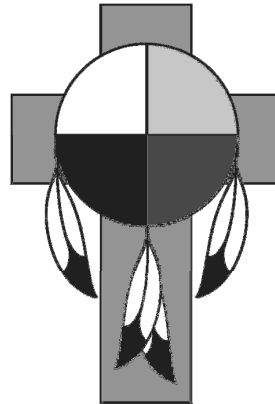


Lent 2012

A Congregational Resource

“Seeking God’s Justice for All”

**Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery
Part Three**



The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.
Psalm 103:6 NRSV

Forward

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Collect for Ash Wednesday

“Seeking God’s Justice for All”

“Seeking God’s Justice for All” is the third part of an ongoing Lifelong Faith Formation resource which responds to the 2009 General Convention resolution D035 in which the Episcopal Church repudiated and renounced the “Doctrine of Discovery” a set of legal and ecclesiastical documents and policies which gave the full blessing and sanction of the Church to the colonizing dispossession (genocide) of the Indigenous peoples and lands of the Americas.

In that our Baptismal vows evoke from all Episcopalians promises -- with God’s help -- “to seek and serve Christ in all persons” and “to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being”, we are compelled to learn of and reflect at length on these disparities between our Christian faith and the history of our nation and Church. The hope for this process of transformation calls the Church into renewed vision and action with Christ at the center of one sacred circle of all of God’s many and diverse peoples.

Lent has been traditionally a time for repentance and amendment of life, a time for preparing those who are new to the Church for Baptism, for restoring those who have been away from the church and are returning, and a more general call to all who follow Jesus for renewal of faith and deepening of (personal/ individual) spiritual life and practice.

The woundedness, separation, and estrangement of humans from God, each other and the Creation that are the focus of Lent have more than one pattern. It is not only “our personal sins” that bring about alienation and call for healing and reconciliation. God’s people are also separated from God and each other by events and experiences of injustice, tragedy and oppression. That is, both the wrongs that we do, as well as the wounds “that we absorb from one-another” are very much at the heart of the reconciling journey through Lent.

The familiar language of the Collect for Ash Wednesday, where the focus of Lent is directed toward the reconciliation of penitents with God, primarily through “lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness,” conveys very well the pattern of reconciliation that deals with our personal sins. However, it may not assist us to grasp other patterns of reconciliation that take on our experiences of or witness to oppression, tragic suffering, and injustice. These wounds and “wretchedness” call for the reconciling and healing movements of God which restore the brokenhearted and the oppressed to the liberation of hope and new life in the Holy One.

Thus, while we most certainly do come to Lent in order to “lament our sins”, we also enter this holy season in order to lay before God the wretchedness that “we” experience and or

witness as tragic suffering, injustice and oppression. Thus, Lent is a season for both repentance and lamentation:

“Repentance, turning away from that which wounds and separates us
turning towards God and each other, and the Creation”

“Lamentation, crying out in distress to God and to each other about the wounds
that we experience and witness”

Given this view of Lent as a holy season for both repentance and lamentation, it is especially fitting that we use these days as a time of communal spiritual preparation for Holy Week and the international lament over the Doctrine of Discovery to be held next summer at General Convention, and at other locations around the nation.

“WE” – Who are “we”?

The series, “Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery” is a direct response to Resolution DO35 from General Convention 2009 by which the Episcopal Church repudiated the genocide and colonization of Native people authorized by various papal bulls, royal letters, and legal principles such as the Doctrine of Discovery, Jamestown Charter of 1607, and Manifest Destiny.

In taking on such a challenging historical series of events, which to this day continue to diminish the lives and rights of Indigenous people in North America, it is very important that we not lose sight of who “we” are in the matter. We, the people of the Episcopal Church, are people who have experienced, witnessed and struggled with all aspects of the Doctrine of Discovery. *“We” are both the oppressed and the oppressor.* “We” who are God’s people in the Episcopal Church include both Indigenous people, and all of those who have come to this land from other places, and under varying circumstances and conditions, either long ago or more recently. Part of the first session is dedicated to helping us to appreciate more fully the full range of who “we” are. Thus, wherever we are located geographically and historically as we enter Lent 2012, we are being invited to keep in mind and heart other congregations across the nation that share in this same journey, but from a different perspective. For example: If your community is located in a major city and most of those who participate in the series are Euro-Americans, it is imperative that this community do what they can to try to grasp how these stories and challenging questions sound and play out among congregations where most of the people are African American, Latino, Asian American, Indigenous, or various combinations thereof. “We” are all of the above.

The gift of using Lent 2012 as a time for repentance, lamentation and transformation is that we are called into a powerful experience of the many sides of sin and grace. “We”, all of us across the whole range of God’s people, learn, see, feel, think and pray about both our experiences of falling short of God’s call to us, as well as come to know intimately the pain of suffering and distress to which the Cross of Jesus so powerfully responds. Used wisely, these days of prayer, reflection, spiritual discipline, study, communal gathering and worship offer a rare opportunity for learning and transformation that we cannot accomplish on our own. For only in communities that practice both lamentation and repentance are we able to witness, be party to, and benefit from the gift of transforming healing that takes place in the “sacred circle that is” the Body of Christ.

The Lenten series “*Seeking God’s Justice for All*” has come together more with the intention of building strong foundations through spiritual, theological and ethical formation for the substantive transformation of institutions, policies, attitudes and the actual well-being of Native people rather than a specific proposal as to how that transformation should or could take place. If our past actions have failed to bring about such a transformation, then it is clear that we need to look and listen again to the “Good News”, seeking an understanding of God’s call to us that actually works to bring about God’s justice for all people.

In a spirit and practice of “self-determination” for *all people*, one of the most widespread characteristics among various Indigenous communities of North America, this series seeks to provide tools with which various congregations and the individuals in them are equipped spiritually, theologically, and ethically to work together with other communities using practices of respectful collaboration.

Conciliation vs. Reconciliation:

In a spirit and practice of “self-determination” neither Indigenous nor other peoples are going to prescribe how other people *should* respond to the Doctrine of Discovery. Rather, formed by a deep sense of the “dignity of every human being” our interactions and efforts around these complicated matters will be marked by the spiritually informed practices of:

Listening, Presence, Witness, Respectful Collaboration and Conciliation

Thus, “reconciliation” refers to the *bringing together again* of parties who have previously been in some kind of mutual and respectful relationship. (Example: The “reconciliation of a penitent” restores to full relationship a person who has a previous broken relationship with God and the Body of Christ.) Given the nature of many relationships between Indigenous – Non- Indigenous people, that were anything but mutual or respectful, “Conciliation” may be a more suitable term to describe the nature of Indigenous – Non-Indigenous relations. (There can be a problem with reconciliation processes that ask much from the victims while mostly serving to assuage the guilt of the perpetrators.) “Clearly, “Conciliation” is more like the risky, unilateral, and self-offering of Jesus towards the other. It does not assume or obligate the other party to anything. (God’s love is neither activated nor shut down by our response or failure to respond.)

When our dealings become marked most by the depth of our listening, capacity for being present with others as they are, and respect for the ways of others, then we may be moving towards God’s justice for all people.



Sarah Eagle Heart
Missioner for Indigenous Ministries



Ruth-Ann Collins
Staff Officer for Lifelong Christian Formation

Preface

"I believe that most of the churches are in the same boat about [the Doctrine of Discovery] and that we will all have to teach and learn together."

The Rev. Richard Mendez

Below are the comments of the Rev. Richard Mendez, written in response to a question about how the Doctrine of Discovery brings up very different responses depending on where a congregation lives and their experiences, or lack of experience with injustice and oppression:

When I first brought up the Doctrine of Discovery (DOD) to my former congregation it was introducing something new. Like myself, we have been in the dark about this -- it seems forever. I believe I heard about it (DOD) in grade school but not since then. I was very much in the dark until our first meeting in Cincinnati; though I believe Sarah [Eagle Heart] brought it up at Fair Hope, AL. I was ill most of that meeting so never heard it. I believe that most of the churches are in the same boat about it and that we will all have to teach and learn together.

The more I understand and hear about it, the more I believe we need to help our people to understand what the repercussions have done to the past and present generations by way of depression which leads to alcohol, drugs, and attempted suicide. Our white brothers and sisters are on the same page as we are when it comes to understanding it or just learning about it. Most of them haven't heard about it either but I don't think they would be too thrilled hearing about it from the mouths of the oppressed. Sometimes things like this bring about a lot of guilt feelings which leads to distrust, and misunderstanding, and blame. 'Someone else did it, not me.'

The Rev. Richard Mendez +

The Rev. Richard Mendez, a retired priest in the Episcopal Church (2011), is from Fort Hall, Idaho home of the Shoshone & Bannock Tribes. Currently he is enrolled with the Western Shoshone from Nevada. He served for five years with the churches on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, Shoshone Mission, St. David's & St. Michael's Mission, and four years at Our Fathers House at the same time as Shoshone Mission. From 1990-1995 he served as missionary, circuit rider, regional minister, etc., for Mountains and Deserts Indian Ministries which included Episcopal Indian congregations in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and later St. Philip's, San Jose, CA. From 1995 to 2011 he served at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Randlett, UT. Fr. Mendez continues as a supply priest at American Falls, ID, Fort Hall, ID, Alta, WY, Pocatello, and Blackfoot, ID.



