

# A Gathering Day: Communal Recollection and Commitment

- Fall 2022 All-Seminary Retreat
- Saturday, September 10, 2022
- with Rebecca Letterman
- Director of the Intellectual and Spiritual Humility Institute at Roberts Wesleyan College and Northeastern Seminary

# Welcome

- ❑ Students
- ❑ Faculty
- ❑ Staff
- ❑ Administration
- ❑ Board Members
- ❑ Retirees
- ❑ Prospective Students
- ❑ Guests – friends, family ...





An Invitation...





# Opening Prayer

## Bidding Prayer

Prompt: Lord in your mercy...

Response: Hear our prayer.





# Session 1: Gathering for Communal Remembering



The Act of  
Re-memberin  
g



Remembering  
& Gratitude



Remembering  
Whose We  
Are

# Remembering as “Re-mem-bering”



THOUGHTS



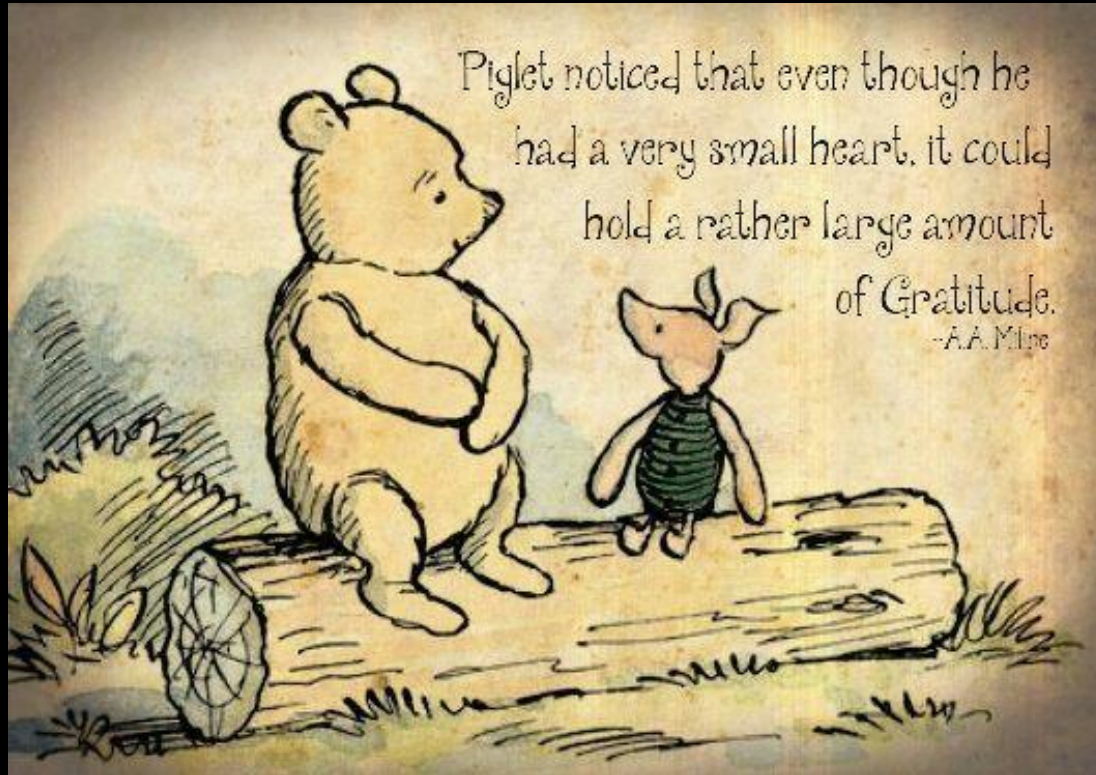
ACTIONS



SENSES



EMOTIONS



## Gratitude Examen

1. Recall event
2. Name "felt sense"
3. Share with others

## ▣ Object Lesson: “Belonging to”

▣ II Corinthians 6:19c-20a

“You are not your own,  
you have been bought with a price” ...

Remembering  
Whose We are:  
We Belong to  
God



# How do you “belong” to God? How does God “hold you”?





# Belonging to God: “Relational” – not “Transactional”

□ Isaiah 43:1

“But now, thus says the Lord,  
your Creator, O Jacob,  
and he who formed you, O Israel,  
‘Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.  
I have called you by name.  
You are mine.’”



