

STUDY GUIDE

SEE ME, BELIEVE ME

AN UPDATED GUIDE TO DEEPEN ALLYSHIP
WITH CONGREGATIONAL LEADERS OF COLOR

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**MOUTH
HOUSE**

SESSION 1 (CHAPTERS 1-3)

SEE ME, BELIEVE ME

COMMUNITY COVENANT (to be read out loud)

Leader: This space invites honesty, humility, and courage. We will speak from our own experience, listen without defensiveness, and resist the urge to explain or justify harm. Care for yourself and others—stepping out for breath or grounding is always permitted.

What promises do we need to make to each other to feel safe(r) in this space to be vulnerable and to share deeply? (*write on white paper and post on wall*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What word or phrase captured your attention or imagination from today's scripture? How does that relate to what you have read for today?
- What story from these three chapters was most challenging to read? Why might that be?
- What stories have we told ourselves about ourselves—or about the church—that have allowed us to remain ignorant of the suffering of congregational leaders and lay people of color?
- In what ways do you “mask” in your own life, and why? How does that make you feel?
 - For those with racial privilege: how do you imagine masking impacts people of color around you?
 - For people of color: what feels important to name about masking or about being seen?
- What example of white privilege from McIntosh's list surprised you most? What others would you add? How can you use your privilege to benefit others?
- Reflect on a time when the pain or trauma of people of color was minimized, dismissed, or overlooked. For those with racial privilege: what did you notice, and how did you respond—or wish you had responded—in solidarity? For people of color: what feels important to name about being witnessed well, or not, in moments like these? (*Leader: No one is expected to educate or relive harm. Speak from your own experience and capacity.*)
- If you have taken the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), what insight continues to challenge or stretch you? If not, what are you noticing about your own intercultural instincts as you read?

MATERIALS

- *See Me, Believe Me* (book)
- “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” by Peggy McIntosh (article)
 - *This Far By Faith* (TFF)
- White paper and markers

DEVOTIONAL SONG

We've Come This Far By Faith
(TFF 197, refrain only)

SCRIPTURE

John 20:24–31

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer at the end of Chapter 3
 (“All wise God ...”)

CHECK-OUT

Share one word or phrase describing how you feel at this moment.

SILENT PRAYER

(3 minutes) - Leader

This three-minute silence is a shared practice for each session, offered with the understanding that stillness can be restful or unsettling, and that you are free to participate in the ways that feel safest for you.

CLOSING PRAYER -

Prayer at the end of Chapter 1
 (“Gracious God ...”), concluding with the Lord's Prayer

SESSION 2 (CHAPTERS 4-6)

BOUNDARIES & BIG FEELINGS

REVIEW COMMUNITY COVENANT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What word or phrase captured your attention or imagination from today's scripture? How does that relate to what you have read for today?
- When you hear the word *boundary*, what is the first thing that comes to mind?
- Share a time when you had to set a boundary. How and why did you do so?
- Share a time when you wish someone else had set a boundary. Why?
- Identify a word, phrase, or action you will use to interrupt boundary violations when you see them.
- Share about a celebration that is most precious in your own life. Why?
- What celebrations do you observe in your church?
- What celebrations occur in your community among people of color, and what have you learned when you have been invited to participate?
- Do you know how to lament? What has lament looked like in your own life or in the life of your church?
- Have each participant write a card to a BIPOC leader in your synod, thanking them for their ministry.

MATERIALS

- *See Me, Believe Me* (book)
- Blank cards and pens
- *This Far By Faith* (TFF)

DEVOTIONAL SONG

Precious Lord, Take My Hand
(TFF 193)

SCRIPTURE

Zechariah 13:1-3

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer at the end of Chapter 4
("Jesus, I want all people ...")

CHECK-OUT

Share one word or phrase describing
how you feel at this moment.

SILENT PRAYER

(3 minutes) - Leader

This three-minute silence is a shared practice for each session, offered with the understanding that stillness can be restful or unsettling, and that you are free to participate in the ways that feel safest for you.

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer at the end of Chapter 6
("O Lord, our God, forgive us..."),
concluding with the Lord's Prayer

SESSION 3 (CHAPTERS 7-9)

BOUNDARIES & BIG FEELINGS

REVIEW COMMUNITY COVENANT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What word or phrase captured your attention or imagination from today's scripture? How does that relate to what you have read for today?
- What is your personal definition of oppression?
- Share a story of a time when you felt oppressed.
- Notice the intersectionality of oppressions present in the room today. What do you make of this? How might your struggles for justice and peace be more unified?
- Are you aware of the original occupants of the land on which your church stands? Are you in relationship with those harmed? Why or why not?
- Read *God's Holy Darkness*. Discuss the content together. How does it make you feel? Does it challenge assumptions or teachings you received in the church? Why does representation matter?
- Are there images of people of color in your church building? Why or why not? How can you help ensure representation throughout your shared spaces?
- How do you define reparations?
- Is your congregation currently engaged in any work of reparation with your BIPOC neighbors? Why or why not?
- Consider the work of repair in your context. (*Leader: This is about what you are ready and able to do, not about proving or performing. Speak only from what feels responsible and possible.*)

For those with racial privilege or institutional responsibility: what is one tangible act of reparation you are willing to commit to tonight, in the presence of this community, as part of accountable relationship with BIPOC neighbors?

