

INTRODUCTION TO **CHRISTIAN PEACEBUILDING**

6-SESSION SMALL GROUP



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Here we would like thank those who have been instrumental in arranging these voices into a curriculum format, providing points of reflection for participants, and formatting this guide so frameworks and tools for peacebuilding might be accessible to everyday Christians: David Katibah with Telos Group, Danielle Blevins with Mission Reconcile, Saji Oommen, Kendra DeMicco-Lovins, and Kurt Ingram with The Peacemakers Collective, and lastly our colleagues and friends with Peace Catalyst International - Martin Brooks, Becca Tyvoll, and Nicole Wriedt.

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OUR VISION OF A PEACEBUILDING CHURCH

Across the broad spectrum of Christian theological tradition and practice, the nature of God's mission and our Christian calling is understood in various ways. The many voices that have contributed to this small group guide see shalom, God's holistic just peace, at the center of the biblical story and as the trajectory toward which God is working and Jesus leading. God's mission is to establish a holistic, just peace in which all relationships are healed and made whole. Therefore, the Church's calling as the hands and feet of Christ is to participate in God's shalom-building work. You and I are invited into the sacred and healing work of peacebuilding.

Our vision for the Church is that it might become a community of peacebuilders, helping individuals both to heal so that we might experience and shape our lives around and toward God's shalom and then to be equipped to work as agents of reconciliation, healing, and justice in our communities. This calling is for each and every one of us who claims to follow Jesus; not just for the select few. Toward that end, this small group guide serves as a brief introduction to Christian peace-oriented theology, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding skills. It is intended as a launching pad to help you personally become a peacebuilder and to provide resources and support for you to invite your friends along on the journey.

Since 2020, this guide has been used by small groups composed of pastors, lay leaders, and everyday Christians from around the world, including in Australia, Canada, Congo, Germany, India, Great Britain, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Philippines, Serbia, South Korea, Tanzania, Uganda and the United States. Many participants have shared how helpful this small group has been to open up their eyes to the essence of God's shalom-building mission and how they can begin to follow Jesus into peacebuilding work.

We hope and pray the same for you: that you rediscover a clarity and passion for God's sacred and healing work toward shalom, experience the spirit's liberating work in your life personally, and feel equipped with frameworks and skills to follow Jesus into the work toward holistic, just peace.

Blessings and peace,
Bryan Carey and Peter Anderson

HOW TO USE THIS SMALL GROUP GUIDE

This small group guide is primarily intended for small groups of approximately 6-18 Christians gathering on a regular basis for six sessions, either in person or virtually. The first session is reserved for group member introductions, so it is not necessary for participants to know one another before the small group begins. Sessions 2-6 contain three main parts: 1) Preparatory Materials to be completed before each session; 2) a Small Group Meeting Flow with a suggested meeting agenda and discussion points; and 3) Deeper Dive, which provides additional resources about the session's themes.

The topics for each session are as follows:

1. Introductions: Meet and Greet
2. God's Reign and Shalom
3. A Peacebuilding Church
4. Christian Discipleship: Formation for Peacebuilding
5. Introduction to Conflict Transformation
6. Peacebuilding Postures and Skills

All the resources provided in the Preparatory Materials and Deeper Dive are available via hyperlinks leading to publicly available content published by a great variety of Christian and/or peacebuilding organizations. By pointing to public content from diverse authors and organizations, we hope small group members will learn from a variety of voices and be better equipped to explore themes more deeply with the leaders that speak directly to the questions, skills, and themes that are most pressing in their lives.

Small group gatherings are designed to last an hour and a half, and notations on the Meeting Flow show recommended lengths of time for each conversation point (0:00 - 0:10 for the first 10 minutes, 0:10 - 0:15 for the next 5, etc.). A commitment to gather weekly for 6 weeks may be most realistic for many groups. However, groups may choose to go through these sessions at your own pace. Feel free to also inquire with Peace Catalyst International and partner organizations about additional training, curricula, small group guides, and other peacebuilding learning opportunities.

If the group does not already have a designated facilitator(s), it is recommended that they designate one or two from their number to be facilitators, or rotate each session. Depending on the group size, facilitators may choose to lead a simple circle, provide space for popcorn sharing, or use breakout groups to discuss the primary reflection questions, and facilitators can follow the links to the appendix for guidelines and best practices for each.

We hope the content presented here can be useful to anyone seeking to learn about peace-oriented Christian theology and peacebuilding practices, with any background, at any pace, and in any setting. Please email smallgroups@peacecatalyst.org to report any issues accessing online content or if you require technical assistance with the resources. The links will then be corrected or updated for your and future groups using this guide.

SESSION 1

MEET & GREET

Small Group Meeting Flow | Session 1

The following is a suggested agenda with recommended topics and questions to discuss

(0:00 - 0:05) **General welcome and conversation** as participants arrive

(0:05 - 0:10) **Popcorn sharing**

“In 2-3 words, how are you arriving in this space? What emotions or impressions are you bringing into this meeting with you from today or this week?” (E.g.: excitement, stress, anxiety, exhaustion, neutral)

(0:10 - 0:15) **Silence and prayer**

- Encourage the group to silently acknowledge the diversity of emotions and experiences people are bringing with them into this group (30-60 seconds of silence)
- Welcome prayer, led by a facilitator or volunteer

(0:15 - 1:00) **Introductory circle** - Respond to the following questions (1-2 minutes per person):

- What is your name and where are you from?
- What is your current job, profession, role, or greatest time commitment (student, dentist, writer, retired, volunteer...) and/or, how are you involved in peacebuilding?
- What drew / brought / motivated you to be here?

(1:00 - 1:10) **Introduction to the small group**

- Briefly introduce the goals of this small group (c.f. [Our Vision...](#) and [How to Use...](#))
- Explain the structure of each small group session:
- Show participants how to find and preview preparatory materials for [Session 2](#) to be completed before the session. Practice clicking the links and opening the resources. Encourage participants to note quotes, questions, or insights that stands out to them.
- Locate the “Deeper Dive” section in Session 2 for those who would like to explore further before or after each session
- Inform participants when and how facilitator(s) are available for follow-up or reflection outside the small group time (e.g. via a WhatsApp group or by email)

(1:10 - 1:25) **Group covenant and free conversation**

- Create a [group covenant](#), so that all participants feel safe to share in the group
- Provide space for further questions about the small group
- Encourage participants to connect with one another between sessions

(1:25 - 1:30) **Closing prayer, led by a facilitator or volunteer**

SESSION 2

GOD'S REIGN & SHALOM

Preparatory Materials

Group Members: Engage this material on your own, in preparation for the Session 2 small group meeting

- **The Bible Project, “Shalom: ‘Peace’”** - Watch the Bible Project provide a brief introduction to the concept of shalom, helping to introduce shalom as central to the Biblical narrative, God's mission, Jesus's work, and ultimately, the vocation we are invited to participate in as people following Jesus.
- **Tom (N.T.) Wright, “Jesus's Gospel about the Kingdom of God”** - What is the good news of Jesus? How does this good news relate to God's Kingdom and God's mission to establish holistic shalom?
- **The Bible Project, “Euangelion: ‘Gospel’”** - Watch this presentation of the gospel, which could offer a different definition of gospel than you've heard before. "The Good News is that in Jesus, the God of Israel was coming as the cosmic king, to confront all corrupt and violent kingdoms and restore his rule over all nations."
- **Lisa Sharon Harper, “Shalom is the 'Very Good' in the Gospel”** - A pilgrimage experience sparked the question, "What does the gospel have to say to all the brokenness and social division in our histories and contemporary societies?" This catapulted Lisa Sharon Harper into a journey discovering God's mission to restore shalom. Read an excerpt of the first chapter of her book, 'The Very Good Gospel' [here](#).

