

WEEK 2 GATHERING IN THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

“Like a spiritual sunrise, it dawned on them that God’s presence and love had accompanied them each step of their journey.”

-Paul Chilcote, on the faith of The Wesleys



“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,”

-Luke 4:18

For Reflection & Discussion:

1. Love and Unity seem to go together. Both lofty ideals sound good, but we know that they aren't easy. What are the things that stand in the way of love and unity in your world?
2. What have you been doing to cultivate deeper love and more inclusive unity?
3. Where have you been experiencing it yourself?

ENGAGING OUR FAITH:

Paul Chilcote, in his book *Multiplying Love*, he talks about the present struggle in The United Methodist Church between the need for division and the call to unity as Christ called us to be reconcilers of the breach and restorers of streets to live in. On this upcoming MLK weekend, we remember the words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on beloved community when he made a constructive statement: "the present tension represents the necessary pains that accompany the birth of anything new. It is both historically and biologically true that there can be no birth or growth without birth and growing pains." This is a reminder that few things good and sacred come easy.