This series is an invitation to the whole church, "the oppressed and the oppressors" to come together as one Body of Christ to become formed and transformed by our communal response to the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. Thus, while there are different experiences of oppression given and received, as Christians, together we seek God's justice for all people *together*. That seeking means BOTH forgiving sins *and* healing wounds AS NEEDED within each individual and community.

There may be confusion as to who is doing the healing, repair, restoration and reconciliation/conciliation, etc. We may learn as we enter more fully into this Lent that while there certainly is MUCH that we can, should, and need to do in response to the Doctrine of Discovery and all of the other places in the world where God's justice is so glaringly missing, as followers of Jesus Christ, we recognize that it is GOD who does the healing, reconciling, and restoration, etc. Yes, we can and must participate in the conciliation that we are capable of, but true healing is the work of God and lies far beyond our imagination or hands. We participate in, collaborate on, and share in the work that God is doing.

The task for Lent 2012 may be to use this time to prayerfully reflect on who does what around healing and hope of justice for all of God's people. What are we called and able to do? How does God's healing and transforming love and reconciliation enter into these grievous, huge, gapping wounds? And what are the wise, faithful things that both the oppressed and oppressor can *do together* as followers of Jesus Christ in response to our Church's repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery?

The formal language of resolutions written for General Convention gives considerable weight and significance to the serious intentions of a resolution such as DO35. However, the tone of such language may not convey the intimate tenderness, and very close familiar relationships that are behind, within and all around these efforts to respond to the Doctrine of Discovery. The "Indigenous Peoples" to which DO35 refers are "us". That is, many of the people who have contributed to this project of "Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery" — the Rev. Richard Mendez (Ute), Martha Allen (Lakota), the Rev. Dr. Brad Hauff (Lakota), Sarah Eagle Heart (Lakota), and the Rev. Lewis Powell (Cherokee) — are Indigenous Episcopalians. "We" also includes many people from other ethnic communities — Ruth-Ann Collins, Newland Smith, Judith Conley, the Rev. Christopher Johnson, John Grate, and Steve Lemen — who are passionately committed to working along side of their Indigenous sisters and brothers to bring healing and hope to all who are affected by the Doctrine of Discovery.

When "we" as a Church are called to reflect upon and work for *God's justice for all people*, we are referring not only to Indigenous people beyond the communities of this church, who are our dearly beloved sisters and brothers in Christ, but also many, many Episcopalians, their families, friends, tribes, and communities.

Kathryn A. Rickert, Ph. D.
Coordinator, "Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery"
Whidbey Island, WA
January 12, 2012

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Introduction

The LORD works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed. (Psalm 103:6 NRSV)

The title of this Lenten Series, “Seeking God’s Justice for All”, comes from Psalm 103:6 appointed for use on Ash Wednesday. As Americans, we are accustomed to hearing the phrase “justice for all”. This use of the phrase here, as the focus of a Lenten series responding to the Doctrine of Discovery and the injustice experienced by Indigenous peoples of the Americas for 500 years, seeks to reconnect those words with the very heart of the Christian tradition – the reconciling, transformative life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

There are few people who continue to attempt rationales by which the brutal settlement of North America, with its conquest, genocide, and tragic suffering is somehow justified as being a good thing, let alone the will of God. Most people laugh at any serious notion that representatives of one nation might come along, plant a flag and a cross in the front yard of someone from another nation and say, “This now belongs to us!” Rather, many people simply look at these horrific events and say, “The past is past, let us move on into the future.” Such an approach might work, if it were not for the very real and on-going wounds, brokenness and injustice that continue to be justified using the legal and social attitudes reflected by the Doctrine of Discovery.

Because we in the Episcopal Church take our Baptismal Vows very seriously, as indicating the kind of life that followers of Jesus are called to live, we here during Lent 2012 engage each of those vows to see what guidance they give us for responding to the injustices of the Doctrine of Discovery. We do this not only because the “Good News” is promised to all people, but especially because the genocide and conquest of the Doctrine of Discovery were carried out under the cross and the name of the “Good News” of Jesus Christ.

In full awareness of the very complex nature of the wounds and brokenness associated with the past of this nation, we now seek to work together with people of “every tribe and nation” to help bring about healing and hope. As such, we acknowledge that no one people, tribe, or nation is called or is capable of doing so alone. As such, we enter this journey that is Lent 2012 to prepare ourselves spiritually to engage in this work in the near future.

Resolution DO35 calls for “reviewing [the] policies and programs with a view to exposing the historical reality and impact of the Doctrine of Discovery and eliminating its presence in its contemporary policies, program and structures,...that contribute to the continuing colonization of the Indigenous People,...each diocese within the Episcopal Church be encouraged to reflect upon its own history, in light of these actions and encourage all Episcopalians to seek a greater understanding of the Indigenous Peoples... and to support those people in their ongoing efforts for their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights as peoples to be respected...”

The hope of this series is that we may grow in information as well as being spiritually formed for this communal task of healing and hope.

Sessions:

Session One:	“Lent 2012 & the Doctrine of Discovery”	(Week of Feb 26 th - Mar 3 rd)
Session Two:	“Making God’s Ways Known”	(Week of Mar 4 th – 10 th)
Session Three:	“Massacres – “Return to me”	(Week of Mar 11 th – 17 th)
Session Four:	“As we work together”	(Week of Mar 18 th – 24 th)
Session Five:	“Being God’s People	(Week of Mar 25 th – 31 st)

Overview of some Principles for Communal Response to the Doctrine of Discovery:

Those, who use this series as part of their “Lenten disciplines”, are making an important transition from Lent as a private spiritual practice, to a more communal experience of applied Christian faith. As we connect our individual spiritual lives and desires for reconciliation with God, with the desires for healing and hope of Indigenous peoples we participate in the Body of Christ. Through the five weeks of the series, the particular questions and participation of individuals in one congregation become woven together, at least in the Spirit, with many other individuals and congregations across the nation. In doing so, we live out our Baptismal Covenant, alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the Episcopal Church.

From within the circle of.....preparing for General Convention and the international Lament over the Doctrine of Discovery

This series is a continuation of three earlier resources:

[“Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery”](#)

[A Leader’s Guide Columbus Day Through the Lens of our Baptismal Vows](#)

[“The Four Directions and *Magnificat*”](#) Advent Series

Each congregation who joins in this series is building on their past experiences of education, reflection, oppression, and/or perhaps a lack of understanding about the past, etc. Although the language of the “Doctrine of Discovery” is unfamiliar to many, the series and this response to the Doctrine of Discovery does not come “out of the blue” uninformed by and disconnected from all that has gone on before in each community that participates.

For, by, among and shared with various kinds of congregations -

“After this, Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias...
When they were satisfied, he told his disciples “Gather up the fragments, so that nothing may be lost.
John 6:1a & 12b”

The focus and method of this series is communal. As the earlier parts invited personal reflection, part three, “Justice of All” invites a communal approach and understanding intended to lead to communal responses to injustice and reconciliation.

A critical aspect of the series is built into the introductory session where each congregation that participates is introduced to some of the other kinds of demographic communities within the Episcopal Church. Based on the needs of each community, what do you already know or need to learn about the Doctrine of Discovery?

- Native/ Indigenous Congregations
- Mostly Euro-American Congregations
- Other Ethnic Congregations
- Some Combination of All of the Above

Whatever the ethnic makeup of a congregation, it is very important that each community become aware of, appreciate and honor that which is good, faithful, strong and noble in that place and its history, as well as recognize and pay attention to those parts of the communal past and present that call for healing, forgiveness and reconciliation. As the quote above from John's Gospel demonstrates, Jesus, and those who follow him *are* able to cross over to "the other side" where things have other names, worldviews, etc.

Such awareness of and interest in the "other side" does not mean that we need to become like the other. Rather this crossing over to the other side has more to do with informing our community of what the other is like and how these challenging issues look from the other side.

Also, "so that nothing may be lost", as communities, we may not be able to see what we have not seen before about ourselves or others, unless we have some degree of confidence and acceptance of ourselves as well as openness to our need for repentance. Thus, we approach the Doctrine of Discovery in the spirit of being one, but not the only part, of all people and all tribes.

Both head *and* heart – not only do we challenge ourselves to gain a better understanding of the history of our nation, and church, we also seek to pray, reflect and address the problems and wounds in that history with the spiritual practices of the Christian faith by using a combination of head *and* heart (history and emotion.)

One of the contributing factors to the far too long tacit acceptance of the grave injustices inflicted on Indigenous people in this country is the disconnection of emotion from history. When history is taken as accomplished, untouchable, and unquestionable "fact" over which strong emotions are inappropriate or useless, we lose the opportunity for ethical reflection. Thus one of the major forms for communal transformation around the DOD is the intentional encouragement of a reconnection of emotion with history. History without emotion runs the risk of becoming disembodied and inhuman. Likewise emotions, which are not well informed by and in touch with reflection upon the events of history, run the risk of becoming silly and useless. There is tremendous potential for personal and communal spiritual transformation to be found in the reconnection of strong feelings about what happened in the past of this nation. It is in this movement of reconnecting knowledge with emotion, i.e. a process of theological reflection, which a Holy Spirit of Wisdom breaks through into new insight and understanding of how we are called to live out of this learning.