Israel as **Vineyard**  
of the Lord  
(Matt. 21:33-44)

Israel as God's  
Beloved **Wife** (Ez. 16:8-21)



Israel to God  
like  
**Infant** & Nursing  
Mother (Is. 49:15)



❑ Christians as Adopted **Children**

Rom. 8: 5-17 "you have received a spirit of **adoption**, through which we cry "Abba, Father!" ... we are the children of God

❑ Jesus Parable: Prodigal Son (Lk. 15: 11-32)





## Belonging to God as a “People” (1 Pet. 2:9)

- You are:
- a chosen generation
- a royal priesthood
- a holy nation
- a people belonging to God

# Communion of Saints (“Great Cloud of Witnesses”)

A word cloud of saints' names, with 'john' being the largest and most prominent. Other names include: gaza, caesarea, damascus jr, nazianzus, alexandria, augustine, ammonas, assisi, siena, origen, cady, maximus, eusebius, king, confessor, theodore, hippo, cassian, theodoret, antony, grimke, chrysostom, martin, ponticus, polycarp, irenaeus, nyssa, elizabeth, clement, younger, rome, francis, poemen, macrina, evagrius, susan, stanton, martine, great, gregory, thomas, dorotheus, abba, basil, roberts, and catherine.

# We also belong to each other

□ I Cor. 12:12-27

<sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by<sup>[a]</sup> one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. <sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

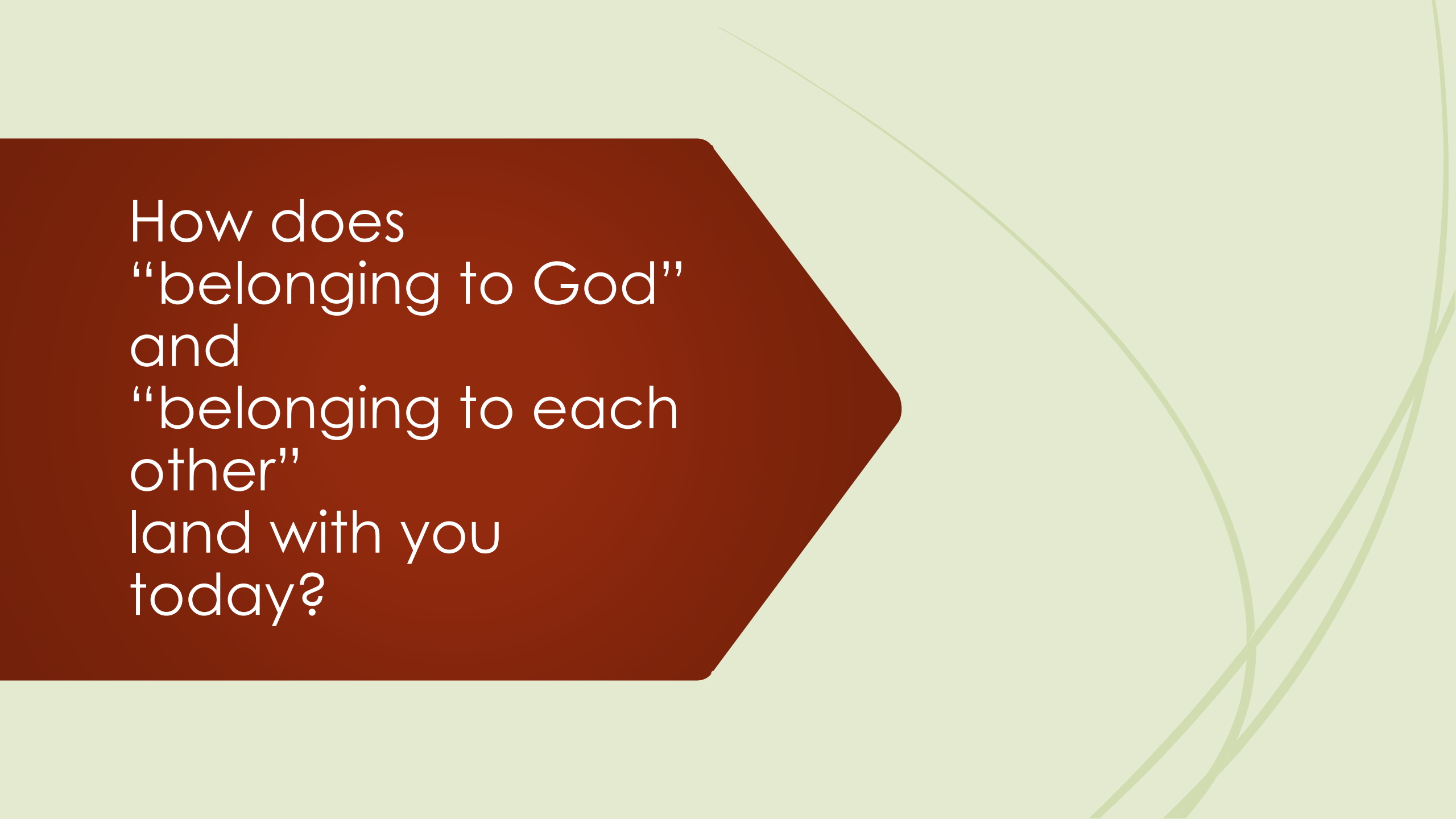
<sup>15</sup> **Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.** <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But in fact **God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.** <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

<sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” <sup>22</sup> On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, <sup>24</sup> while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup> so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

<sup>27</sup> **Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.**







How does  
“belonging to God”  
and  
“belonging to each  
other”  
land with you  
today?



**Break**





## Session II: Whatever you Do

I Corinthians 10: 13

So whether you eat or drink,

or whatever you do,

do it all for the glory of God.

- What? ... Why? ... How?



- “Whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do it (all) as ...
  - Eating ... drinking ... doing dishes
  - Texting ... studying ... writing ...scheduling
  - Visiting ... cooking ... cleaning
  - Preaching ... sleeping (sleeping while listening to preaching??) ...

**The What:** what  
we are doing  
“for God’s  
glory”



The **Why**: what does it mean to do things for “**God’s glory**”?

□ **Glorify**

□ “to honor”

□ “give weight to”

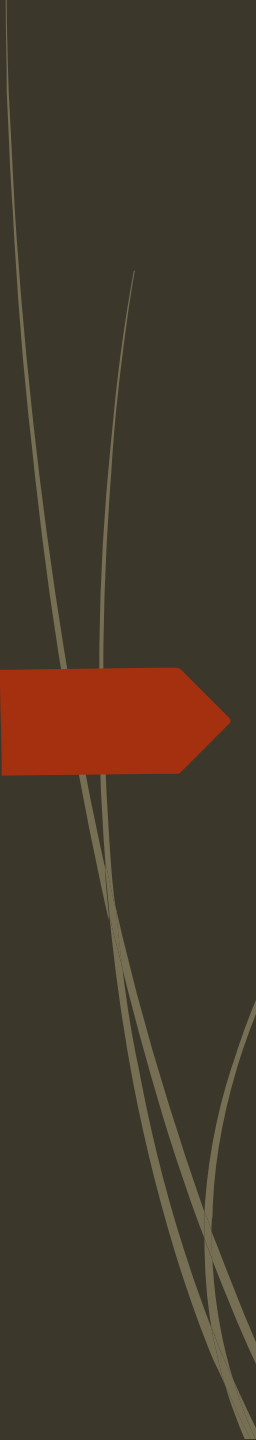




**The How: How** do we do anything/everything for God's glory?

(What gives us away??)





