio divina](#):

1. **Read** the passage, listening with the "ear of your heart." What phrase, sentence or even one word stands out to you?

2. Read the passage again and **Reflect** on the word of God. Be aware of what touches you, a thought or reflection that is meaningful. Allow a minute or two of silence.

3. Read the passage again and **Respond** spontaneously to the word of God. Be aware of any prayer that rises up within that expresses the experience. Allow a minute or two of silence.

4. Read the passage a final time and **Rest** in the word, reflect or pray and allow God to speak in the silence. Allow 3-4 minutes of silence.

What stood out to you in the verse you studied? How does that change the way you see the value of awe?

Define

Activity 4: Bible Study - Lexicon/Blue Letter Bible

Let's look some more at how awe is talked about in the bible. If you have access to the internet, go to BlueLetterBible.org or download the Blue Letter Bible app on your phone or tablet.

Using their search engine, search for verses in which the word awe is used. Note that the number of uses may vary between translations, so check out a few different ones.

Read the verses. If you have time, go to each verse and look at the context for each use of the word.

What do these verses have in common?

How do these verses expand your idea of awe?

Reflect

Activity 1: Journaling

Why did you choose to explore this value?

What images, objects, or ideas capture your imagination when you think of awe?

Activity 2: Journaling

How have you experienced the value of awe?

At what time in your life did you feel most connected to this value?

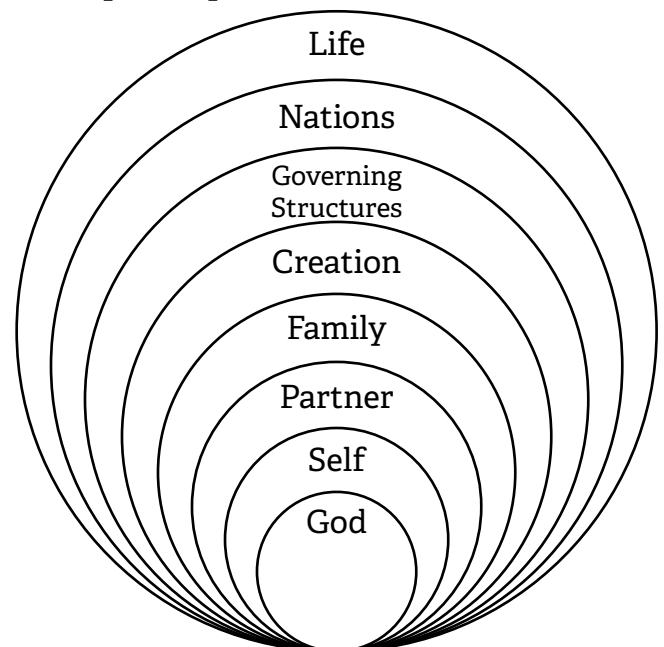
What feelings are stirred when you consider this value?

Activity 3: Journaling

How have you seen awe exhibited in people's lives, including your own?

**Who in your life embodies this value well?
In what ways?**

Lisa Sharon Harper uses this diagram in *The Very Good Gospel* to illustrate the different circles of relationship. There may be layers of this diagram that do not resonate for you. That's okay. Feel free to skip layers that don't connect with you or add layers beyond what's listed here.



Reflect

Starting with your relationship to God, how could you express the value of awe in these relationships?

Activity 4: Meditation

Meditate for 5 min, using the word awe, or awesome, as your mantra. When distracted, forgive yourself and return your focus to the word.

Afterward, write down any thoughts about this value that arose during your meditation.

Immerse

Activity 1:

Candle Meditation

Find a space where you feel comfortable and calm. Sit in a comfortable spot. If it's safe for you, light a small candle and put it in a safe place within your eyesight. If a flame isn't safe for you or those around you, you can use a battery-operated candle or any other light source. With your eyes fixed on the candle or other light source, take a few deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Then, with your eyes still fixed on the candle or other light source, meditate on the value. Perhaps say the value out loud or silently. Give yourself a few minutes to meditate on the value and observe the light. Close by taking a few deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Reflect on how you felt during this meditation time. Make sure to blow out the candle if you're using one.

Activity 2: Observation

In your packet, you will find some sand in a small baggie. You can use this or another natural object of your choice, for this exercise. Use your senses (as you're able) to observe the object.