Example: As long as we, both Indigenous and other peoples, are misinformed as to the actual injustices of the settlement of this nation, (Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny, etc.) we construct our understanding of who we are, and what it means to be American Christians on a foundation less stable than sand.

As followers of Jesus, we make these vows to strive for justice, peace and reconciliation based upon an actual awareness of human wounds and separation from God and each other. When we are unable to notice these wounds, it becomes nearly impossible to live out our baptismal vows because we fail to see the need for God's reconciling love and participation in the world.

Problems / sins / wounds / and profound needs for reconciliation and conciliation of the magnitude suggested by Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery are in no way addressed by the acquisition of new information alone. There is nothing that we, as humans from any community, can do or imagine without divine participation, direction, and cooperation that will even begin to repair the wounds and brokenness.

The Shape of our Learning:

Unless we are intentional about making a connection between what happens during Lent and the rest of the year, an approach to Lent which calls for "giving up things" over the 40 days may not necessarily carry over into meaningful transformation once the Lenten journey is completed. This year of 2012, as we dare to travel these days of Lent seeking to respond to a long, tragic past and present attributed to the Doctrine of Discovery, it may help us to arrive at Holy Week and season of the Resurrection, if we begin with "follow through" in mind.

The invitation and long term potential of Resolution DO35 is far greater than the initial announcement; *if* we are sincere in hearing and responding to God's call to put flesh on the bones of this resolution, — (quote from the resolution about institutional change) — we as individuals and congregations of the Episcopal Church will not be the same individuals and congregations we were, once we arrive at Holy Week and the commemoration of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The purpose of the resolution is to bring about change in the way we understand both the past and present of this nation, and continue to move towards the kinds of transformation, in how we see ourselves, our congregations, and our participation in the wider world.

One of the most meaningful indications that we are moving in such a direction would be to change our understanding of the shape of our learning. So, rather than thinking of a starting line and a finish line, this year we might shift — if that is not already how "we" see the world — our understanding to see ourselves as part of a sacred circle, with the Holy One at the center of this circle. The gathering prayer below is one which can help us to make this shift:

GATHERING PRAYER

Creator, we give You thanks for all that You are
and all that you bring to us within your creation.
In Jesus, you placed the Gospel in the Center of the Sacred Circle
through which all creation is related.
You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life.
Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we
grow in your spirit, for you are God, now and forever.

Amen.

(Disciple's Prayer Book, Episcopal Indigenous Ministries)

Use of Fiction

Given the high degree of difficulty of grasping the nature and extent of the wounds and brokenness brought about through the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny, it is often necessary to engage works of fiction.

To say that something is a work of fiction does not mean that it fails to get at the truth of what actually happens in the world. Rather, it is to acknowledge that some times it may be simply too painful, costly, complicated, or even dangerous for those people involved in an event to use a “true story” to convey the significance of that event to others. Especially when dealing with events and practices of Indigenous peoples, there are things — events, stories, rituals, traditions, sacred places, etc., — that are not shared with those who are not members of a specific community. Still, if those outside of Indigenous communities are to be able to collaborate respectfully and work together for the self-determination of Indigenous peoples, it is necessary to have some understanding of the Indigenous experience and worldview. When it is not possible to learn such things directly, then fiction may make it possible to learn something, even if not completely.

Thus, when in this series a work of fiction is recommended please be sure to have a brief conversation about why fiction is being used. Make sure to acknowledge a distinction between works by and from Indigenous authors and those which represent an Indigenous experience through the lens of another culture and worldview.

In order to gain an understanding of the experience of massacre, a section from *One Thousand White Women*, by Jim Fergus, or *Waterlily* by Ella Deloria is recommended.

Explanation of the Format:

- **Welcome** – Each session begins with an introduction of everyone present.

- **Prayer** – A Prayer for Healing and Hope is on page 41. This prayer was written to be adapted and updated for use in each community. If possible, ask someone in the group to do some research between each session and make the prayer more specific for the location of your congregation.
- **Introduction of the Theme for the Session** – Each of the five sessions begins with one of the five vows that follow the Creed in the Baptismal Covenant. Each of the vows is paired with one aspect of this approach for using Lent as a time of spiritual formation and preparation for Holy Week and the international lament over the Doctrine of Discovery that will be held next summer during the time of General Convention 2012.
- **Reading** – Each session is paired with one of the readings from the Ash Wednesday Liturgy. (Some are slightly expanded to include reading a few verses more.) The idea is to hear again and consider in perhaps a new way the call to repentance that is connected to Lent as including not only our personal but also those public, communal actions and ideas that have brought about great injustice and suffering, and then to engage that injustice with the full spiritual forces and practices of Holy Lent.
- **Background** – Each session includes a brief description of some of the pertinent history and then invites theological reflection on that history which helps to develop the spiritual responses of compassion and wisdom that lead to God’s justice for all people.
- **Questions** – Each session includes questions to help motivate listening, reflection and conversation. Most of these questions are not the kind with only one correct answer. Rather, these questions invite listening to everyone at the table, and learning how to stay with unresolved issues.
- **Spiritual Exercises** – Because the kinds of transformation that we seek by offering a repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery extend far beyond the announcement of such an action, the core of this series calls us into spiritual exercises that help to form us for genuine transformation. It is not information alone, but transformation that we seek.

Preparing for the Series

1. If you have not already done so, please watch the DVD, “Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery” and see the Leader’s Guide for “Columbus Day through the Lens of our Baptismal Vows”. If your congregation is unfamiliar with the 2009 repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery at General Convention, you may wish to include a viewing of this 15 minute DVD at the beginning of the series.
2. Prepare the preacher(s) for Ash Wednesday, Lent and Holy Week with the resources and background used for this series.

The Baptismal Vows:

Each of the five sessions is paired with one of the five vows of application that follow the Creed in the Baptismal Covenant. In that most congregations include the renewal of Baptismal Vows as part of the Easter liturgy; this series provides a solid, in-depth opportunity for reflection on how each of the five vows is connected to the Creed. This context of reflection on the Doctrine of Discovery during Lent also invites individuals and congregations to become more specific about how we live out each of the five, especially as they pertain to responding from our faith to the wounds of the past and the brokenness of the present.

The Lessons: This series is based upon specific choices from among the Ash Wednesday readings. The congregation will be able to benefit most if the readings include the specific verses listed: the Joel reading adds the verses (Joel 2:3-11) omitted by the Lectionary. Also, the Psalm is based on using the entire 14 verses of Psalm 103, rather than only 8-14.

The Principles: (see pages 9-13)

3. Formats for the Series:

Note: Children and the Doctrine of Discovery

It is very important that children do become aware of the tragic events brought about by the Doctrine of Discovery. Children also need to learn what it means for adults to repudiate this painful past and present from the perspective of Christian faith. Each congregation needs to determine the readiness of the children in their community to learn these things. Given that many Indigenous children suffered and continue to do so, on account of this painful past, children need to be introduced to this part of history, along with faithful responses to injustice, as soon as they are able to handle such ideas and emotions. There are excellent resources designed specifically to introduce such events to children. (See *The Trail of Tears* in the Bibliography.) Although this book was written for children, it explains just enough to make history of the “Trail of Tears” useful for anyone.)

Adult Faith Formation Forum Sunday morning (45 min.)

This format may allow enough time to do all the Spiritual Exercises, or only one. However, some version of the Spiritual Exercise might be offered as homework.

Mid-Week Evening Adult Faith Formation Session (1 hour 15 min.)

This format should offer enough time to include the Spiritual Exercise, Reading, Prayer, Presentation of the Theme and Discussion Questions.

Part of a Lenten Soup Supper Program – This intergenerational format could include children, youth and adults. Although there may be fewer occasions for small group discussions and the kind of reflection suitable for adult faith formation, an actual practice of prayer and fasting connected to the wounds and brokenness associated with the Doctrine of Discovery could be very powerful. This might be done by using the theme, the reading, one or two of the questions, and the Prayer for Healing and Hope designated for the session, in the context of a simple communal meal. A fast might mean eating less so as to draw attention to the suffering of those who do not have enough to eat. If possible, consider preparing a simple soup or bread that was/is part of the local Indigenous diet of your region.

Youth Group Session(s) (30 min – 1 hour 15 min) – If you are using this series for a youth group, be sure to find out ahead of time just how much of the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny they have/have not been exposed to in school. Then, based upon what they already know, select one or two of the vows from the Baptismal Covenant and set up an interaction conversation whereby they are helped to make the connections between their faith and what they know so far about the history of this nation.

4. Local Options for the Prayer:

As part three of four, this series is built on steps suggested for earlier prayer and reflection. If your congregation is joining this process at part three, please be sure to take a look at the Prayer for Healing and Hope on page 41. If it was not used earlier, someone in the congregation may want to take on the Lenten discipline of finding out about the particular local experiences and situations as they pertain to the settlement of your region and current circumstances for local Indigenous peoples. Please see page 25 for additional suggestions as to how to go about this. It may be desirable to use this prayer form at various services throughout Lent.