"Shalom refers to something that is complex with lots of pieces that is in a state of completeness... True peace requires taking what is broken and restoring it to wholeness, whether it's in our lives, our relationships, or in our world. That is the rich, biblical concept of peace."

~The Bible Project

Small Group Meeting Flow | Session 2

The following is a suggested agenda with recommended topics and questions to discuss

(0:00 - 0:05) **General welcome and conversation** as participants arrive

(0:05 - 0:10) **Centering Bible verse:** Read Isaiah 9:6-7 aloud:

- “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Shalom. Of the greatness of his government and shalom there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.”
- Take a moment of silence to contemplate what this verse means to you, or how it connects with the preparatory material for this session.

(0:10 - 0:25) **Content recap**

- A facilitator highlights the first preparatory material and provides 30-60 seconds of silence to allow participants to consider what stood out. One participant volunteers to share: “What was the main idea that stood out to you? What challenged you or was difficult to understand?” Repeat one by one for all preparatory materials.
- Alternatively, a facilitator may summarize a resource with key take-aways and challenges it presents to the reader/viewer.

(0:25 - 1:10) **Reflection conversation:** Discuss the following reflection questions using a simple circle, popcorn sharing, or breakout groups:

- Reflection question 1: “Where do you see the biblical concept of shalom embedded in the biblical story, the gospels, the work of Jesus, and God’s mission in the world?”
- Reflection question 2: “What implications does this biblical concept of shalom have for our understanding of the Church’s vocation, calling, or mission?”

(1:10 - 1:25) **Prayer time** in small groups or pairs:

- Break up into pairs or groups of 3-4 to share with one another: “What is one relationship in your life in which you would like to see healing and wholeness?”
- In your pair or small group, pray together for God’s shalom to break into these relationships and for God to give us wisdom about how to follow Jesus towards this shalom.

(1:25 - 1:30) Application and commission

- This week, consider doing one or both of the following:
 - Commit to praying daily for the relationships you discussed during prayer time.
 - Create a “Shalom Journal”: commit each day this week to capturing and celebrating moments you've seen shalom break through in your day: when you've witnessed a life-giving relationship, steps toward a relationship healing, moments when people are caring for each other, etc.
- Commission: May God give each of us the energy and attentiveness to notice each day this week how God is working to reconcile all things: (pause) in our own personal lives, (pause) with families and friends, (pause) and in our wider communities and the whole of God's good creation. Amen.

“The good news is that Israel's God Yahweh is at last taking power and reigning.
God is becoming king.”
~Tom (N.T.) Wright

Deeper Dive | Session 2

These are supplemental resources to learn more about the themes explored in the session

- Drew Jackson, “[Cosmic Shalom](#)”
- Peace Catalyst International, “[Shalom](#)” and “[Shalom in the Biblical Narrative](#)”
- Anvil Trust, “[Shalom / Wholeness: the panorama of biblical hope](#)”
- Tim Keller, “[The Meaning of Shalom in the Bible](#)”
- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “[When Peace Becomes Obnoxious](#)”
- Dr. Randy Woodley, “[Including Land and Critters in Spiritual Community](#)”
- Tom Wright, “[What is the Gospel?](#)” and “[Interview about his book, How God Became King](#)”
- Dallas Willard, “[What is Kingdom Living?](#)”
- Scot McKnight, “[What is the Gospel? \(Regeneration Project\)](#)”
- The Bible Project, “[Gospel of the Kingdom](#)”
- Greg Boyd, “[White Heresy](#)” and “[The Inclusive Kingdom](#)”
- Lisa Sharon Harper,
 - “[Book introduction: The Very Good Gospel](#)”
 - “[The Very Good Gospel and Reconciliation](#)”
 - “[The Very Good Gospel: How Everything Wrong Can Be Made Right](#)”
- Brian Zahnd, “[My Problem With the Bible](#)”

SESSION 3

A PEACEBUILDING CHURCH

Preparatory Materials

Group Members: Engage this material on your own, in preparation for the Session 3 small group meeting

- **Jer Swigart and Jon Huckins, “Confused, Divided, and Paralyzed”** - What exactly is “Mission of God”? If Christians are to live with clarity of purpose about the life and work that God calls us to, then we need to get clear about what God is doing in the world.
- **Osheta Moore, “Seeking Shalom”** - Osheta Moore shares about how a theology of peacemaking and shalom is a theological “scaffolding” to think about connecting well with God, others, creation, and ourselves.
- **Anvil Trust, “Gospel of Peace”** - Many Christians have questions about how we prioritize service and action as part of the Church's proclamation and witness. Read Anvil Trust's article to consider how our work, service, and proclamation contribute to or break shalom. (After reading page 1-9, feel free to skip down to “Shalom-making qualities” on the bottom of page 15 to read the conclusion.)

“Peace wasn’t only of value to God; it’s central to who God is.
Peacemaking wasn’t one of God’s peripheral practices; it’s God’s mission.
Could it be that peacemaking is central to what it means to follow Jesus?”
~ Jer Swigart and Jon Huckins

Small Group Meeting Flow | Session 3

The following is a suggested agenda with recommended topics and questions to discuss

(0:00 - 0:05) **General welcome and conversation** as participants arrive

(0:05 - 0:10) **Popcorn sharing:** “How did your application go from the last session: praying for your relationships, capturing and celebrating moments of shalom in a journal, and being attentive each day about how God is working to reconcile all things?”

(0:10 - 0:15) **Centering Bible verse:** Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 aloud:

- “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”
- Take a moment of silence to contemplate what this verse means to you, or how it connects with the preparatory material for this session.

(0:15 - 0:30) **Content recap**

- A facilitator highlights the first preparatory material and provides 30-60 seconds of silence to allow participants to consider what stood out. One participant volunteers to share: “What was the main idea that stood out to you? What challenged you or was difficult to understand?” Repeat one by one for all preparatory materials.
- Alternatively, a facilitator may summarize a resource with key take-aways and challenges it presents to the reader/viewer.

