Under Construction

Key References: Exodus 35:30-40:38; Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 30, pp. 343-358; The Bible Story (1994), vol. 2, pp. 163-168; 182-187; Our Beliefs nos. 12, 3, 22
“Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8).

Have you ever been a part of building a church? Are you a part of the worship that goes on inside your church? In what way?

The people of Israel had chosen to create and worship a golden calf while Moses, their leader, was up on the mountain talking with God. While God was giving Moses instructions for building a sanctuary so He could dwell with His people, those same people were acting as if God didn’t exist. But finally God and His people were working together once again. Moses gave the people the special directions God had given him for building a copy of the temple in heaven. But God gave more than directions.

God gave Bezalel, of the tribe of Judah, a special ability in crafts. He could make artistic designs and could work in gold, silver, bronze, precious stones, and wood. And He gave Oholiab, of the tribe of Dan, the gift of teaching others.
But they were not the only ones. God gave special skills and abilities to many other people as well. Together the people of Israel prepared to build a place where they could worship God together, and where God would live among them again.

The builders and skilled workers were not the only ones involved in this big worship project. Materials were needed. Everything used in making the tabernacle would be brought as an offering by the people. Moses let the people know exactly what was needed. He also told them that God wanted gifts only from those who loved Him and truly wanted to give something for His tabernacle.

So the work began. Each day the
skilled artisans went to work. Each day the people lined up with offerings of gold, jewels, and any other items that might be needed.

One day the artisans and builders came to see Moses. They asked him to stop the people from bringing more offerings. They hardly had room to work for all the gifts the people had brought. They had more than enough.

So Moses gave an order that no man or woman was to make or bring anything else for the building of the tabernacle.

But the work of making a place for God to live among them continued. First 10 large blue, purple, and scarlet curtains made of fine linen and embroidered with cherubim were woven and decorated for the walls of the tabernacle. The curtains were fastened together with loops and gold clasps. Over the linen curtains were placed goat hair curtains. And then skins were placed over everything to protect it.

Frames, silver sockets, and cross-bars—all of them covered with gold—
were prepared. And last, but not least, the hanging for the doorway was made by an embroiderer with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn.

Layer by layer the tabernacle was built, just as layer by layer the people were learning again to trust and worship. Then came the making of the special furnishings. The most important of these was the ark, the special place where God would dwell. Bezalel himself worked on the ark, carefully crafting the mercy seat and the cherubim that covered it. But he assigned other artisans to make the table, the lampstand, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering, and the table for washing.
After that the special clothing and equipment for the priests were prepared. Altogether the people had brought a little more that 2,024 pounds (1,000 kilograms) of gold for making God’s tabernacle. If this much gold were made into a cube, it would be 14 inches (37.25 centimeters) on a side. They had brought 7,582 pounds (3,440 kilograms) of silver, and about 5,337 pounds (2,421 kilograms) of bronze. Not to mention the precious stones, spices, special wood, cloth, and animal skins.

Moses inspected all the work the people had done. And they had done it all according to the directions Moses had given them from God. Moses was pleased, and so was God. God gave Moses special instructions for setting up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month.

When everything was in place, the cloud in which God showed His presence covered the tabernacle. The glory of the Lord filled it. From then on God’s presence stayed with His people while they traveled to the Promised Land. When the cloud lifted from the tabernacle, the people packed their camp and moved on. When the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, the people stayed right where they were.

So it is today. God is present with us when we worship Him together.
Instructions: The answers to the following questions are either YES or NO. Place the letter that corresponds to the correct answer in the right column.

Puzzle Clue: God joins us when we ______________ ___________ ______________

Questions:

1. Did God give the ability and talent to the people who would construct His sanctuary? (Ex. 36:1, 2)
2. Did the workers tell Moses that the people were not bringing enough materials to make the sanctuary? (Ex. 36:4, 5)
3. Did the skilled workmen make the tabernacle using 10 curtains of black and gold silk? (Ex. 36:8)
4. Did they make a tent to cover the ram skins dyed red? (Ex. 36:14, 19)
5. Did they make the frames and crossbars of acacia wood? (Ex. 36:20, 31)
6. Did the workers overlay the frames, the crossbars, and the rings to hold the crossbars in gold? (Ex. 36:34)
7. Did Bezalel build the ark and overlay only the outside of it in pure gold? (Ex. 37:1, 2)
8. Did they make of pure gold the plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers for the table? (Ex. 37:16)
9. Did they make the lampstand from two talents of pure gold? (Ex. 37:24)
10. Did they make the altar of burnt offering and its utensils of pure bronze? (Ex. 38:1)
11. Did all the posts of the courtyard have silver bands? (Ex. 38:17)
12. Did the total of 603,550 people include everyone over the age of 18? (Ex. 38:26)
13. Did they mount the onyx stones in gold settings? (Ex. 39:6)
14. Did the “ministers” have pure gold bells attached to the hems of their robes? (Ex. 39:25)
15. Did Moses bless the workmen after he inspected the finished work? (Ex. 39:43)
16. Did Moses and Aaron set up the tabernacle as God had commanded? (Ex. 40:16-18)
17. Did a cloud filled with God’s light by day and fire by night cover the tabernacle? (Ex. 40:38)
18. Did the cloud lift above the tabernacle when God wanted the Israelites to worship Him? (Ex. 40:37)