The first session includes a collage prayer made up of selected portions of the Ash Wednesday Lessons. (See page 42)



**Session One: Introduction – Lent 2012 & the Doctrine of Discovery
(Week of Feb 26-Mar 3)**

Celebrant: Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People: I will, with God’s help.

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*Goals for this session:*

- To enter into this holy season of Lent, 2012, whether for the first or perhaps for the 82<sup>nd</sup> time, so that these days powerfully mark the rest of this year by connecting the events of Holy Week — the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ — with the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery;
- To experience a clear sense that being a follower of Jesus means being in relationship with all of God’s people, and especially with those who see the world and experience life and faith other than the way one’s own community does;
- To grow in our desire for and experience of “God’s justice for all people” such that the grave wounds of genocide and oppression brought about by hatred and ignorance come under the healing and transforming power of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;
- To become open to the many ways and places each person enters this space of remembrance and repentance, depending on how we have been impacted by the silence and complicity around genocide and land-theft and or been maimed and disenfranchised in far more palpable ways.

**Note:** The Ash Wednesday liturgy is intended as part of the preparation for and introduction to this series. You may want to include this information in any announcements made about either the series or the Ash Wednesday liturgy. If those who preach on that day are aware of the themes and format of the series ahead of time, it will help to connect Ash Wednesday with the remained of Lent and Holy Week. The intention is to invite a re-hearing, and perhaps a new context for the spiritual practices of Lent; that our repentance is not only a turning away from personal sin or attitudes, but also a communal turning together away from a past that is painful and not well understood, towards a new and shared view of the past which informs “Seeking God’s Justice for All” in our current, contemporary policies, practices and worldviews.

This series, “Seeking God’s Justice for All”, offers an invitation to engage with head and the heart the lessons appointed for every Ash Wednesday as a context and background for communal, congregational reflection and response to “Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery” in the Episcopal Church. Although these lessons are the same ones used for many years on Ash Wednesday, this year, we will take the time to reflect upon them over the course of the five weeks of Lent.



This series offers a safe and sacred place to share our unique experiences, to question and learn together, to make new discoveries as individuals and as communities about the history of our nation and church, and to pray for healing and hope for all of God's people.

The first session serves to set up the other four sessions by introducing the idea of using Lent 2012 for prayerful reflection and spiritual formation in response to the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery by connecting it to Holy Week, and the celebration of life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We do this in preparation for next summer's international lament over the Doctrine of Discovery as a major step in transforming policies and institutions by Seeking God's Justice for all of God's people.

**Welcome** – Introduce the series with a brief summary of the Preface and the Forward. Then invite each person present to introduce themselves, along with a brief comment as to what each hopes for and brings to this series.

### **Prayer for Healing and Hope (See page 41)**

#### **Introduction of the Theme for the Session: Lent 2012 & the Doctrine of Discovery**

Present the goals for this session. Then, depending on how much the group knows about the Doctrine of Discovery and its repudiation by resolution DO35 at the General Convention 2009, either watch the DVD, "[Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery](#)", or elicit from the group their understandings of how these actions, (General Convention's and those of your group seeking to use Lent 2012 for deepening faith formation around these matters), are faithful responses to the "Good News" of God in Christ and our Baptismal Covenant. (Pg 47) Set up the context for reflection by doing a group reading of the "Collage of the Readings from Ash Wednesday."

**Reading:** (See the Collage of the Readings from Ash Wednesday, pg 46)

**Background:** If this group is new to the Doctrine of Discovery, please see the Leader's Guide, [Looking at Columbus Day Through the Lens of our Baptismal Vows](#), pp 14-16. Also, in this Leader's Guide, please see the Preface, and Forward, pp 2-18

#### **Some Spiritual Exercises:**

##### **I: Meeting other Episcopalians**

##### **For, by, among and shared with various kinds of congregations -**

"After this, Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias...  
When they were satisfied, he told his disciples "Gather up the fragments, so that nothing may be lost."  
John 6:1a & 12b"

The focus and method of this series is communal. As the earlier parts invited personal reflection, part three, "Justice of All" invites a communal approach and understanding intended to lead to communal responses to injustice and reconciliation.

A critical aspect of the series is built into the introductory session where each congregation that participates is introduced to some of the other kinds of demographic communities within the Episcopal Church. Based on the needs of each community, what do you already know or need to learn about the Doctrine of Discovery?

- Native/ Indigenous Congregations
- Mostly Euro-American Congregations
- Other Ethnic Congregations
- Some Combination of All of the Above

Whatever the ethnic makeup of a congregation, it is very important that each community become aware of, appreciate and honor that which is good, faithful, strong and noble in that place and its history, as well as recognize and pay attention to those parts of the communal past and present that call for healing, forgiveness and reconciliation. As the quote above from John's Gospel demonstrates, Jesus, and those who follow him *are* able to cross over to "the other side" where things have other names, worldviews, etc.

Such awareness of, and interest in the "other side" does not mean that we need to become like the other. Rather this crossing over to the other side has more to do with informing our community of what the other is like and how these challenging issues look from the other side.

Also, "so that nothing may be lost", as communities, we may not be able to see what we have not seen before about ourselves or others, unless we have some degree of confidence and acceptance of ourselves as well as openness to our need for repentance. Thus, we approach the Doctrine of Discovery in the spirit of being one, but not the only part, of all people and all tribes.



Here is an example of how responding to the Doctrine of Discovery looks to some Indigenous Episcopal Congregations in the West:

*"I believe that most of the churches are in the same boat about [the Doctrine of Discovery] and that we will all have to teach and learn together"*

When I first brought up the Doctrine of Discovery (DOD) to my former congregation it was introducing something new. Like myself, we have been in the dark about this -- it seems forever. I believe I heard about it (DOD) in grade school but not since then. I was very much in the dark until our first meeting in Cincinnati; though I believe Sarah [Eagle Heart] brought it up at Fair Hope, AL. I was ill most of that meeting so never heard it. I believe that most of the churches are in the same boat about it and that we will all have to teach and learn together.

The more I understand and hear about it, the more I believe we need to help our people to understand what the repercussions have done to the past and present generations by way of depression which leads to alcohol, drugs, and attempted suicide. Our white brothers and sisters are on the same page as we are when it comes to understanding it or just

learning about it. Most of them haven't heard about it either but I don't think they would be too thrilled hearing about it from the mouths of the oppressed. Sometimes things like this bring about a lot of guilt feelings which leads to distrust, and misunderstanding, and blame. 'Someone else did it, not me.'

The Rev. Richard Mendez +

*The Rev. Richard Mendez, a retired priest in the Episcopal Church (2011), is from Fort Hall, Idaho home of the Shoshone & Bannock Tribes. Currently he is enrolled with the Western Shoshone from Nevada. He served for five years with the churches on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, Shoshone Mission, St. David's & St. Michael's Mission, and four years at Our Fathers House at the same time as Shoshone Mission. From 1990-1995 he served as missionary, circuit rider, regional minister, etc., for Mountains and Deserts Indian Ministries which included Episcopal Indian congregations in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and later St. Philip's, San Jose, CA. From 1995 to 2011 he served at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Randlett, UT. Fr. Mendez continues as a supply priest at American Falls, ID, Fort Hall, ID, Alta, WY, Pocatello, and Blackfoot, ID.*

## **II. "History and Emotion" - connecting Lent, Doctrine of Discovery and Holy Week**

When history becomes a disembodied kind of information, stripped of human joy and sorrow through disconnection from the normal human emotions that usually accompany all major life experiences, it may lose its capacity for teaching wisdom and offering insight. Also, when emotions about difficult events fly in any and all directions, also disconnected from knowledge of the very real events that give rise to human emotions, they may become either silly and useless, or fields of ignorance that grow hatred and prejudice.

However, when history and emotions are allowed and encouraged to inform each other, then there is a great potential to learn from the wounds and brokenness of the past so that we might work together for healing and hope for all of God's people.

Select one single historical event from your region involving Indigenous and other peoples. (Or use some brief account of the Trail of Tears 1831-1838, Wounded Knee 1890, or the Sand Creek Massacre, 1864). If you are able to find them, read two accounts; one from the Indigenous perspective, and another from the "settler's perspective. Then, after a pause for either the Prayer for Healing and Hope, pg 41 or silent prayer, invite each person to share briefly their "emotional" response to the story in a talking circle format. (That is, there are to be no audible responses to each person's comments. Simply listen in silence and honor with presence and attention.) Then, follow this Spiritual Exercise with some of the questions offered below. Close the session by inviting brief comments of hope and or concern for the next four weeks, and the Prayer for Healing and Hope, if not used earlier.