(0:30 - 1:20) **Reflection conversation:** Discuss the following reflection questions using a simple circle, popcorn sharing, or breakout groups:

- Reflection question 1: How have you typically thought about God’s mission? How has that or is that changing? Are there any particular feelings of discomfort or questions that surface as you reevaluate your understanding of God’s mission?
- Reflection question 2: How does a scaffolding of shalom shape how you treat yourself and deal with internal conflict? How does it impact your perception of relationships and conflicts with family, friends, and neighbors? How does it shape your relationship with the wider community? Society? Environment and ecosystem? God?
- Reflection question 3: How might shalom shape both what you proclaim and how you work and serve? What excites you about that? What questions does that bring up?

(1:20 - 1:30) **Application and Commission**

- This week, consider doing one or both of the following:
 - Start to dream: What’s possible in your community if shalom were to grow and spread? What would increase? What new things would start? What would end? What might you or your church contribute to that? How are you already?
 - The ministry of reconciliation is for all of us; it’s part of our calling as followers of Jesus. How are you actively building shalom in your own career or vocation? What could you start doing to more intentionally work toward shalom?
- Prayer and commission: May each of us have the courage to dream about how shalom may grow and spread in our lives, relationships, and communities. God, give us the strength to lean into your sacred and healing work of shalom-building this week. Amen.

“This then is evangelism, the proclamation of shalom in all that it means and then working to see it become a reality in people’s hearts, minds, lives, circumstances and communities.”

~ Anvil Trust, Workshop Notes

Deeper Dive | Session 3

These are supplemental resources to learn more about the themes explored in the session

- Bryan Carey
 - [“Building Vibrant Congregations Through our Peacebuilding Learning Journey.”](#)
 - [“Peacebuilding: A More Christlike Witness”](#)
- World Council of Churches, [“Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation”](#)
- Robert Schreiter, [“Reconciliation and Healing as a Paradigm for Mission.”](#) ([View on Publisher’s site.](#))
- Jer Swigart and Jon Huckins, [“Video Introduction to Mending the Divides”](#)
- Gerald W. Schlabach, [“Signs of That Peace: Peacemaking is everybody’s business”](#)
- Ronald J. Sider, [“God’s People Reconciling”](#)
- Father Emmanuel Clapsis, [“Peacemaking As Vocation: Toward an Orthodox Understanding”](#)
- David O’Brien, [“Catholic Strategic Peacebuilding: The Unique Role of the Laity”](#)
- Osheta Moore, Shalom Sistas’ Manifesto, [Video](#) and [Text](#); Shalom in the City podcast: [“Shalom Y’all”](#); and books: [Shalom Sistas: Living Wholeheartedly in a Brokenhearted World](#) and [Dear White Peacemakers: Dismantling Racism with Grit and Grace](#)
- Musalaha, [“Theology of Reconciliation”](#) and [“Musalaha, Ministry of Reconciliation”](#)
- Greg Boyd, [“Seeking Shalom”](#)
- Dr. Rula Khoury-Mansour, [“When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the peacemaker do?”](#)
- Todd Deatherage, [“The Family that Love Built: A Call for Biblical Peacemaking”](#)
- Pastor Drew Jackson, [“Pax Cultural Identity StoryArc: Benediction”](#)
- Eric Paul, [“Blessed are the Peacemakers – In Paris and Your Neighborhood”](#)
- Martin Accad, [“Biblical Peace begins at Home: Challenging Common Notions of Peace in the Global Church”](#) and [“Kerygmatic Peacebuilding as the Practice of Biblical Salam”](#)
- Hannah Swithinbank, Tearfund’s [“Theological Framework for Peacebuilding,”](#) specifically “Chapter 3. Becoming Peacebuilders: Discipleship” (pg 24-28) and “Chapter 4: Characteristics of a Peacebuilder” (pg 29-36)
- Scott Hughes, [“Who’s Got Time for Peacebuilding?”](#)

SESSION 4

DISCIPLESHIP

CHRISTIAN FORMATION
FOR PEACEBUILDING

Preparatory Materials

Group Members: Engage this material on your own, in preparation for the Session 4 small group meeting

- **Bryan Carey, “Why Your Church Should Start Training for Peacebuilding Now”** - If Jesus invites us to follow him as part of his shalom-building mission, then the Church should be a community that trains and equips its members as peacebuilders.
- **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story”** - Adichie helps us understand the importance of understanding a multiplicity of stories associated with others. Our brains like nice, simple stories, so to survive in a complicated world, our brains naturally take really complex information and put it into uncomplicated categories. Instead, we must actively work to recognize how reality is more complex than our brains would like us to believe.
- **Matthew Inman, “You’re not going to believe what I’m about to tell you”** - As we try to follow Jesus into broken relationships and conflicts as ambassadors of healing and reconciliation, we have blind spots, triggers, and natural physiological reactions that work to prevent us from learning new information. Awareness is essential.
- **Sarah Bessey, “Born Again All Over Again”** - As we engage in peacebuilding across differences, questions and uncertainty emerges, which launches us onto a journey reevaluating our inherited political, national, or religious beliefs and narratives.
- **Bill Blackburn, “Self-Awareness: The Key to Resolving Conflict Effectively”** - To more effectively engage in conflict situations, we must understand our default relationship with conflict, exercise emotional intelligence, work to identify and prevent fight/flight responses quickly, and notice our intentions and goals.

“Prioritizing peacebuilding does not mean including some small add-on program to your church work, but a concentrated shift in priorities to realign ourselves with the very mission of God. And this is urgent. It’s time to get started centering peace-oriented theology and peacebuilding skills training in our churches and Christian formation so that we can learn to partner as peacebuilders to bless and heal our communities.”

~ Bryan Carey

Small Group Meeting Flow | Session 4

The following is a suggested agenda with recommended topics and questions to discuss

(0:00 - 0:05) **General welcome and conversation** as participants arrive

(0:05 - 0:10) **Popcorn sharing:** “How did your application go from the last session: dreaming about what’s possible if you and your church or community contributed to shalom growing and spreading; considering concrete ways you might actively building shalom in your own life?”

(0:10 - 0:15) **Centering Bible verse:** Read Proverbs 3:5-6 aloud:

- “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”
- Take a moment of silence to contemplate what this verse means to you, or how it connects with the preparatory material for this session.

(0:15 - 0:30) **Content recap**

- A facilitator highlights the first preparatory material and provides 30-60 seconds of silence to allow participants to consider what stood out. One participant volunteers to share: “What was the main idea that stood out to you? What challenged you or was difficult to understand?” Repeat one by one for all preparatory materials.
- Alternatively, a facilitator may summarize a resource with key take-aways and challenges it presents to the reader/viewer.

