

Love's Braided Dance Study Guide Week 3

This week's reading: Chapters 5 A Forgiveness-Seeking Hope & 6 A Forgiveness-Granting Hope

Spiritual Practice

Begin by centering yourselves in a few breaths of stillness. Invite participants to hold in mind a situation, person, or community where forgiveness, either offered or received, feels tender or unfinished.

[Spiritual Practice: Loving Kindness Meditation](#)

Scriptures

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

[Doctrine & Covenants 163:2b-3b](#)

2b. Generously share the invitation, ministries, and sacraments through which people can encounter the Living Christ who heals and reconciles through redemptive relationships in sacred community. The restoring of persons to healthy or righteous relationships with God, others, themselves, and the earth is at the heart of the purpose of your journey as a people of faith.

3 a. You are called to create pathways in the world for peace in Christ to be relationally and culturally incarnate. The hope of Zion is realized when the vision of Christ is embodied in communities of generosity, justice, and peacefulness.

b. Above all else, strive to be faithful to Christ's vision of the peaceable Kingdom of God on earth. Courageously challenge cultural, political, and religious trends that are contrary to the reconciling and restoring purposes of God. Pursue peace.

Discussion

Transformation, Not Forgetting - *"Transformation is not reconciliation, especially if by reconciliation we mean something like the forgetting of past wrongs, the concealing of wounds, or the assumption of an easy harmony. Wounds often remain as the visible reminder that the trauma is having ongoing effects that require correction, patience, forbearance, and mercy."* - p.82

- In Community of Christ, we believe that God continues to work with us and through us in our imperfection. How does this understanding shape the way we think about forgiveness as an ongoing process rather than a single moment?
- Wirzba says that true reconciliation doesn't erase wounds but transforms them. What does it look like when a wound becomes a teacher rather than something we hide?

The Role of Community - *"What the person in pain requires is a community of support that provides a protective space in which processes of healing might occur."* — p.82

- How can our congregations and small groups become the kind of "protective space" Wirzba describes, a community where wounds are acknowledged, not hidden?
- How have you experienced God's healing grace through community?

Words and Actions - On page 104, *"The doing of sorry continues with the work of correcting the systems and behaviors that bring about pain and suffering. Apology needs to be accompanied by accountability on the part of those admitting injustice."* - p. 104

- In Community of Christ, we talk about Responsible Choices and Pursuit of Peace. How do those principles call us beyond words into the real work of healing systems and relationships?
- What might it look like for us, as a church, to embody a forgiveness that repairs harm and restores trust?

Weekly Practices

Reflect & Journal - Forgiveness, as Desmond Tutu reminds us, is "the journey toward wholeness." It doesn't erase pain or excuse wrongdoing, it transforms us, softens what has hardened, and restores connection where separation once lived. Where in your life are you still carrying the weight of unforgiven hurt, toward another person, toward yourself, or even toward the world? How might forgiveness, or the intention to forgive, free up space in your heart for compassion, creativity, and renewal?

Find a Restoration Project Forgiveness and healing aren't just inward acts, they ripple outward into how we live and care for creation. This week, explore how you might join in the work of restoration right where you are.

- Research local habitat restoration, tree planting, or river clean-up efforts near you.
- If no formal group is nearby, choose a small act of care, picking up litter on your street, planting native flowers, or tending to a community garden.

Spiritual Practice: Loving-Kindness Meditation – Spend a few quiet minutes each day offering blessings of love and compassion, first to yourself, then to loved ones, then to those you struggle with, and finally to the world.

- [Loving-kindness meditation: what it is, how to practice and why — Calm Blog](#)
- [A Lovingkindness Meditation](#) with Sylvia Boorstein
- Participate in the [10 Day Lovingkindness Challenge](#) by Sharon Salzberg.

Start a Conversation: Read, watch or listen to one of the resources listed below. Think of ways you can use this piece of media to start a conversation that goes beyond the superficial. Share it with a friend or family member.

Closing Poem

Regenerative Work

By Emory Hall

From [Made of Rivers](#)

i have learned that
forgiveness
is a fire.
and while some fires are lit
to destroy,
others are lit
to regenerate.

i am working with the latter.
learning the heart-work
of making space
for things to bloom
where there once was
no room
for new life.

Other Resources

- Article: [Volunteers help plant ... trees this weekend at the Bear River Massacre Site](#)
- Article: [Peace-Keeping, Peace-Making, or Peace-Building | Peacebuilding Education](#)
- Article: [Praying the imprecatory psalms with Bonhoeffer | The Christian Century](#)
- Video: [The Shoshone Nation's quest to reclaim Bear River | WILD HOPE](#)
- Poem: [regenerative work](#)
- Song: [Speak your mind by Henrik](#)
- Blessing: [A Blessing for Those Trying to Stay Soft by Kate Bowler](#)
- Children's Book: [I Am You: A Book About Ubuntu by Refiloe Moahloli](#) or [I Am You: A Book About Ubuntu Read Aloud](#)