## **III. Burying the "Alleluias" in a new way**

Many congregations have a custom of burying the Alleluias before Lent begins. Whether or not this is your custom, you might invite the congregation to add to their reflections about what the missing Alleluias mean throughout Lent. In this year of 2012, suggest that as we either actually bury the Alleluias, or as we reflect upon their absence we use this as a time of mourning and honor for those who have not experienced "God's justice for all". Each week during Lent, the congregation might include in the Prayers of the People

a specific, local group and or individual from among all God's peoples and tribes, who does not experience God's justice, and with whom your community is committed to pray and work.

**Questions:**

1. How does "continuing in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers" help us to respond to the Doctrine of Discovery?
2. What do we in this congregation know, so far, about the Doctrine of Discovery? How did we learn this?
3. As a community of Christian faith, how do we feel about what we know of the history of settlement of our state and region?
4. How does "Seeking God's Justice for All" around the issue of the Doctrine of Discovery connect to our faith?
5. What concerns and hopes do we have for this Lent 2012?



**Session Two: “Making God’s Ways Known” (Week of Mar 4-10)**

*“The Lord forgives all your sins and heals all your infirmities;” Ps 103:3*

*Celebrant:* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*People:* I will, with God’s help.



*Goals for this session:*

- To respond to the many wounds and needs for healing and forgiveness connected with the settlement of North America, through grief, compassion and respectful, well-informed insights leading to collaborative actions for healing and hope
- As we become aware of our local history and current situations for Indigenous peoples, to ponder prayerfully, side-by-side with our brothers and sisters in Christ across the Episcopal Church, the magnitude of the wounds, injustice and suffering associated with that history along side of God’s abundant, gracious capacity for healing and forgiveness.
- To see “God’s justice for all”: carried out in our local, communal lives as an incarnation of Jesus Christ whereby both the healing of wounds and the vindication of injustice take place

**Welcome**

Invite those who are new to the group to introduce themselves, and then ask for a few people to share briefly as to how the first session unfolded.

Prepare a handout for each person with the goals, Psalm 103:1-14, discussion questions, the Prayer for Midday on pg 22-23, and the Prayer for Healing and Hope.

**A Prayer for Healing and Hope (See page 41)**

For this week’s use of this prayer, ask someone in the group ahead of time, to come up with two or three specific examples of local historical wounds from the past to be inserted at that part of the prayer. Ask another person to come up with two or three current local examples of ongoing brokenness to be inserted at a point in the prayer. The wounds of the past might refer to broken treaties for the tribes in your region, or local massacres. The brokenness of the present might refer to local statistics for Indigenous youth high school graduation and suicide, especially how they compare with other youth in your region.

**Introduction of the Theme for the Session: “Making God’s Ways Known”**

This session invites participants to expand their experience of Lent 2012 by using it to engage in both aspects of God’s grace -- healing *and* reconciliation –as they respond to the

Doctrine of Discovery from Christian faith. Beginning with the first of the five vows that follow the Creed in the Baptismal Covenant (See pg 47), we God's people, are being called to explore what it means to be "the oppressed and the oppressors."

**Reading:** Psalm 103:1-14

**Background:**

Review the first session by summarizing the Doctrine of Discovery, and asking for comments from the group members as to how they see the connection of the Doctrine of Discovery to Lent 2012.

Psalm 103 is used on Ash Wednesday every year. When kept in mind as a context for our reflections on the Doctrine of Discovery, Psalm 103:1-14 provides a powerful context for bringing together the oppressed and the oppressors. Rather than setting us against each other, and allowing us to pray for each other from a distance, (or simply avoid each other,) this Psalm holds out rich images of God's presence, "benefits", mercy, justice, judgment, compassion that we are compelled to imitate.

Read the psalm together aloud. Then collect from the group their understanding of the wounds of the past and the brokenness of the present for your region. Then, re-read the psalm and ask the group to look at the various ways this psalm offers hope, healing and reconciliation to both the oppressed and the oppressors. Invite a hearing from the perspective of those who (or whose ancestors) have experienced these wounds and on-going brokenness. What does this psalm offer? Invite a hearing from the perspective of those who either watch from the sidelines, or who have in some way participated or benefitted from the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny. What does the psalm offer?

**A Spiritual Exercise:** "For the oppressed and the oppressors"

A Prayer from Midday Prayer, pg 162

For the hungry and the overfed

**May we have enough.**

For the mourners and the mockers

**May we laugh together.**

For the victims and the oppressors

**May we share power wisely.**

For the peacemakers and the warmongers

**May clear truth and stern truth lean us to harmony.**

For the silenced and the propagandists

**May we speak our own words in truth.**

For the unemployed and the overworked

**May our impress on the earth be kindly and creative.**

For the troubled and the sleek

**May we live together as wounded healers.**

For the homeless and the cosseted

**May our homes be simple, warm and welcoming.**

For the vibrant and the dying.

**May we all die to live.**

*(New Zealand Prayer Book, pg 162)*

*Directions for the Leader:*

Pray the prayer together with the group. Then, invite each person to select one of the pairs from the “oppressed and the oppressors”. Provide materials for drawing, journaling, images placed around the room, or clay to work with. If desired, provide music as a backdrop for the reflection and give the group about 10 minutes or so, (noticing how busy or not, they are) to bring to mind and heart particular people who belong to each of the pairs.

Then invite the group to form a Talking Circle, in which each person is invited to share without comment or critique from anyone else, as to what each person thinks, feels, prays, and or hopes about the particular pair that he or she chose.

This Talking Circle may be managed with the use of some special item that serves as a talking stick — a cross, an image, a rock —and is passed from one to another as people speak. No one without the stick is allowed to speak at that time.

Then, conclude the Talking Circle by praying the prayer once more.

Following the prayer, invite the people to reflect out loud in a conversation on the experience, especially as to what people hear and see about that community and how it is that the “oppressed and the oppressor” dwell together, or not. Elicit hopes and fears for the remainder of the series on Seeking God’s justice for all people.

**Questions:**

1. How does the Baptismal Vow to “persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord” help us to respond to the Doctrine of Discovery?

- a) What guidance or direction does it offer as we seek to take action here?
- b) If we are recipients of the wounds of that policy?
- c) If we have used the Doctrine of Discovery to justify the injustice in our world?

2. Elizabeth Malbon Struthers suggests that the sin against the Holy Spirit in Mark 3:28, the “unforgivable sin” is not some failure to uphold conventional morality; it is the willful

attempt to view good as evil — or evil as good.”<sup>1</sup> What does this understanding of good and evil suggest for our responses to the Doctrine of Discovery?

3. What does it mean or look like for communities to be healed after 500 years of oppression? What are the indications that the wounds are still there? What would healing accomplish or look like?

4. What does it mean or look like to forgive sins of oppression? Who does the forgiving?

5. What does it mean or look like to be healed from sins of oppression and injustice?

**During the week ahead:**

Encourage participants to use the Prayer for Healing and Hope throughout the week and to give thought and prayer to the specific people in your community who belong to each of the groups. Pray for all of them, by name.

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<sup>1</sup> Malbon, Elizabeth Struthers. *Hearing Mark: A Listener's Guide*. Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press International, 2002, p 27.





**Session Three: Massacres – “Return to Me” (Week of Mar 11-17)**

*Celebrant:* Will you proclaim by word and example the “Good News” of God in Christ?  
*People:* I will, with God’s help.



Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
**rend your hearts and not your clothing.**

Return to the LORD, your God,  
for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
and relents from punishing. (Joel 2:12-13)

*Goals for this session:*

- To grasp that the massacres in the biblical story and the history of this nation call us into solidarity with and compassion for all who suffer
- To ponder the of Jesus Christ as a response to the full range of human experiences, and to consider how the “Good News” helps us engage the challenging history of our nation and church
- To be moved to compassion and wisdom by the many events of “Indian Massacre”, in which innocent Indigenous men, women, and children — often “in error”, ignorance and hatred — were brutally murdered
- To consider using grief rather than guilt as we respond to the Doctrine of Discovery; opening our hearts to the other with compassion
- To sit prayerfully with God’s call to both the “oppressed and the oppressor, ...troubled and the sleek”, that we “May live together as wounded healers” as we seek healing and hope for the injustices of our past and present

**Welcome**

Introduce anyone new to the group. Invite those who were present last week to offer brief comments and or questions about last week’s session.

**A Prayer for Healing and Hope (see pg 41)**

If possible, find another team of two people who will research additional examples of the local wounds of the past and the brokenness of the present to be used with this prayer for today. It is important the group know without hesitation something of the local history of dealing with the Indigenous peoples of your region. A lot of detail is not necessary and may even get in the way of responding to what happened, but a meaningful response to the Doctrine of Discovery requires at least a minimal awareness of the injustice of the settlement of your own region of the nation.

## Introduction of the Theme for the Session

The 40 days of Lent are a journey of return to God and reconciliation with and among God's people. We see that pattern of awareness of separation + grief + returning to God above in Joel 2:12-13. As suggested above in the Preface, the "Good News" of God in Christ includes proclamations by word and example of forgiveness for the wrongs we have done, as well as healing and repair around the wrongs – tragic suffering, injustice and oppression — we have experienced.