(0:30 - 1:10) **Reflection conversation:** Discuss the following reflection questions using a simple circle, popcorn sharing, or breakout groups:

- Reflection question 1: Does peace-oriented theology and peacebuilding bring new clarity, coherence, and hope for you? Or has it sparked new questions, uncertainty, and anxiety? How so? Why?
- Reflection question 2: What is your default relationship with conflict? When have you felt yourself become defensive or upset after having a perspective or belief challenged or questioned?
- Reflection question 3: What other people or groups are difficult for you to “see” or to understand in all their complexity? How can you develop a “balance of stories” and why is that important?

(1:10 - 1:25) **Optional: Prayer Reflection**

- A facilitator or volunteer reads the following:
“‘Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious...’ (Luke 12:22) These are wonderful words from the Gospel of Luke, but how can we live without anxiety? Anxiety is the body’s built-in response to perceived danger and the brain’s ‘fight or flight response’ –

regardless of whether danger is physical or intellectual. In the next 10 minutes, we invite you to pay attention to your body, which reflects God's image (Gen. 1:27) and is a 'temple of the Holy Spirit' (1 Cor. 6:19). Prayer and meditation creates time to cultivate an attitude of friendly curiosity and openness to whatever sensations we find in our bodies, including anxiety that we carry with us throughout the day. The goal of this practice is not to achieve any particular experience, nor necessarily become more relaxed, or calm, or happy. The goal is simply to be present and attentive to what is happening in our bodies and to what God might teach us."

- A facilitator leads the small group through a guided prayer or meditation. Consider the following options:
 - Haven Inspired, "[10 Minute Morning Meditation for Christians](#)"
 - The Mindful Christian, "[Body Scan 7 min \(The Mindful Christian\)](#)"
 - A facilitator may lead a guided prayer, meditation, or body scan of their own.
 - Facilitators can invite group members to offer short, introspective prayers so that the small group might cultivate mindfulness and attention to our bodies.

(1:25 - 1:30) **Application and Commission**

- This week, reflect about the following:
 - Reflect on the dominant narratives/single stories that we hear in our church or that we take for granted about "others" in society. How can we complexify that narrative?
 - Are you friends, colleagues, or acquaintances with someone who is "other" to your community? Show some "holy curiosity" about their story this week. Ask questions; get to know them better.
 - Consider the narratives you get from the media. How can you intentionally hear a wider perspective of voices? Consider reading news stories from different sources and including more minority voices in your social media feed.
- Prayer and commission: May each of us lean into discomfort as God challenges our presumptions and calls us to courageously follow Jesus into relationships across differences and divisions. Lord, give us courage and grace to discover you at work in unexpected places. Transform us to be part of your shalom-building work. Amen.

"The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."

"Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize."

~ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Deeper Dive | Session 4

These are supplemental resources to learn more about the themes explored in the session

- **Dignity | Seeing Others resources:**
 - The Bible Project, "[Image of God](#)"
 - Donna Hicks at TEDxStormont, "[Declare Dignity](#)"
 - Amanda Ripley, On Being with Krista Tippett, "[Stepping out of 'the zombie dance' we're in, and into 'good conflict' that is, in fact, life-giving](#)"
- **Conflict response and bias resources:**
 - Podcast, "[You Are Not So Smart](#)" - The following three episodes inspired the Oatmeal comic, "You're not going to believe what I'm about to tell you":
 - [The neuroscience of changing your mind](#),
 - [How motivated skepticism strengthens incorrect beliefs](#), and
 - [How to fight back against the backfire effect](#)
 - Dr. Christena Cleveland, "[Urbana 2015](#)" about meta-perceptions
 - Ava Ma De Sousa, "[Seven Lessons about Prejudice from Social Neuroscience](#)"
 - Korn Ferry, "[Understanding Bias and the Brain](#)"
- **Self care resources:**
 - Alena Hennessy, "[The Self Empathy Process](#)"
 - John Kinyon and Ike Lasater, "[Self-Connection Process](#)"
 - Irene Kraegel, "[The Mindful Christian: Guides for Practice](#)"
 - Gregory Bottaro, "[The Present Moment: A Christian Approach to Mindfulness](#)"
 - Lexi Schmidt, "[Six Different Types of Grounding Exercises for Anxiety and Intense Emotions](#)"
- **Unlearning and relearning resources:**
 - Bryan Carey, "[The Faith for Peacemaking](#)"
 - Greg Boyd, "[Benefit of the Doubt](#)"
 - Brian McLaren, [Book launch interview](#) about his book, Faith After Doubt: Why Your Beliefs Stopped Working and What to Do About It
 - Greg Boyd, "[The Idolatry of Certainty](#)" and "[On Doubt, Faith and James 1:6-7](#)"
 - Richard Rohr, "[Faith is not Certainty](#)," which is a snippet from his longer talk, "[Christianity and Unknowing](#)"
 - Peter Choi, "[Is Deconstruction Biblical?](#)"
 - The Bible for Normal People, "[Episode 189: Pete Enns – Faith and the New Normal](#)"
 - Relevant Magazine, "[Deconstruction Doesn't Mean You're Losing Your Faith](#)"
 - Charles Taylor, "[What Kind of Religion Makes Sense in a Secular Age](#)"

SESSION 5

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION & BUILDING SHALOM

Preparatory Materials

Group Members: Engage this material on your own, in preparation for the Session 5 small group meeting

- **Tom Porter, “Changing Our Attitude Toward Conflict”** - Conflict is an opportunity for creating justice where there is injustice. If our work as followers of Jesus is to participate in God's mission to restore shalom, we must shed our ingrained negative attitudes toward conflict and approach it as an opportunity for positive transformation.
- **Peter Anderson, “Transforming Conflict: How to Make Peace that Lasts”** - Read Peter Anderson's introduction to John Paul Lederach's "Little Book of Conflict Transformation" and the process of conflict transformation. Anderson applies Lederach's principles to an example situation to show how conflict can be embraced as an opportunity to heal underlying broken relationships and create new relational patterns for the future.
- **The Peacebuilding Practitioner, “Analysis of violence for peacebuilders”** - Violence plays out in a variety of ways. Keep in mind that God's work to restore shalom isn't just about ending direct violence between individuals or healing individual wounds; God is reconciling the entire creation, bringing shalom in every relationship, between people and God, with one another, between groups, and with the whole of creation.
- **Michelle Maiese, “Interests, Positions, Needs, and Values”** - Driving so many individual and group stories are a web of interests, needs, positions, and values. If we are to work toward understanding, empathy, healing, and human flourishing, then it's incredibly important to understand the interests and core needs that we and others have, because it's essential that we work together to meet them.

“The problem is that if you just have a negative attitude toward conflict, your response is going to be defensive. It creates anxiety. Anxiety creates fear. Fear creates anger. Anger creates harm and even violence. But isn't conflict a natural part of creation? Isn't conflict necessary for creating justice where there's injustice?”

~ Tom Porter

Small Group Meeting Flow | Session 5

The following is a suggested agenda with recommended topics and questions to discuss

(0:00 - 0:05) **General welcome and conversation** as participants arrive

(0:05 - 0:10) **Popcorn sharing:** “How did your application go from the last session: reflecting on our “single stories”; showing curiosity about the stories of friends from other backgrounds; considering and expanding the media narratives and voices we listen to and include?”

