Lenten Series Ideas

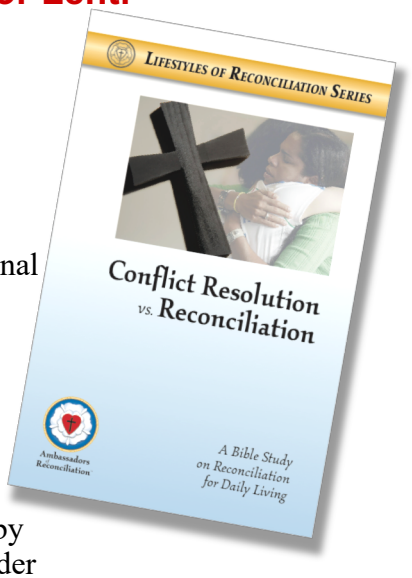
from

Ambassadors of Reconciliation

New for 2019!

Lent is an ideal time to reflect, teach, and preach reconciliation. Focus on reconciliation throughout the entire season as we hear again the passion of the Christ and prepare for our Easter celebration. Our reconciliation to God was finished on the cross, and we are now Christ's ambassadors of reconciliation.

Choose from a wide array of resources ideally suited for Lent.



NEW FOR 2019

New this year! Several Bible studies, including an on-line course and audio-email devotions.

- ***Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation***: A six-week Bible study on reconciliation. Provide a book for each participant for notes and personal reflection. Order a Leader's Pack to get PowerPoint and videos to enhance learning!

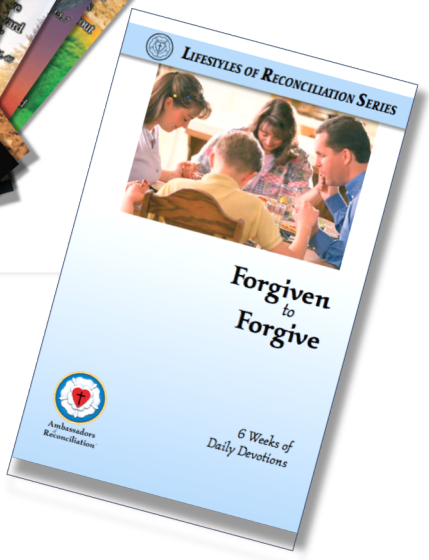
  https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/conflict-resolution-vs-reconciliation

- **Reproducible Bible studies** on contemporary topics relating to reconciliation. Download and reproduce as many as you need. Order by individual topic or order the entire set at substantial savings! Then, order bookmarks people can keep in their Bibles for future reference.
  Choose from:
  - Anger
  - Authority
  - Bitterness
  - Careless Talk
  - Confession
  - Fear, Cravings, & Misplaced Trust (a three-part study)
  - Forgiveness
  - Identity
  - Loving Others
  - Suffering

  https://www.aorhope.org/downloadable-bible-studies

- **Daily Devotions for Email** – Audio/written devotions you send every day to your email list. Based on *Forgiven to Forgive*, each one takes only 3 minutes.
  What a great way to reach people throughout Lent!

  https://aorhope.org/daily-devotions



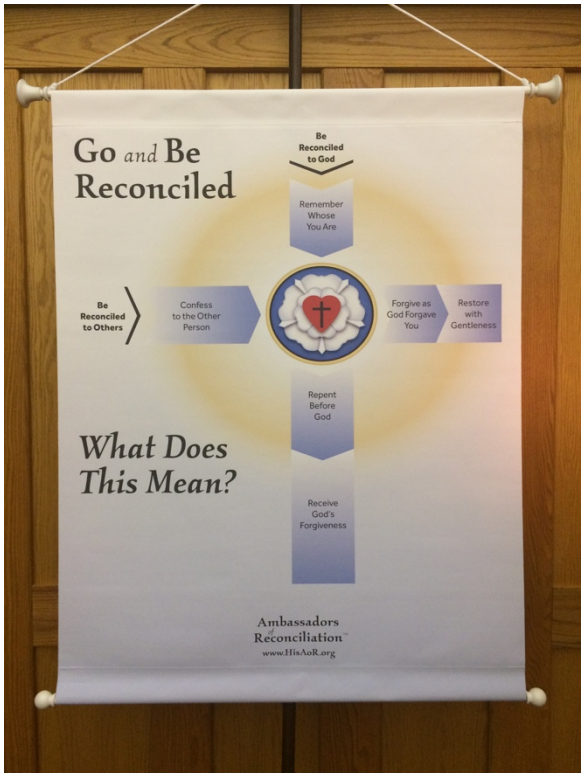
On-Line Self-Paced Study

- Just in time for Lent… *Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation* is now available in an interactive on-line course. People can work through it on their own. A special feature includes the downloadable *Application Discussion Guide* – great for small group discussions! And, the Guide is ideal for helping someone work through a conflict in his own life.