This Lenten journey invites us to prayerfully reflect upon and respond to the Doctrine of Discovery with the full grace and healing power of the "Good News", by considering the suffering and injustice in light of the Cross. As members of the Body of Christ, *all of us, the oppressed and the oppressors*, are all called to become wounded healers who experience and proclaim by word and example the "Good News" of God in Christ. The oppressed are already wounded; and those who have yet to experience or notice the wounding, are called to learn with and from them.

### Background:

What Faustian contact did we think had been made on our behalf? How could we imagine that in a shrinking world, we could forever postpone being touched by that majority experience? In the global village, fire can jump more easily from roof to roof. Globalization is not just an economic matter, the removal of pointless and archaic barriers to the movement of capital; not just a cultural matter, a McDonald's in every village in Papua-New Guinea. It isn't even a matter of the free flow of information, so that images of the triumphant culture are everywhere... All these things have one sobering consequence: suffering in one region is connected with action in another.

*Writing in the Dust : After September 11* by Rowan Williams pg 53

For those of us who have not experienced recent events or know of family histories of massacre, September 11, 2001 may offer the closest event we know of to help us gain some insight into what such experiences do to a people. Even 10 years later, the consequences of that event continue in various ways.

Some interpretations of massacres in biblical texts and in history conclude that those who are massacred deserve such violence. Such interpretations depend upon hearing the story from the perspective of the "winner", without necessarily considering the perspective of those who suffered and died. When the stories of those who suffered and died are skipped in the lectionary, it becomes more difficult to learn from them. Nevertheless, those whose lives are not informed directly or indirectly through family histories of the wounds of tragic suffering, injustice and oppression, are called to learn from those who are intimately familiar with such things. One of the challenges to recognizing the "Good News" of God in Christ at work in the world is a confusion between divine responses to human sinfulness, e.g. such as that in the reading from Joel 2:1-17 and politically and economically based murder of

innocents such as those at Wounded Knee and Sand Creek. (See [PBS Documentary, \*The West\*](#) )

When the strong responses of God in the Prophets are set within a story of punishment, it is easy to miss the fundamental point of these “scary stories”; God wants us back. God cares and will go to tremendous lengths to bring about healing reconciliation for God’s people. As such massacres — violent, assaults upon men, women and children — are events experienced by the People of Israel and the Indigenous peoples of North America. One such massacre is described in the verses omitted from Old Testament reading for Ash Wednesday. Yet, even with the distinction between the massacres of the Old Testament, (such as Joel 2, and those of North America) that is a divine punishment carried out in light of God’s justice and human failure to act justly and faithfully vs. an overt act of injustice. The experience of destruction for those who go through it appears to be very much the same.

Within the biblical story, the purpose for including such painful examples of divine punishment *always* has to do with drawing humans back to God, not scaring them away. In part, such divine actions demonstrate God’s seriousness and power when it comes to standing up for justice. Injustice will not be tolerated and it will bring about a powerful response. However, there is also the potential for grief to lead to healing, with lamentation as part of the healing process. In both cases, the strong response for God is designed to help us return to God and to repair all of the relationships that are subject to injustice.

### **Reading Joel 2:1-17**

Please have one person read aloud the appointed version of Joel 2: 1-2 & 12-17....leaving out the massacre story that we will read later on in the session. Invite those listening to notice that something is missing from this reading and that they will hear it later on.

If additional examples and reading about “Indian Massacres” are needed, please see the Bibliography, especially the PBS Documentary, *The West*.

### **A Spiritual Exercise:**

#### **Massacres**

*Read aloud these two accounts of “massacre”. Invite the participants to listen as though there were experiencing both of these tragic events from the inside as those who suffered and died.*

1 March 1876

Yes, truly it is finished now, it is over. The soldiers have come with the breaking light of dawn like the vengeful hand of God to strike us down. I am shot. I fear that I am dying: the village destroyed and burning, the people driven naked into the hills to crouch like animals among the rocks. I have lost track of most of the others, some still alive, some dead. I have taken refuge in a shallow cave with Feather on Head, Quiet One, and Martha. Here we huddle together with our babies as the village burns below, a huge funeral pyre upon which the soldiers pile our belongings, everything that we own and all that we have – hides, furs,

and blankets, meat and food supplies, saddles and ammunition – and upon these they place the bodies of our dead, and with burning torches set all aflame, they ignite our lodge which burst into flames like trees in a forest fire, the ammunition and kegs of gunpowder inside popping and exploding like fireworks... Against the Wind came true...mankind is mad, ...

...

I must be quick now, I am so cold I can barely move the pencil across the page, my teeth chatter, the women, children and old people are scattered out among the rocks above the camp, Martha is with me, Quiet One, Feather on Head, our babies...I do not know where the others are, some are dead...many are dead...

From a distance I head the horses nickering nervously; I sense the something was terribly wrong...stopped short when I saw him: Horse Boy stood wrapped in his blanket, soot staring as a stature of stone and there before him, mounted and leveling his pistol at the boy like an executioner, was Captain John G. Bourke. ...

“John, what are you doing” I cried out. “Put down your gun. He is only a boy. We are all prepared to surrender. Have you not seen out white flag flying?”

Bourke look at me as it he had seen a ghost... He hesitated; the gun trembled in his hand. “Good God, May, our scouts have told us that this is the village of the Sioux, Crazy House,” he said. “What are you doing here?”

“This is the village of the Cheyennes,” I said. “Little Wolf’s village. My village. ...

“It’s too late, May,” the Captain said. “The village is surrounded, the attack beings...Our chief scout Seminole assured us that this is the village of the Sioux Crazy Horse. Run the way you have come and hide yourself in the hills...”

(Excerpts from *One Thousand White Women: The Journals of May Dodd (a novel)* by Jim Fergus. New York: Saint Martins Press1998, pp 403-411)

Below are the verses usually omitted from the Ash Wednesday reading in Joel 2. vv 3-11

<sup>3</sup> Fire devours in front of them,  
and behind them a flame burns.  
Before them the land is like the garden  
of Eden, but after them a desolate  
wilderness, and nothing escapes them  
<sup>4</sup> They have the appearance of horses,  
and like warhorses they charge.  
<sup>5</sup> As with the rumbling of chariots,  
they leap on the tops of the mountains,  
like the crackling of a flame of fire  
devouring the stubble, like a powerful army  
drawn up for battle.  
<sup>6</sup> Before them peoples are in anguish,  
all faces grow pale.  
<sup>7</sup> Like warriors they charge,  
like soldiers they scale the wall.  
Each keeps to its own course,  
they do not swerve from their paths.

<sup>8</sup> They do not jostle one another,  
each keeps to its own track;  
they burst through the weapons  
and are not halted.  
<sup>9</sup> They leap upon the city,  
they run upon the walls;  
they climb up into the houses,  
they enter through the windows like a thief.  
<sup>10</sup> The earth quakes before them,  
the heavens tremble.  
The sun and the moon are darkened,  
and the stars withdraw their shining.  
<sup>11</sup> The Lord utters his voice  
at the head of his army; how vast is his host!  
Numberless are those who obey his command.  
Truly the day of the Lord is great;  
terrible indeed—who can endure it?

### Questions:

1. How does “proclaim[ing] by word and example the “Good News” of God in Christ” help us to respond to the Doctrine of Discovery? How do we proclaim “Good News” to those who have been wounded by this Doctrine? How do we proclaim “Good News” to those who used the Doctrine of Discovery to justify injustice?
2. What happens to our grasp of faith and understanding of God’s presence and action in the world when we see/ hear / feel/ think / pray only from our own perspective, side, point of view?
3. What difference does it make to the hearing of the Joel reading when the massacre part is left out? When it is included? What do you gain from this spiritual reading exercise that could help your community respond to the Doctrine of Discovery?
4. What “massacres” in your region, both long ago and in the present call for Good News? How might your community use the “Good News” to inform the ways in which you think, feel, pray about and respond to these wounds?
5. How might our grief – shared and honored -- over such events, rather than guilt, help us to work together with others for healing and hope?



**Session Four: “As we work together” (Week of Mar 18-24)**

*Celebrant:* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

*People:* I will, with God’s help.

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As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.
For he says,
"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you." 2 Corinthians 6:1-2

Goals for this session:

- To ponder our local history of “red-white” relations that is often marred by a long, complicated alternating pattern of Euro-American people doing things for or against Indigenous peoples without the benefit of mutually respectful, collaborative, adult relationships
- To explore the importance of and opportunities for listening to local Indigenous people as we seek to work collaboratively for healing and hope
- To explore the meaning and significance of “self-determination” as it plays out in seeking justice for all of God’s people
- To grow in our understanding and practice of collaborative “working together with” other communities as we seek God’s justice for all people

Welcome

Prayer for Healing and Hope (see page 41)

This week the prayer could continue to use some of the same wounds and brokenness from the past weeks, but come up with some specifics in the last category of local examples of working together for healing and hope. The projects may be small, even informal ones such as shared interests in school and community groups that work to improve education, local streams, fisheries, or awareness of the region’s Indigenous history and presence as indicated by street signs, place names, and public markers of significant events.