For people of color: what would meaningful repair look like from your perspective, if you wish to share?

MATERIALS

- *See Me, Believe Me* (book)
- *God's Holy Darkness* (book)
- *This Far By Faith* (TTF)

DEVOTIONAL SONG

Bind Us Together, Lord
(TFF 217)

SCRIPTURE

Luke 19:1-10

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer at the end of Chapter 7
("Blessed Jesus ...")

CHECK-OUT

Share one word or phrase describing how you feel at this moment.

SILENT PRAYER

(3 minutes) - Leader

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CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer at the end of Chapter 9
("Holy One ..."), concluding with the Lord's Prayer

SESSION 4 (CHAPTERS 10–11)

DO YOUR OWN WORK

REVIEW COMMUNITY COVENANT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What word or phrase captured your attention or imagination from today's scripture? How does that relate to what you have read for today?
- Name one specific, achievable step you will take in the next 90 days to deepen your anti-racism work personally or with your family.
- Name one step you can take with others in your church, work place, or neighborhood that supports accountability and growth in anti-racism work.
- How can you resist the pressure to be perfect while engaging this work, and why does it matter to your own learning and accountability?
- What boundary will you set so that this work remains faithful rather than frantic?
- How did you feel when you learned of the elections of Presiding Bishop Curry and Madam Secretary Mills? What were your hopes? What were your fears? Why?
- What specific prayers are you lifting today on their behalf?
- What is one tangible way you can support them—or other leaders of color in your church or synod—as they undertake their ministries?

MATERIALS

- *See Me, Believe Me* (book)
- *This Far By Faith*

DEVOTIONAL SONG

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian
(TFF 234)

SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 5:12–24

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer at the end of Chapter 11
("Holy God, thank you ...")

CHECK-OUT

Share one word or phrase describing
how you feel at this moment.

SILENT PRAYER

(3 minutes) - Leader

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CLOSING PRAYER

Popcorn prayers (celebrations, laments, commitments, hopes, and dreams), concluding with the Lord's Prayer

ONE SESSION FORMAT

SEE ME, BELIEVE ME

MATERIALS

- *See Me, Believe Me* (book)
“Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” by Peggy McIntosh (article)
- *God’s Holy Darkness* (book)
 - Blank cards and pens
 - *This Far By Faith*
- White paper and markers

DEVOTIONAL SONG

Precious Lord, Take My Hand
(TFF 193)

SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 5:12–24

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer at the end of Chapter 11
 (“Holy God, thank you ...”)

COMMUNITY COVENANT (to be read out loud)

Leader: This space invites honesty, humility, and courage. We will speak from our own experience, listen without defensiveness, and resist the urge to explain or justify harm. Care for yourself and others—stepping out for breath or grounding is always permitted.

What promises do we need to make to each other to feel safe(r) in this space to be vulnerable and to share deeply? (*write on white paper and post on wall*)

HOOR ONE: SEEING & NAMING

- What word or phrase from today’s scripture captured your attention or imagination? How does it connect with what you learned in *See Me, Believe Me*?
- What story from the book was most challenging or compelling? Why? What insight or lesson do you hope to carry forward?
- Which example of white privilege from McIntosh’s list surprised you most? What would you add? How can you use your own privilege or influence to support justice and equity?
- Share a time when you had to set a boundary. How and why did you do so?
- Identify a word, phrase, or action you can use to interrupt boundary violations when you see them, in a way that feels responsible and safe.
- Write a card to a BIPOC leader in your synod thanking them for their ministry, as a tangible act of solidarity and support.

— **STRETCH, WATER, BIO BREAK** —

HOOR TWO: REPAIR & COMMITMENT

Devotional Song: *I Want Jesus to Walk With Me* (TFF 66)

- Read *God's Holy Darkness* together and discuss:
 - How does it make you feel?
 - What assumptions or teachings from the church does it challenge?
 - Why does representation matter, and how does it shape the communities you serve?
- How do you personally define reparations, in terms of relationships and accountability?
- Consider the work of repair: (*Reparations are not symbolic gestures or one-time acts, but commitments made in relationship and accountability. This is about what you are ready and able to do, not about proving or performing. Speak only from what feels responsible and possible.*)

For those with racial privilege or institutional responsibility: what is one tangible reparative action you are willing to commit to tonight, in the presence of this community, that builds accountable relationships with BIPOC neighbors?

For people of color: what would meaningful repair look like from your perspective, if you wish to share?

- What is one specific way you will covenant to “do your own work” over the next 90 days in your personal life, family, or community?
- How will you navigate and resist white supremacy culture’s demand for perfection while allowing yourself and others grace to learn, make mistakes, and try again? Why does this matter for sustaining your growth and relationships?
- What specific prayers are you lifting today on behalf of Presiding Bishop Curry, Madam Secretary Mills, or other leaders of color in your church or synod?
- What is one tangible way you can support them—or other leaders of color in your church or synod—as they carry out their ministries?

CHECK-OUT

Share one word or phrase describing how you feel at this moment.

SILENT PRAYER

(3 minutes) - Leader

This three-minute silence is a shared practice for each session, offered with the understanding that stillness can be restful or unsettling, and that you are free to participate in the ways that feel safest for you.

CLOSING PRAYER -

Popcorn prayers (celebrations, laments, commitments, hopes, dreams) concluding with the Lord’s Prayer