(0:10 - 0:15) **Centering Bible verses:** Read Jeremiah 8:11 and Psalm 147:3 aloud:

- “They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. ‘Peace, peace,’ they say, when there is no peace.” ~Jeremiah 8:11
- “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” ~Psalm 147:3
- Take a moment of silence to contemplate what these verses mean to you, or how they connect with the preparatory material for this session.

(0:15 - 0:30) **Content recap**

- A facilitator highlights the first preparatory material and provides 30-60 seconds of silence to allow participants to consider what stood out. One participant volunteers to share: “What was the main idea that stood out to you? What challenged you or was difficult to understand?” Repeat one by one for all preparatory materials.
- Alternatively, a facilitator may summarize a resource with key take-aways and challenges it presents to the reader/viewer.

(0:30 - 1:20) **Reflection conversation:** Discuss the following reflection questions using a simple circle, popcorn sharing, or breakout groups:

- Reflection question 1: What makes a conflict constructive? When is conflict destructive?
- Reflection question 2: In conflict transformation, what is the difference between a conflict “episode” and “epicenter”? Why is it important to distinguish between the two? What challenges surface as you consider the episode and epicenter of the conflicts you’re facing?
- Reflection question 3: How would you define “violence”? Why is it important to take into account other forms of violence besides direct violence? Have you personally experienced or witnessed the impact of structural or cultural violence?
- Reflection question 4: What are core needs and how do they differ from interests and positions? When you consider a conflict or social division in your society, what core needs are not being met by each group?

(1:20 - 1:30) **Application and commission**

- Application: Try to apply this session’s content in the following ways:

- Consider a conflict that's currently brewing in your own life or community. Can you identify the episodes and underlying epicenters? What step can you take to start addressing the epicenter, the source of the conflict?
- Consider a recent or current conflict. Can you identify some of the positions and interests that were in conflict? As far as you know, what were some underlying values and needs that people were concerned about? With this awareness, what step can you make to move this toward constructive conflict?
- In what ways do structural and cultural violence show up in your community? If you are not sure, what steps can you take to learn and understand more?
- Closing prayer and commission: Jesus, help us see with eyes of compassion, that we might discern the roots of conflict, division, and hostility. Help us be attentive to our own needs and the needs of others. Prince of Peace and Great Physician, heal each of us, our relationships, our communities, and our world. Help us and empower us to join in your work to mend each of us and your whole creation. Amen

“Peacemaking in the way of Jesus—transforming conflict toward the horizon of shalom and reconciliation that Scripture offers us—is a beautiful and powerful work well worth the challenge.”
~ Peter Digitale Anderson

Deeper Dive | Session 5

These are supplemental resources to learn more about the themes explored in the session

- Tom Porter, [“Discovering a Theology of Conflict Transformation”](#)
- W. Craig Gilliam, [“Conflict Can Be a Good Thing”](#)
- John Paul Lederach’s book, [“The Little Book of Conflict Transformation”](#)
- Michelle Maiese, [“Abridged version of John Paul Lederach's book, The Little Book of Conflict Transformation”](#)
- Beyond Intractability, [“John Paul Lederach's 'Big Picture of Conflict Transformation’”](#)
- Krista Tippet with John Paul Lederach, [“On Being - The Art of Peace”](#)
- Tim Keller, [“Racism and Corporate Evil: A White Guy’s Perspective”](#)
- Heidi and Guy Burgess, [“Understand Your-and Others'-Fundamental Human Needs”](#)
- Jim Taylor, [“Personal Growth: Identify Your Needs and NEEDS!”](#)
- Amy Jen Su, [“Get Over Your Fear of Conflict”](#)

SESSION 6

PEACEBUILDING POSTURES & SKILLS

Preparatory Materials

Group Members: Engage this material on your own, in preparation for the Session 6 small group meeting

- **The Bible Project, “Justice”** - Conflicts come about as the strategies we use to meet our needs come into conflict with the strategies that others use to meet their needs. This video opens the conversation about how meeting the fundamental human need for justice is an essential part in God's mission to restore holistic shalom.
- **Eric Brahm, “Trauma Healing”** - As we learn the stories of individuals and groups, we recognize that wounds, trauma, and the fear of being wounded again drive so many cycles of personal and group conflict. To be people who participate in God's work toward shalom, we must learn how to break free from cycles of violence by 1) understanding and empathizing with harm, wounds, and trauma and 2) developing positive responses to meet human needs and promote healing and communal flourishing. Check out the following diagrams from the STAR Team at Eastern Mennonite University.
 - “Victim-Aggressor Cycle of Violence”
 - “Breaking Cycles of Violence | Building Resilience”
****IMPORTANT: This material is here to help sensitize us to the reality that harms, wounds, and trauma perpetuate cycles of violence and injustice. We are not providers of therapy nor counseling services, and we must recognize our limits. When we are interacting with those who have experienced extreme trauma, we can play a role in the person's healing by being a good friend, recognizing triggers, and understanding the impacts of their trauma, but we should refer people to trained specialists for counseling.*
- **Big Ideas | Growing Minds - “Nonviolent Communication, A Way of Life”** - Empathy with the needs and wounds of others, both individually and as groups, helps us build a bridge of understanding. But how do we do that in the middle of a high-stakes conversation rife with heightened emotions and misunderstanding? Nonviolent or compassionate communication provides easy to grasp, effective communication skills to get to the root of conflict, pain and violence peacefully.
- **Karen Pace and Dionardo Pizaña, “Important Qualities of Authentic Relationships Across Differences”** - Developing authentic relationships across social, racial, ideological, or religious differences can be difficult. This article shares characteristics that are important to create and nurture authentic relationships across differences.
- **Pete Davis, “Solidarity: Five Ideas from Dr. King”** - As we connect across differences, we can begin to identify common goals with those who are different in order to collaborate toward the common good. Rather than charity, this requires deeper relationships, solidarity, and collaborative work taking small steps toward the just peace of God's shalom. Solidarity is about moving beyond service or charity for others and toward collaborative work with others.

“Feelings of trauma can generate feelings of frustration and revenge that can produce a cycle of violence and also perpetuate feelings of victimhood on all sides of the conflict. Shared trauma generates a ‘we-feeling,’ but also creates an ‘us vs. them’ mentality.”

~ Eric Brahm

Small Group Meeting Flow | Session 6

The following is a suggested agenda with recommended topics and questions to discuss

(0:00 - 0:05) **General welcome and conversation** as participants arrive

(0:05 - 0:10) **Popcorn sharing:** “How did your application go from the last session: identifying underlying epicenters of conflict and steps to address them; sorting through positions, interests, and fundamental needs; understanding structural and cultural violence in your community?”

(0:10 - 0:15) **Centering Bible verse:** Read Revelation 21:4 aloud:

- “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”
- Take a moment of silence to contemplate what this verse means to you, or how it connects with the preparatory material for this session.