Introduction of the Theme for the Session “As we work together...toward reconciliation/ conciliation”

Reading 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10: As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

Invite the group to read the Corinthians text in a round robin way; with one person reading to the next punctuation mark and the person following picking up from there. Invite a hearing of this text in light of what the group has learned so far about the Doctrine of Discovery and elicit from the group specific implications as to how your congregation or diocese might work together around these difficult matters. The idea here is to identify the characteristics of respectful, collaborative work so that once you enter into a specific project it may be possible to keep in mind how self-determination enters into respectful, adult relationships.

Background: The history of “red-white” relations is marred by a long, complicated alternating pattern of Euro-American people doing things for or against Indigenous peoples without benefit of mutually respectful, collaborative, adult relationships. This is not good for anyone.

A Spiritual Exercise

Listening & “Self-Determination”

‘From Native American and Tibetan sandpaintings to Gothic rose windows, mandalas are used as symbols for meditation, protection and healing’ Clare Goodwin

A mandala is a sacred space, often a circle, which reveals some inner truth about you or the world around you. In Sanskrit, mandala means both circle and center, implying that it represents both the visible world outside of us (the circle - whole world) and the invisible one deep inside our minds and bodies (the center - healing circle.)

The mandala prepared for this session weaves together a Native American image of the “medicine wheel”, with the cross and the scales of justice:



This complex image in the mandala is offered as an invitation to prayerful consideration of the implications of our Christian faith, in particular as it is expressed in the Baptismal Covenant, for responding to the Doctrine of Discovery:

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

Setting them side by side and even weaving them together is not to say that they are the same things. They are not. But, the three together have much to do with each other and contribute to each other. The image invites us to listen to and learn from each other.

Use each image separately as the focus for a meditative reflection on what you know so far about each, as it pertains to your community's response from faith to injustice and tragic suffering:

Some Context for the Medicine Wheel

Ritual-based cultures are founded on the primary assumption that the universe is alive and that it is supernaturally ordered. That is, they do not perceive economic, social, or political elements as central; rather they organize their lives around a sacred, metaphysical principle... They perceive the universe not as blind or mechanical, but as aware and organic. Thus, ritual – organized activity that strives to manipulate or direct non-material energies toward some larger goal—forms the foundation of tribal culture.²

The comments above come from Paula Gunn Allen (Hopi) and demonstrate something of the way in which Indigenous peoples do not separate the various aspect of life from all other aspects of life, e.g. everyday life experience and faith and justice. There are very good reasons for seeing that Christians too are also called by the Old and New Testaments and by the ritual of the Eucharist to keep the three deeply connected to each other. But, often under the influence of the Enlightenment, they come apart. The Medicine Wheel, with various understandings among different tribes, is one way of holding together everything in life, and looking at it so that none of its parts and mutual implications is lost. Basic understandings of the Medicine Wheel associate the Four Directions, and or Four Seasons with the very aspects of human life --- body, soul, spirit, wisdom, war, peace, creation – that tend to become disconnected in much Western thinking.

Self-Determination –

Share a recent example from your area of a local tribe that is being forced to gain permission to sell or develop their own land. (This need for “permission” is in addition to and precedes all of the normal permits that other land owners must obtain.) All land owned by tribes and Native American individuals is “held in trust” by the Federal Government, rather than being owned outright as for most other Americans. Although a tribe or individual “owns” their land, according to the details of the Doctrine of Discovery, tribes and individuals are not allowed to sell that land on the open market, but must endure cumbersome and expensive legal processes not required of other citizens.

² Paula Gunn Allen. *The Sacred Hoop*. Beacon Press, Boston, MA, 1986, p 80.

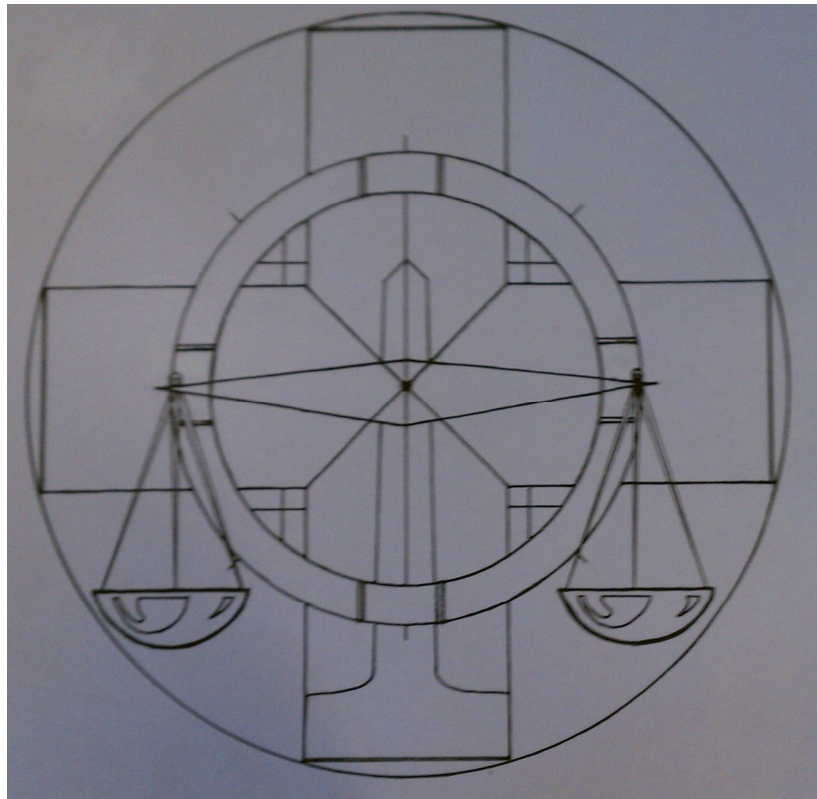
OR

Watch the DVD, “Exploring the Doctrine of Discovery” again. Now that the groups have given some prayerful attention to our difficult past, it will be more clear as to what extent so many of the problems around unjust settlement of North America have to do with a failure to respect the need for and support the Self-Determination for Indigenous peoples.

OR

Play a quiet CD with meditative music, e.g. Native American Flute (Carlos Nikai). Read aloud the 2 Corinthians text. Providing blank pieces of paper to each person, invite them to journal about some particular experience in which your community experienced a struggle around self-determination (5 -7 min.) If you have no communal experience of that kind, then reflect on personal experiences. Invite them to focus on the spiritual impact of not being allowed to exercise adult wisdom over major life decisions. Once the writing is complete, invite each person to go back and re-read what they wrote, and select a brief (1-2 sentences) observation as to what they learned from doing this.

The mandala could be presented in this session and then brought back again for use in the final session. If so, please invite participants to place the mandala in a prominent place during the week, and to contemplate what they are to learn from these images. Those who have the time and desire to do so could begin filling in the various sections of the mandala with color and or words...which help to make their understanding more concrete and their response to the Doctrine of Discovery specific. Then, request that they bring them back again for the last session. An easy to copy full size version of this mandala can be found in the resource section of this document.



Questions:

1. How does “seek[ing] and serve[ing] Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself” help us to respond to the Doctrine of Discovery? What does it suggest about the fundamental ideas which allowed the taking of the land and possessions of other people? What does it suggest about changing the ways Indigenous people and others who experience injustice are thought of and treated today?
2. How do we tell the difference between attitudes, prayers, and projects that come from respectful collaboration and recognize self-determination of the other, and those which come more from a capacity and desire to control the other, making them over into our own image?

3. What does it mean “to work together” for (re)conciliation across all of the various lines of history, race, economics, wounds, injustice, guilt, etc? Rather than “white people doing things for Indians”, what would it look like to enter into mutually determined, humble, respectful, honorable collaboration between communities in relationship?

4. After spending some time thinking about, praying over the mandala, what qualities does this suggest, for our working together with all God’s people, for justice, healing and hope? What might we want to do differently in the future?



Session Five: “Being God’s People” (Week of Mar 25-31)

Celebrant: Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
People: I will, with God’s help.



Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. (Matt 6:1 NRSV)

No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord’, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:34 NRSV)

Goals for this session:

- To develop a better understanding of realistic occasions and opportunities for working together in relationship across lines of communal difference seeking God’s justice for all.” (Come to know of actual examples that are ongoing or are being planned.)
- To build a background of understanding, wisdom, (history AND emotion) and spiritual healing necessary for participation in “Exposing the Doctrine of Discovery” and next summer’s lament.
- To carry into Holy Week and the remainder of this year some new insights, spiritual strength, courage and love to change how we see ourselves in relation to those who are most familiar with genocide, oppression, suffering, and injustice.
- To see how communal lament — crying out to God in distress — and communal repentance can help prepare us to work together for healing, conciliation and reconciliation among estranged communities and individuals.

Welcome

Prayers - Use the Gathering Prayer to open this session.

Creator, we give You thanks for all that You are
and all that you bring to us within your creation.
In Jesus, you placed the Gospel in the Center of the Sacred Circle
through which all creation is related.
You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life.
Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we
grow in your spirit, for you are God, now and forever.