Sight: In your packet you will also have a magnifying glass. Spend some time observing the sand with the magnifying glass. **What do you see magnified that you don't see otherwise?**

Touch: Hold the sand in your hand and rub some of it between your fingers or on the palm of your hand. **What do you feel?**

Consider the number of grains and the size of each. Consider the origin of each grain of sand and the forces that brought them to this moment. **How do your observations of the sand reflect the mystery of creation?**

Activity 3: Audio

Listen to some of the following songs or read through the lyrics ([links to audio and lyrics](#) can be found in the online version of the values exploration kit):

Every Cell - United Pursuit

So Will I (100 Billion X) - Hillsong Worship

Saturn - Sleeping at Last

Every Grain of Sand - Bob Dylan

Crags and Clay - Gungor

All Creatures of Our God and King - Luther

What images of or connections to awe do the artist's lyrics bring to mind?

What new connections to awe did you find in the song(s)?

Immerse

Activity 4: Art Engagement - Meditation and Prayer

Pick an art piece below that resonates with you and your understanding or experience of awe.

DESCRIPTION

First, create a mental description of the artwork. Build a list of what you actually see. Look for recognizable objects. Consider what seems to be happening. What types of lines, colors, shapes, and textures do you see?

ANALYSIS

Next, explore the visual structure and the artist's choices. How did the artist arrange the elements? Where does the emphasis seem to be? What stands out to you or captures your attention? Notice how your eye moves around the artwork. What areas make you stop for longer moments, or return frequently? How do the colors influence your attention? Which colors stand out to you? Why do you think that might be?

INTERPRETATION

Next, work towards making meaning of what you see. What story might the artist be telling? What details help to add meaning?

Does this work of art seem to express an emotion or mood? Does anything you have noticed in this work of art remind you of a personal experience? You could also consider Biblical or spiritual connections, especially to the Artisan value of awe.

EVALUATION & REFLECTION

Finally, evaluate the artwork. This is where you make it personal, reflect, and pray. Based on your observations and interpretation, what stands out most to you? Why do you think the artist created this work? What have you discovered through this process? What is your personal opinion about this artwork? Does this painting invoke a sense of awe for you? Can you name why or why not? In what ways, if any, does this painting create a sense of awe for you personally? Reflect on any questions it has brought to mind. Spend time in silent meditation or prayer, based on your experiences with this observation process.



Diego Rivera
Creation, 1922-1923
Fresco and gold leaf mural
[Image via wikiart.org](https://www.wikiart.org/en/Diego-Rivera/Creation)

Immerse



Lovie Wise. *Nurture*, 2018. Illustration. [Image from loveiswise.com](https://loveiswise.com)



Raphael. *Transfiguration*, 1518-1520. Oil on wood. [Image via Web Gallery of Art](https://www.web-gallery.com)