(0:15 - 0:30) **Content recap**

- A facilitator highlights the first preparatory material and provides 30-60 seconds of silence to allow participants to consider what stood out. One participant volunteers to share: “What was the main idea that stood out to you? What challenged you or was difficult to understand?” Repeat one by one for all preparatory materials.
- Alternatively, a facilitator may summarize a resource with key take-aways and challenges it presents to the reader/viewer.

(0:30 - 1:00) **Reflection conversation:** Discuss some of the following reflection questions using a simple circle, popcorn sharing, or breakout groups:

- Reflection question 1: When you hear the word “justice,” what thoughts and feelings come up for you? How do you think “empowerment” or exercising power or agency “with” others have to do with justice and fundamental needs?

- Reflection question 2: In what ways has trauma impacted your life or the life of your loved ones? Who has done you harm and are there ways that you are entrapped by feelings of anger and vengeance to that past harm?
- Reflection question 3: Is it possible to forgive in situations where harm is ongoing? If so, how does that look? What is the relationship between forgiveness and trust?
 - Reflection question 4: What relational and communication skills are most difficult for you to practice in conflict situations or across social divisions? What skills are most natural or strongest?
- Reflection question 5: What do you think makes the difference between a superficial "coming together" and an authentic coming together in solidarity?

(1:00 - 1:30) **Final reflections and action steps**

- Group reflection in a circle: "What insight or question was most impactful for you most from this small group?" Reflect silently for one minute and then begin the circle.
- Facilitator and group members popcorn share about the action steps they plan to take or can take together - some examples:
 - Lead this Introduction to Christian Peacebuilding small group with people from your church, community, organization, or network
 - Read Peter Digitale Anderon's "Getting Started With Community Peacebuilding" and work to understand, connect, and collaborate across divisions in your community
 - Join a Peace Catalyst International event or training
 - Lead or join a group on a Peace Catalyst's Catalyze Peacebuilding Pilgrimage to Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Feedback: Help improve this small group by taking 3 minutes to fill out this survey; facilitators, email smallgroups@peacecatalyst.org for survey results.

(1:30) **Prayer and commission**

- Closing prayer and commission: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." (Matthew 7:24) May each of us take what we have learned from you, Jesus, during this small group and put it into practice. Guide us into the next steps that we can take to follow you in your sacred, healing work of peacebuilding. Amen.

"I don't believe in charity. I believe in solidarity. Charity is so vertical. It goes from the top to the bottom. Solidarity is horizontal. It respects the other person. I have a lot to learn from other people."

~ Eduardo Galeano

Deeper Dive | Session 6

These are supplemental resources to learn more about the themes explored in the session

Justice resources:

- Colin Holtz, "[Why Social Justice, the Kingdom of God Go Hand in Hand](#)"
- Adam Taylor, "[What does social justice really mean?](#)"
- The Bible Project, "[Overview: Amos](#)"
- Tom (N.T.) Wright, "[Kingdom come: The public meaning of the Gospels](#)"; also, refer to [the summary](#)
- Greg Boyd, "[Jesus' Kind of Social Justice](#)"
- Ted Grimsrud, "[Biblical Bases for Restorative Justice](#)"
- Musalaha, "[Justice From a Biblical Perspective](#)"
- Colson Center, Prison Fellowship, the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the National Association of Evangelicals, "[Justice Declaration](#)"
- The Church Council on Justice and Corrections and The Anglican Diocese of Toronto, "[A Justice That Heals and Restores](#)"
- NewSpring Church, "[What the Bible Says About Justice](#)"

Trauma healing (individual and communal) resources:

- Shawn Ginwright, "[The Future of Healing: Shifting From Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement](#)"
- Steven Handel, "[Reconnecting With Your Body After Trauma](#)"
- Kaethe Weingarten, "[Common Shock: The Effects of Witnessing Violence and Violation](#)"
- David Anderson Hooker, "[Trauma and Legacy](#)."
- Nadine Burke Harris, "[How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime](#)"
- Judy Daniels and Michael D'Andrea, "[Trauma and the soul wound: A multicultural-social justice perspective](#)"
- Armand Volkas, "[Armand Volkas: Healing Collective Trauma](#)"
- Olga Khazan, "[Inherited Trauma Shapes Your Health](#)"
- Andrew Jenner and Bonnie Price Lofton, "[Historical Harms Keep Hurting if They're Not Addressed](#)"
- The United States Institute of Peace special report, "[Training to Help Traumatized Populations](#)"
- Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience (STAR), "[Common Responses to Stress / Trauma](#)" and "[The Brain\(s\), The Body, and Flashbacks](#)"
- Ivana Franović, "[On CNA Approach to Dealing with the Past](#)"
- Bryan Carey "[Perspectives from Bosnia for Divided America](#)"
- Cvijeta Novaković, "[Peacebuilding and Trauma Transformation. Is sustainable peacebuilding possible without addressing and transforming trauma?](#)"

Nonviolent and Compassionate Communication resources:

- Marianne van Dijk [“Intro to Nonviolent Communication”](#)
- The Center for Nonviolent Communication, [“The Purpose of NVC”](#)
- Puddler Dancer Press, Nonviolent Communications Books and Resources:
 - [“4-Part Nonviolent Communication \(NVC\) Process”](#)
 - [“Feelings and Needs We All Have”](#)
- Inbal Kashtan and Miki Kashtan, [“Basics of Nonviolent Communication”](#)
- Uri Talmor, [“Introduction to Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication”](#)
- Marshall Rosenberg, [“FULL nonviolent-Communication-Workshop”](#)
- Callibrain, [“Video Review”](#) for Kerry Patterson's book:
 - [Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High](#)
- Jami Breese, “Sketch Notes” of a crucial conversation training:
 - 1-2 - [Get Unstuck and Start with the Heart](#)
 - 3-4 - [Master My Stories and State My Path](#)
 - 5-6 - [Learn to Look and Make it Safe](#)
 - 7-9 - [Make it Safe\(r\), Explore Others' Paths, and Move to Action](#)
- Tabitha Bower, [“Top 10 Takeaways from Crucial Conversations”](#)
- A critique of Nonviolent Communication: Raffi Marhaba, [“Nonviolent Communication is for the Privileged”](#) about nonviolent communication giving people “the tools to appear more loving, kind, and thus morally superior, while not having to do any work on the actions that precedes language.”

