

Third Sunday in Lent

We were reconciled to God through the death of God's son, . . . having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life.—Romans 5:10 NRSV adapted

Explore

Amazing Grace: The Story of the Hymn by Linda Granfield, a musical arrangement of “Amazing Grace” on media, media player, checkbook, bank statement, balance sheet

Be Reconciled

Begin this session by telling/reading the children’s book, *Amazing Grace: The Story of the Hymn* by Linda Granfield (Tundra Books, 1997). Then play a favorite CD arrangement of the hymn such as the one on *The Path* CD (available through Herald House), making sure each class member has a copy of the words to contemplate (*Hymns of the Saints* 104).

Ask teens to define the word reconcile/reconciliation and give a practical illustration of it (balancing/reconciling a checkbook or bank statement, mending a relationship, coming to terms with the death of a loved one, balancing a beam scale with weights). Definitions might include bringing differing elements into harmony, restoring balance, or bringing our need into alignment with others.

Extract

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

Consider reconciliation in a different setting by having class members dramatize the encounter of Jesus with the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well (John 4:5–42/John 4:7–44 IV). Ask teens to participate ahead of time and provide costumes and props. Discuss how reconciliation is demonstrated by this account.

John 4:5–42/
4:7–44 IV
Romans 5:1–11

In his World Conference sermon, “A Transforming Faith: Our Call to Discipleship,” given on April 3, 2000, then president of the church, W. Grant McMurray, stated that the path of the disciple calls us to reconciliation. “A willingness to step forward aggressively into our communities, to sit at the table with priests and pastors, to engage in interfaith discussions, is a way of proclaiming to the world who we are. We have things to say, contributions to make, a wonderful story worth recounting. Let us be reconciled to brothers and sisters of other faiths and religions by authentically expressing our witness and being respectful of theirs.”—*Saints Herald* (June 2000), 11.

After sharing these words with the group, encourage them to respond to these questions. What do you feel the Community of Christ has to say to those of other faiths and religions? What unique contributions do we have to make? What aspects of our story as Community of Christ do you feel are especially worth recounting? How do we authentically express our witness yet remain respectful of the witness of other faiths and religions? What does reconciliation have to do with this process? Reconciliation is a process that brings us into a closer relationship with Jesus and others. Read what Paul writes in Romans 5:1–11.

Reflection

Ask the teens to reflect on a time they consider full of tribulation and trial. On the paper provided challenge them to explore how that period of their life could or did lead to perseverance, character development, and hope.

The Journey

In a large room or outside set up a large “game board.” Make each square from a piece of colorful construction paper. Write different situations and struggles found in the lives of today’s teens locally and around the world. One suggestion is to incorporate several situations that address hunger and the resulting suffering. Add squares with scripture references that provide additional understanding about reconciliation for the teens to read as they journey. Also include squares with setbacks and opportunities for reconciliation that move them forward. Playing pieces are the teens themselves. Use a spinner to move the teens around the board. As the teens progress through the game, share how the reconciling power of Jesus Christ goes with them to the end of their journey.

Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, construction paper, markers, spinner, newsprint, tape, markers, pens, paper

Expand

The Temple

The Temple has been set apart as a place of peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit, a concept that places the strength of reconciliation at the very heart of its reason for being.

Hymns of the Saints

Lord, may we recognize that we are in the process of being reconciled to Christ. Sing the fourth verse to “Amazing Grace,” *HS* 104, as a closing prayer.

The Lord has promised good to me;
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

—“Amazing Grace,” John Newton