Amen.
(Disciple’s Prayer Book, Episcopal Indigenous Ministries)

A Prayer for Healing and Hope - pg 41 (For the Closing Prayer)

In this final session before Holy Week, the openings in the prayer, where there is space for adding specific examples, might be used to offer everyone in the group a chance to look back over what they have learned during the five weeks. So, rather than preparing specific examples, invite each person to add one specific example in each category – wounds of the past, brokenness of the present and examples of ways in which we can work together for healing and hope.

Introduction of the Theme for the Session

The concluding theme for these Lenten Series invites us to acknowledge that as God's people, we simply must find ways to respond to the tragic past of our nation and church. To fail to do so is simply not in keeping with our faith as Christians. If our faith has substance, if our piety is not false, then we will come to see that this response of justice to injustice from Christian faith is not simply a task to do, but is at the heart of who we are as God's people.

Reading: Matt 6:1-6, 16-21 & Jeremiah 31:31-34

Read both readings aloud with each person reading one sentence, or to the next punctuation mark. Introduce the session with the following:

The genius of the “Good News” is that the Gospel describes very clearly the qualities of necessary preparation and foundation for faithful following of Jesus:

give alms

pray

fast...

and all storing up treasures “in heaven”...for where our treasure is, there our hearts will be also.

What the Gospel does not do is to tell us exactly how to do this in each and every context where God's people live. So, in this last session, let us engage this call of Gospel and see how it could lead us to concrete actions within our congregations and dioceses. How do our giving, our praying, and our fasting...show where our treasure is?

We take our clue that Jesus is the *incarnation* then in-the-flesh-God-with-us, from whom we learn how to respond. As such, our responses need to take place in our bodies, not just in our heads. They need to show up in everyday life, worship, work, play and love.

Background

This work of seeking God's justice for all and of participating in bringing healing and hope is difficult work. It is very difficult for those on the receiving end of the injustice and those

who see themselves as living without hope. It is also difficult work for those who struggle, as us humans, with their blindness and ignorance of injustice, yet seek to carry that cross.

This question in the Baptismal Covenant helps us to take seriously suffering that we may not experience first hand without discounting the pain and anguish. There is a great danger in doing a series of this kind. The danger is that we could arrive at the end of Lent and enter Holy Week just like we were when we began. There is great danger that we might have no better appreciation for the gravity of the injustice behind the settlement of North America, and simply carry on as before, with nothing at all changed in our attitudes or actions. There is another danger that we might have spent this time and either become even more angry and bitter over the past, or on the other hand, simply walk away feeling better, less off the hook for the past, because we did this. Either result is very sad.

The invitation for this last session before Holy Week is to identify what and how we might change the ways we think, see, feel, pray, talk and behave around matters of injustice as seen in the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny. In particular, how we might do this in our local community of the Body of Christ as God's people.

A Spiritual Exercise: Around the Baptismal Font

As a group, walk to the Baptismal font in your Church, either in silence or while singing a song. (See *Wonder Love and Praise*, #813 "Way, Way, Way" or some other hymn or song that helps to connect justice to faith for your community.)

Invite someone to read the definition of the Doctrine of Discovery out loud.

Then as a group, make a renewal of your Baptismal Vows.

Return to your usual classroom or meeting place. There, with each vow written out on a large piece of paper...invite everyone to go up to each page and add their ideas, hopes, prayers as to how your community (congregation, diocese, region) might do something in a new way...in light of your prayerful reflection on the Doctrine of Discovery and in light of the Baptismal Covenant. Then walk around and read what is written.

Invite each person to take the Mandala that they worked with in the previous session and write on to it, some specific, concrete action, prayer that they commit to doing in the future. Please add some kind of timeline to the commitment.

(Examples: visit a local tribal cultural center or Museum

- go to a powwow
- explore the tribal place names of your town, county
- read a history of the settlement of your state
- find a way to listen to the needs and desires of local Indigenous people

In each case, find some way to prayerfully reflect on that experience and share what you have learned with each other. In particular, what are you learning that might suggest

different ways of dealing with people in your community (e.g. self- determination, listening, collaborative, mutual respectful relationships, etc.)

Questions:

1. How will “striv[ing] for justice and peace among all people, and respect[ing] the dignity of every human being” help us to respond to the Doctrine of Discovery? What will it look like when this application of Christian faith is lived out in action?
2. How do communities prepare for authentic action, and participation in reconciliation/conciliation between estranged communities and groups?
3. What are some of the “legitimate” — neither placating those seen to be the oppressors, nor romanticizing the victims — responses to the DOD in your community?

Listening and Prayerful Reflection

Lament (crying out to God in distress within the community of the faithful)

Mutual – Collaborative actions



Resources:

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Miller, Robert J. *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny*. Westport, Conn: Praeger Publishers, 2006.

A Prayer for Healing and Hope

O Great Spirit, God of all people and every tribe,
through whom all people are related;
Call us to the kinship of all your people.

Grant us vision to see
through the lens of our Baptismal Covenant,
the brokenness of the past;

*(Here may be inserted specific, local
prayers for the brokenness of the past.)*

Help us to listen to you and to one-another,
in order to heal the wounds of the present;

*(Here may be inserted specific, local
prayers for wounds of the present.)*

And, give us courage, patience and wisdom to work together
for healing and hope with all of your people,
now and in the future.

*(Here may be inserted inter-sessions
and thanksgiving for on-going examples of mutual
collaboration between Indigenous and other peoples.)*

Mend the hoop of our hearts and let us live in
justice and peace,
through Jesus Christ,
the One who comes to all people
that we might live in dignity. Amen.

The Ash Wednesday Lessons, Adapted:

[Joel 2:1-17](#) [Psalm 103:1-14](#) [2 Corinthians 5:20-6:1-10](#) [Matthew 6:1-6,16-21](#) [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)

The Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Old Testament

Joel 2:1-17 (Note: Please read the entire passage, including verses 3-11)

2:¹ Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of
the Lord is coming, it is near—
2 a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness spread upon the mountains
a great and powerful army comes;
their like has never been from of old, nor will be again
after them in ages to come.
[³ Fire devours in front of them,
and behind them a flame burns.
Before them the land is like the garden of Eden
but after them a desolate wilderness, and nothing
escapes them
4 They have the appearance of horses,
and like warhorses they charge.
5 As with the rumbling of chariots,
they leap on the tops of the mountains,
like the crackling of a flame of fire devouring the
stubble,
like a powerful army drawn up for battle.
6 Before them peoples are in anguish,
all faces grow pale.
7 Like warriors they charge,
like soldiers they scale the wall.
Each keeps to its own course,
they do not swerve from their paths.
8 They do not jostle one another,
each keeps to its own track;
they burst through the weapons
and are not halted.
9 They leap upon the city,
they run upon the walls;
they climb up into the houses,
they enter through the windows like a thief.
10 The earth quakes before them,
the heavens tremble.
The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.
11 The Lord utters his voice
at the head of his army; how vast is his host!
Numberless are those who obey his command.
Truly the day of the Lord is great;
terrible indeed—who can endure it?]

¹² Yet even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
¹³ rend your hearts and not your clothing.
Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and
relents from punishing.
¹⁴ Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain-offering and a drink-offering
for the Lord, your God?
¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
¹⁶ gather the people.
Sanctify the congregation;
assemble the aged;
gather the children,
even infants at the breast.
Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her canopy.
¹⁷ Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep.
Let them say, 'Spare your people, O Lord,
and do not make your heritage a mockery,
a byword among the nations.
Why should it be said among the peoples,
'Where is their God?''

The Psalm

Psalm 103:1-14 (page 733, BCP) *Benedic, anima mea*

- 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, *
and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.
- 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, *
and forget not all his benefits.
- 3 He forgives all your sins *
and heals all your infirmities;
- 4 He redeems your life from the grave *
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;
- 5 He satisfies you with good things, *
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
- 6 The LORD executes righteousness *
and judgment for all who are oppressed.
- 7 He made his ways known to Moses *
and his works to the children of Israel.
- 8 The LORD is full of compassion and mercy, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.
- 9 He will not always accuse us, *
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
- 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, *
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.
- 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, *
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.
- 12 As far as the east is from the west, *
so far has he removed our sins from us.
- 13 As a father cares for his children, *
so does the LORD care for those who fear him.
- 14 For he himself knows whereof we are made; *
he remembers that we are but dust.

The Epistle

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:1-10

²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

6 As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For he says, 'At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.' See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (For use in Session 5 along with Matthew 6:1-6 & 16-21.)

1 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. ³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But

whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

A Collage of the Ash Wednesday Readings for use with Session One: Introduction:

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made
and forgive the sins of all who are penitent:
Create and make in us new and contrite hearts

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; 13 rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing...16 Gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. 17 Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, 'Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, "Where is their God?"' (Joel 2: 12-13, 16-17)

3 He forgives all your sins and heals all your infirmities;
4 He redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;
5 He satisfies you with good things,
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
6 The LORD executes righteousness
and judgment for all who are oppressed. (Psalm 103:3-4)

²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, (2 Corinthians 5:20-6:3a)

[I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:33-34)]

Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, ... your Father who sees in secret will reward you." And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; ... your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, ...and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

(Matthew 6:1, 2, 4, 5, 6,16, 17, 19-21)

The Baptismal Covenant

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and
in the prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and
return to the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the "Good News" of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all
people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