Solidarity resources:

- Elise Zelechowski, [“What do we mean by 'Solidarity Over Charity'?”](#)
- International Volunteering, [“Solidarity or Charity?”](#)
- Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, [“‘More than Flinging a Coin’: True Compassion as a Critique of Charity.”](#)
- Mandy Bayton, [“The Jericho road: Jesus' parable is about transformation, not charity”](#)
- Kim Malcolm, [“The Difference Between Charity and Solidarity and Why It Matters”](#)
- Sadaf Shallwani, [“Solidarity over charity: Prioritising long-term shifts over band-aid responses”](#)
- Mutual Aid Disaster Relief, [“Solidarity not Charity!”](#)
- Marilyn J. Legge, [“The Church in Solidarity: Liberation Ecclesiology”](#)
- Catholic Relief Services, [“Catholic Social Teaching 101: Solidarity”](#)
- Catholic Relief Services, [“Catholic Social Teaching 101: Option for the Poor and Vulnerable”](#)
- Thomas O'Brien, [“Preferential Option for the Poor”](#)
- John Dear, [“Gustavo Gutierrez and the preferential option for the poor”](#)

APPENDIX

Creating a Group Covenant

We recommend that each small group have a group covenant with corresponding practices that will help everyone feel safe and included. Your group may use the sample covenant below, build upon it, or create your own. If there is time during the first session, we recommend discussing the following questions:

- Think of a time when you felt unsafe, unvalued, or excluded in a group. What actions or attitudes led to those feelings?
- Think of a time when you felt safe, valued, and included in a group, when you knew you could ask questions or offer ideas trusting they would be welcomed. What actions or attitudes fostered that experience?

We want to create that sort of positive, welcoming, and safe space here. On the following page is a sample small group covenant that we have found to help provide space where people feel safe, welcomed, and invited in. Read through the sample covenant.

- How do these resonate with the positive experiences you described?
- Is there anything you would add? Change? Take out?

Sample Small Group Covenant

As a member of this small group, we agree to the following principles and practices as a way to help everyone feel both safe and brave enough to speak openly and honestly. These principles are reminders of behavior, not hard rules, to help us all make more space for each other. The ultimate purpose of these principles is to help us build authentic relationships, ultimately shaping our individual lives and this small group around and toward God's shalom. In order to do so, we commit ourselves to the following principles:

1. **Be 100% Present** - Set aside the usual distractions of things undone and things to do. Bring all of yourself to this small group. We will all learn most effectively if we are present to one another. This includes a commitment to engage the preparatory materials so that our conversations might be most mutually enriching.
2. **Recognize Dignity** - Each and every person is made in the image of God and therefore imbued with inherent value and worth.
3. **Invite Everyone to the Conversation** - Small groups make space for everyone. More talkative individuals allow time for others to speak, and quieter members are welcome to share and given space to do so. Say what is in your heart, trusting that your voice will be heard, even if it is different from what another has said. Own your truth by speaking for yourself, using "I" statements.
4. **Listen to Understand** - Authentic relationships are guided by curiosity, not fear. Pause to examine assumptions and suspend judgment when others have insights or experiences that challenge us. Although agreement is optional, listen to discover new perspectives and possibilities.
5. **Acknowledge Hurts & Find the Positive Core** - People are motivated by what they are for, even when they appear skeptical, critical, or hurtful. Be ready to acknowledge when words have a harmful impact. Embrace "ouch" and "oops" moments to dig deeper and find the positive core.
6. **Respect Differences** - God created us uniquely different from one another, which helps us recognize blind spots and grow. Rather than belittling or excluding questions and differences, help everyone feel safe and included. Communicate honestly, openly, and humbly—without cynicism or a supposed sense of superiority. Recognize the value of diverse opinions and that unity does not require unanimity.
7. **Expect "non-closure"** - Stay in the present. We won't get to the end of the conversation today. This small group is intended as a launching pad to begin your longer learning journey into peacebuilding.
8. **Maintain confidentiality** - Create a safe space by respecting the confidential nature and content of discussions in the small group. Do not share stories or personal disclosures without permission, so that the small group is both enriching and safe.

This sample small group covenant was adapted from Peace Catalyst, "[Constructive Dialogue Principles and Practices](#)" and [Coming to the Table](#), "[Touchstones](#)."

Facilitating a Circle

Why use a circle?

We encourage small groups to use circles because it helps everyone to practice 1) listening more than speaking; 2) thinking and feeling before speaking; and 3) sharing space and inviting everyone to speak. In small groups it is easy for talkative people to fill the time and space as they verbally process, while quiet or introverted people say little or nothing at all. Circles help create a space for mutual sharing and transformation.

How do I facilitate a circle?

1. Gather in a circle; for those on Zoom, cameras are on (preferably) and mics off
2. Facilitator welcomes everyone, introduces the circle, and indicates time limits for responses (if any) in order to allow everyone to have the opportunity to speak
3. Facilitator indicates the direction of the circle; on Zoom, facilitators may write a circle order in the chat, or each person may invite the next to share until all have shared
4. Facilitator asks the first question and may pass a “talking piece” to the next person
5. Whenever ready, the first person in the circle shares
6. Once finished, the speaker passes the “talking piece” to the next person, verbally saying, “I’m finished, I pass to [insert name]”
7. Sharing is always by invitation; passing is always an option. The facilitator checks back in with those who passed before moving on
8. After everyone has shared, there may be another round inviting further responses
9. After everyone has shared (or passed), Facilitator will move on to the next question

Background

Adaptations of talking circle processes are used by many indigenous nations, initially spread by indigenous teachers. Circles are a process that emphasizes relationship, equality, shared power, and listening. They can be used for creating community, transforming conflict, decision-making, group reflection, and more. They are commonly used in restorative justice in schools and community settings, as well as racial healing work.

Popcorn Sharing

In order to cover more content in a smaller amount of time, popcorn sharing is an excellent option. However, with this method, some people will naturally speak much more while others refrain from speaking. When using popcorn sharing, facilitators should ask each person to speak only briefly in order to allow time for others. Facilitators may also directly invite less talkative group members to share. Depending on the group size, the facilitators should recommend that people try to share their most important insights or questions in 2-3 sentences or in 30-60 seconds. At the end of that time, facilitators may like to say, “Thank you for sharing; now it’s time to hear from someone else.” If oversharing continues to be a problem, facilitators could choose to set a timer so all participants are aware of the group’s time constraints. As much as possible, the facilitator’s goal is to create a “circle” atmosphere (see above) in which everyone is invited into the conversation.

Operating Breakout Groups

Breakout groups allow more time and space for everyone to share in smaller, more intimate groups. When facilitators send participants into breakout groups, it is important for each group to 1) have a designated note-taker to concisely report back key insights, quotes, or questions to the entire group; 2) clearly understand the questions to be discussed; and 3) know how much time they will have in breakout groups, so they can use their time effectively.

Importantly, facilitators must leave extra time during the “Reflection conversation” for each breakout group to come back and share their highlights with the entire group.

When there are larger groups, two additional breakout group formats can be helpful:

- Think-Pair-Share
- 1-2-4-All

Both of these are useful when many people are doing a lot of processing and talking. For in-person groups, 1-2-4-All can be helpful, but Think-Pair-Share will be easier to do via Zoom: facilitators have everyone consider a question while creating breakout groups (Think), create one breakout group for every two people (Pair), take a few minutes to discuss the question or prompt, and then everyone returns to share a key insight or question.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Check out some of the following books if you'd like to go deeper.