# Love: the “how” of giving God glory (1 Corinthians 13)

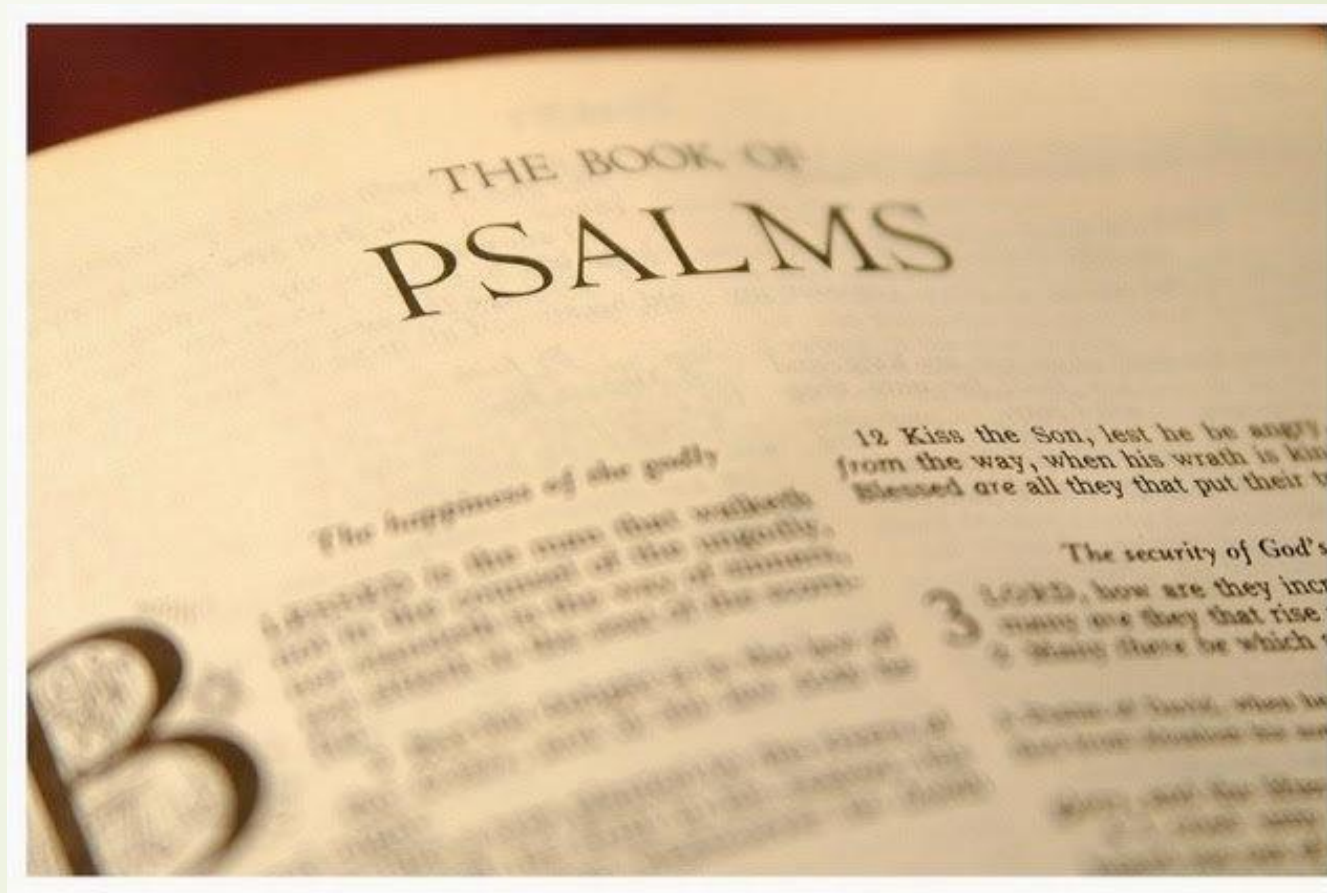
What are some obstacles to doing things with authentic love?

- ❑ Feeling rushed
- ❑ Distractions
- ❑ Need to be needed/liked
- ❑ Others? ...

- ❑ Connection with God, others, self, creation
- ❑ Practicing gratitude
- ❑ Well-being practices (rest/sleep, diet, movement, awareness)
- ❑ “Reclaim the Adverb”
- ❑ Other?

What facilitates  
**loving** action?

# Summary of “whatever you do...”





Break





## Session 3: Communal Reflection

- What touched you today?
- What is one “take-away” for you today?
- Questions/Comments?

# Closing Prayer of Commitment

○ God of the high heavens,  
○ Christ of the deep earth,  
○ Spirit of the flowing waters,  
○ Trinity of love,  
You have offered your love to us,  
and here we pledge our love to you  
and to each another.  
Strengthen us in our desire,  
and breathe into our bodies the passion of your love.  
We pray this in the name of Jesus, to whom we commit  
ourselves. Amen.

*Iona Abbey Worship Book (Glasgow: Wildgoose Publications, 2001)  
105-106.*





# Contact info & Assessment

- Rebecca S. Letterman  
([Letterman\\_Rebecca@roberts.edu](mailto:Letterman_Rebecca@roberts.edu))
- Assessment/Feedback