  Check it out for yourself:
  https://www.aorhope.org/personal-peacemaking-top

Sermon Themes (Sundays or midweek)

Base your series on the six parts of the cross diagram from the pamphlet *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* or the banner (pictured on the right). Handout *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* pamphlets at the beginning of Lent (https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/proclaiming-god-s-forgiveness-forms). Use each one of the six parts to develop that week's sermon. Utilize the "Service of Prayer and Preaching" (*Lutheran Service Book*, 2006, page 260), reviewing the section from *Luther's Small Catechism* that correlates to that week's section on the cross.



https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/reconciliation-cross-banner

See also https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/go-and-be-reconciled-banner

Introduction to Your Series:
Go and Be Reconciled: *What Does This Mean?*

The cross can remind us how we are reconciled. *In our vertical relationship*, God reconciled us to Himself through Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20b). We remember that we are His children, called to a lifestyle of repentance, receiving His forgiveness. *In our horizontal relationship*, we are called to be reconciled with other people for whom Christ has died (Matthew 5:23-24). We confess our sins to the other person, forgive as God forgave us through Christ, and restore others with gentleness.

Week 1: Remember Whose You Are (1 John 3:1[1])
How does my identity affect reconciliation?
Catechism Review: Baptism
Hymn Suggestions[2]:
All Christians Who Have Been Baptized (LSB 596)
All Who Believe and Are Baptized (LSB 601, TLH 301, LW 225, LBW 194)
Baptized into Your Name Most Holy (LSB 590, TLH 298, LW 224, LBW 192)
Father Welcomes (LSB 605)
God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It (LSB 594)

[1] For additional text suggestions, see the Bible study *Go and Be Reconciled: What Does This Mean?* or *Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation*
[2] Hymnal Abbreviations: LSB – *Lutheran Service Book* (2006); TLH – *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941); LW – *Lutheran Worship* (1982); LBW – *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978); HS-98 –*Hymnal Supplement 98* (1998).

Week 2: Repent before God (Psalm 51:17)

How do my conflicts with others affect my relationship with God?

Catechism Review: Ten Commandments

Hymn Suggestions:

I Lay My Sins on Jesus (LSB 606, TLH 652, LW 366, LBW 305)
Lord Jesus, Think on Me (LSB 610, TLH 320, LW 231, LBW 309)
Lord, to You I Make Confession (LSB 608, TLH 326, LW 233)
O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken (LSB 439, TLH 143, LW 119, LBW 123)
Savior, When in Dust to Thee (LSB 419, TLH 166, LW 93, LBW 91)
The Law of God Is Good and Wise (LSB 579, TLH 295, LW 329)
These Are the Holy Ten Commands (LSB 581)
To Thee, Omniscient Lord of All (LSB 613, TLH 318, LW 234, LBW 310)

Week 3: Receive God's Forgiveness (1 John 1:9)

How am I reconciled to God?

Catechism Review: Confession and Forgiveness

Hymn Suggestions:

Baptismal Waters Cover Me (LSB 616)
Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain (LSB 435, TLH 149, LW 96, LBW 301)
How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds (LSB 524, TLH 364, LW 279, LBW 345)
Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing (LSB 421, TLH 144, LW 95)
Jesus Sinners Doth Receive (LSB 609, TLH 324, LW 229, LBW 291)
Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us (LSB 851, TLH 442, LW 402, LBW 424)
Not All the Blood of Beasts (LSB 431, TLH 156, LW 99)
O Bless the Lord, My Soul (LSB 814, TLH 27, LW 457)

Week 4: Confess to the Other Person (James 5:16)

How does my confession lead to reconciliation?

Catechism Review: The Creed

Hymn Suggestions:

Chief of Sinners Though I Be (LSB 611, TLH 342, LW 285, LBW 306)
Lord of all Nations, Grant Me Grace (LSB 844, LBW 419)
O God, My Faithful God (LSB 696, TLH 395, LW 371, LBW 504)
Renew Me, O Eternal Light (LSB 704, TLH 398, LW 373, LBW 511)
We All Believe in One True God (LSB 953, TLH 252, LW 212)
Where Charity and Love Prevail (LSB 845, LBW 126, HS'98 878)

Week 5: Forgive as God Forgave You (Colossians 3:12-13)

How does forgiving and resolving lead to reconciliation?