Peace Oriented Theology

- Lisa Sharon Harper, [The Very Good Gospel: How Everything Wrong Can Be Made Right](#)
- Randy Woodley, [Shalom and the Community of Creation: An Indigenous Vision](#)
- Richard Twiss, [Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way](#)
- Walter Brueggemann, [Peace \(Understanding Biblical Themes series\)](#)
- Perry B. Yoder, [Shalom: The Bible's Word for Salvation, Justice, and Peace](#)
- Gustavo Gutierrez, [A Theology of Liberation](#)
- Grace Ji-Sun Kim, [Intersectional Theology: An Introductory Guide](#)
- Tom (N.T.) Wright, [How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels](#)
- Mae Elise Cannon and Andrea Smith, [Evangelical Theologies of Liberation and Justice](#)
- Bernhard Ott, [God's Shalom Project: An Engaging Look At The Bible's Sweeping Story](#)
- Daniel Erlander, [Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe](#)
- Dallas Willard, [The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life In God](#)
- Scot McKnight
 - [The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited](#)
 - [Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church](#)
- Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, [Reconstructing the Gospel: Finding Freedom from Slaveholder Religion](#)
 - Read [an excerpt of the first chapter](#) on IVP's website
- René Girard, [I See Satan Fall Like Lightning](#)
- Willard M. Swartley
 - [The Love of Enemy and Nonretaliation in the New Testament](#)
 - [Covenant of Peace: The Missing Peace in New Testament Theology and Ethics](#)
- Elaine Enns & Ched Myers, [Ambassadors of Reconciliation Volume I & Volume II](#)
- Emmanuel Katongole & Chris Rice, [Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing](#)
- Noel Moules, [Fingerprints of Fire, Footprints of Peace: A Spiritual Manifesto from a Jesus Perspective](#)
- Steve Heinrichs, [Unsettling the Word: Biblical Experiments in Decolonization](#)
- Wendy Farley, [Gathering Those Driven Away: A Theology of Incarnation](#)
- Damon Garcia, [The God Who Riots: Taking Back the Radical Jesus](#)

Everyday Peacebuilding Practice

- Osheta Moore, [Shalom Sistas: Living Wholeheartedly in a Brokenhearted World](#)
- Jon Huckins and Jer Swigart, [Mending the Divides: Creative Love in a Conflicted World](#)
- Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Graham Hill, [Healing Our Broken Humanity: Practices for Revitalizing the Church and Renewing the World](#)
 - Read [an excerpt of the introduction and first chapter](#) on IVPress's website
- Henri Nouwen, [Peacework: Prayer · Resistance · Community](#)
- David Cramer and Myles Werntz, [A Field Guide to Christian Nonviolence: Key Thinkers, Activists, and Movements for the Gospel of Peace](#)
- Brian Allain and Adam Thomas
 - [How to Heal Our Divides: A Practical Guide](#)
 - [How to Heal Our Divides Volume Two: An Abundance of Opportunities](#)
- Adam Russell Taylor, [A More Perfect Union: A New Vision for Building the Beloved Community](#)
- Tyler Sit, [Staying Awake: The Gospel for Changemaker](#)
- Shane Claiborne, [Jesus for President: Politics for Ordinary Radicals](#)
- John Dear, [The Nonviolent Life](#)
- Brayton Shanley, [The Many Sides of Peace: Christian Nonviolence, the Contemplative Life, and Sustainable Living](#)
- Rick Love, [Peace Catalysts: Resolving Conflict in Our Families, Organizations and Communities](#)

Liberation and Justice

- Gustavo Gutierrez, [A Theology of Liberation](#)
- Howard Thurman, [Jesus and the Disinherited](#)
- Martin Luther King, Jr., [Why We Can't Wait](#)
- Chris Marshall, [Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach To The Bible's Teachings On Justice](#)
- Shannon Craigo-Snell and Christopher Doucot, [No Innocent Bystanders: Becoming an Ally in the Struggle for Justice](#)
- Charles Marsh and John M. Perkins, [Welcoming Justice: God's Movement Toward Beloved Community](#)
 - Read [an excerpt of the first chapter](#) on IVPress's website
- Kat Armas, [Abuelita Faith: What Women on the Margins Teach Us about Wisdom, Persistence, and Strength](#)
- Cole Arthur Riley, [This Here Flesh: Spirituality. Liberation. And the Stories that Make Us](#)
- Korie Little Edwards, [Multiracial churches don't challenge racism until they challenge white supremacy](#)
- Adam L. Gustine, [Becoming a Just Church: Cultivating Communities of God's Shalom](#)
 - Read [an excerpt of the first chapter](#) on IVPress's website
- Curtiss Paul DeYoung, [Becoming Like Creoles: Living and Leading at the Intersections of Injustice, Culture, and Religion](#)

Conflict Transformation

- John Paul Lederach:
 - The Journey Toward Reconciliation
 - Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for Ordinary Christians
 - The Little Book of Conflict Transformation
 - Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies
 - The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace
- Editors John Paul Lederach and Janice Moomaw Jenner, A Handbook of International Peacebuilding: Into The Eye Of The Storm
- Kazu Haga, Healing Resistance: A Radically Different Response to Harm
- Lisa Shirch
 - Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding: A Vision and Framework For Peace With Justice
 - (& David Camp) Little Book of Dialogue for Difficult Subjects: Practical, Hands-On Guide
 - Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding
 - Social Media Impacts on Conflict and Democracy
 - Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward a Participatory Approach to Human Security
- Thomas Porter, The Spirit and Art of Conflict Transformation
- Mary Adams Trujillo, Re-Centering Culture and Knowledge in Conflict Resolution Practice
- David W. Augsburger, Conflict Mediation Across Cultures: Pathways and Patterns
- Jeremy Pollack, Conflict Resolution Playbook: Practical Communication Skills for Preventing, Managing, and Resolving Conflict

Loss, Trauma, and Healing

- Carolyn Yoder, The Little Book of Trauma Healing: Revised & Updated: When Violence Strikes and Community Security Is Threatened
- Resmaa Menakem, My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies
- Bessel van der Kolk, The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma
- Judith Herman, Trauma and Recovery
- Peter A. Levine, Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma
- Laurie Kraus, David Holyan, and Bruce Wismer, Recovering from Un-Natural Disasters: A Guide for Pastors and Congregations after Violence and Trauma
- Pauline Boss, The Myth of Closure: Ambiguous Loss in a Time of Pandemic and Change
- Mark Wolynn, It Didn't Start with You: How Inherited Family Trauma Shapes Who We Are and How to End the Cycle
- Nena Močnik, Trauma Transmission and Sexual Violence
- Judith Lewis Herman, Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice
- Duygu Balan and Yener Balan, Re-Write: A Trauma Workbook of Creative Writing and Recovery in Our New Normal