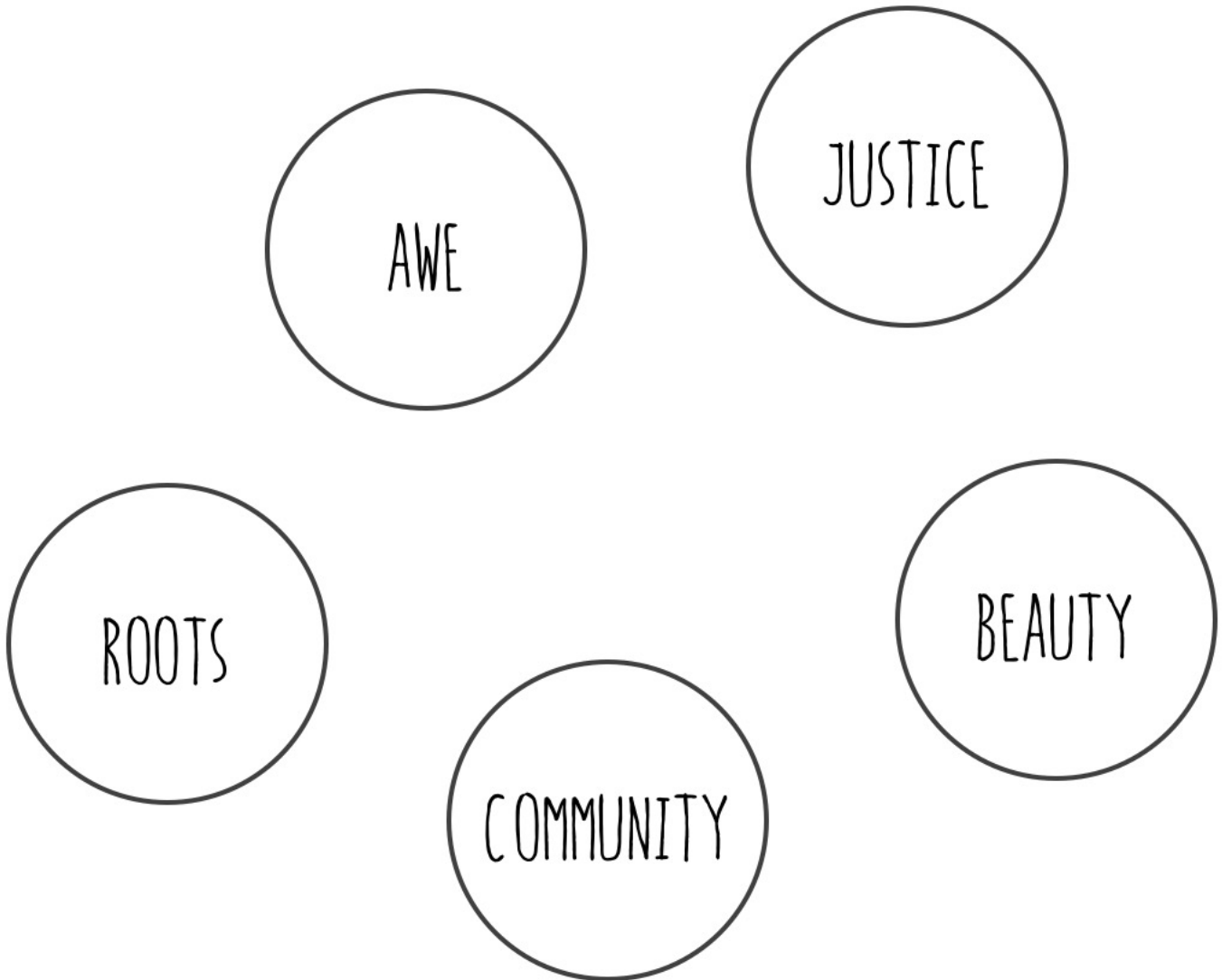
Yayoi Kusama
Fireflies on the Water, 2002
Mirror, plexiglass,
150 lights, and water.
[Image via whitney.org](https://www.whitney.org)



Immerse

Activity 5: Connections

In this activity, consider how the value of awe connects to the other four Artisan values: roots, justice, community and beauty. **Use the diagram below to explore these connections by drawing or writing in the connections you come up with.**



Challenge

Activity 1: Journaling

How well do you feel that you embody this value? In what ways?

If you don't feel that you embody this value very well, what do you think is holding you back?

Activity 2: Journaling

Can you think of ways that this value or verses associated with this value have been or could be used to harm others?

What could we do to prevent that?

Activity 3: Journaling

Not everyone connects with each value. Is there anything in the description of this value or the accompanying verses that you think is problematic?

What could be added to the description that would make it easier for you to connect with this value?

There are many gifts and virtues discussed in the Bible. What other values do you think we're missing?

Act

Activity 1: Journaling

What does it look like to live this value everyday?

What act will you do to show yourself and others that you value awe?

Activity 2: Learn

Learn more about how to live out this value. You can learn from a book/website/social media personality, or really any source. If you can, post the resources you find on Instagram with #ArtisanValuesAwe.

Activity 3: Practice

While we encourage you to explore how to express this value in your everyday life, we don't have to do it all ourselves. Find a place/organization/person who engages with this value and give them some support. Volunteer, affirm, donate.

Activity 4: One Little Thing

Here is a list of little things you can do to embrace awe in your life. Or come up with your own!

- Spend time outside noticing the world
- Stargaze
- Sing at the top of your lungs
- Identify one thing you find awesome about your body, and spend some time in gratitude for your body
- Sit in silence and darkness
- Bake bread and watch the yeast rise
- Watch a documentary like Cosmos or Planet Earth
- Go bird/bug watching