Catechism Review: The Lord's Prayer

Hymn Suggestions:

"Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" (LSB 843, LBW 307, HS'98 877)
In Christ There Is No East or West (LSB 653, LBW 359)
Love in Christ Is Strong and Living (LSB 706, LW 376)
Not for Tongues of Heaven's Angels (LSB 695)
Our Father, Who from Heaven Above (LSB 766, TLH 458, LW 430)

Week 6: Restore with Gentleness (Galatians 6:1)
How does restoring others lead to reconciliation?
Catechism Review: The Lord's Supper
Hymn Suggestions:
Blest Be the Tie That Binds (LSB 649, TLH 464, LW 295, LBW 370)
Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's Head (LSB 647, TLH 477, LW 293)
Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray (LSB 623, TLH 314, LW 250, LBW 225)
O God of Mercy, God of Might (LSB 852, TLH 439, LW 397, LBW 425)
Sent Forth by God's Blessing (LSB 643, LW 247, LBW 221)

Daily Devotions

Provide congregational households with the devotion booklet *Forgiven to Forgive*. Or, order the new audio/written email versions and send them out daily to your members. Six weeks of daily devotions on forgiveness reinforce the theme and enrich your focus on reconciliation. Also available on CD, these recordings with music work great for busy people and for anyone with reading difficulties.

https://www.aorhope.org/devotions for printed materials
https://www.aorhope.org/daily-devotions to sign up for daily delivery of email devotions

Bible Study

For Sunday morning or among small groups, choose from several options:

- *Go and Be Reconciled: What Does This Mean?*
  https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/go-and-be-reconciled-what-does-this-mean
- *Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation* (book or on-line)
  Book: https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/conflict-resolution-vs-reconciliation
  On-Line: https://www.aorhope.org/personal-peacemaking-top
- Single topic Bible studies: Choose from Anger; Authority; Bitterness; Careless Talk; Confession, Fear, Cravings, & Misplaced Talk (3-part study); Forgiveness; Identity; Loving Others; or Suffering. All of them relate to reconciliation.
  https://www.aorhope.org/downloadable-bible-studies

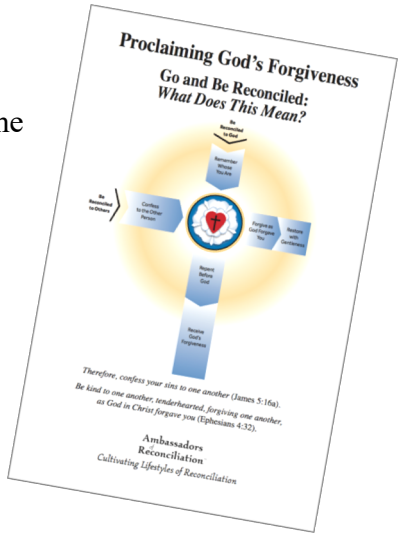
Bible Study Seminar

A full-day Bible study seminar presented by professionals from AoR.

- *Go and Be Reconciled: What Does This Mean?* features personal peacemaking that reflects on the biblical teaching for reconciliation while reviewing the six chief parts of Christian doctrine from *Luther's Small Catechism*.
- *Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation* distinguishes the differences between simply resolving a conflict (material issues) and reconciliation (restoring relationships).

Both seminars answer "What does this mean?" through two parts: "Be Reconciled to God" and "Be Reconciled to Others." Learn more at https://www.aorhope.org/seminars.

Private Absolution



Teach and encourage your members to come to Private Absolution one time during the Lenten season. Schedule open times and appointments. Use the *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* pamphlets.
https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/proclaiming-god-s-forgiveness-forms

The Kiss of Peace

Throughout Lent, teach the original purpose of the passing of the peace (see "Moving from the Holy Howdy to the Kiss of Peace" https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/44f895_80638c1f6a624ea79a078cdbd939744a.pdf). Prepare people for Maundy Thursday when the service will pause following the Sermon and prior to the offering and Holy Communion for sharing the peace of Christ with one another. In addition to greeting those around them, people will be especially encouraged to go to someone with whom they need to be reconciled, beginning with "The peace of the Lord be with you," confessing their sins to one another, and forgiving each other as God through Christ has forgiven them. Allow plenty of time for this activity. Encourage people weeks before to be prepared for this special time (see suggestions in the article).

Pastoral Counseling

Although these resources are ideal for anytime, during this special season of Lent utilize these resources in your pastoral counseling:

- *Forgiven to Forgive* devotion booklet – note counseling/homework questions available for each devotion (https://www.aorhope.org/product-page/forgiven-to-forgive-coaching-questions-for-personal-reflection). At the end of this document, you will find a topical index to help you chose the right devotion.
- *Go and Be Reconciled: What Does This Mean?* and *Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation* – At the end of each of the six lessons, you will find application questions. These questions were specifically written for helping people apply that lesson's teaching to specific situations in people's lives. Use during live counseling sessions or use as homework. Be sure to follow up on any assignments you make.
- *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* pamphlet – Use this form to pronounce absolution and for teaching family members how to confess and forgive in the home. Guide family members in your presence through the form, or assign as homework and follow-up.

Resources

Order from the AoR Bookstore to support your Lenten series (https://www.aorhope.org/bookstore)

- Bible studies and devotions, including new on-line self-paced study
- *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* pamphlets
- *Confession & Forgiveness: Professing Faith as Ambassadors of Reconciliation* by Ted Kober (also available in Spanish)
- *Built on the Rock: The Healthy Congregation* by Ted Kober
- Bookmarks
- Skit: "You Wrecked My Car!" (for family confession and forgiveness)
- Banners (*Go and Be Reconciled* and *What Does This Mean?* cross)