## REFLECTION GUIDE

11.19.23

## INTRO

We have been forgiven! What a free and light feeling that can bring after living with guilt. When you are the one granting forgiveness, you will also find a lightening of your load.

THOUGHTS

## **PRAYER**

God of grace, help me never forget that your forgiveness was freely given so that I might experience love and closeness with you. I don't want to harbor bitterness toward another or personal shame that takes up space in my life that is meant for your love. Help me grow in the grace I give others. Amen.

## **DIGGING DEEPER**

- If shame was something physical and tangible, what would it look like? What would it feel like?
- Do you have a hard time believing that God forgives you for your worst mistakes? Why? Has another person's lack of forgiveness ever influenced how you feel about God's forgiveness?
- Matthew 6:9-15 says, "Pray like this: Our Father who is in heaven, uphold the holiness of your name. Bring in your kingdom so that your will is done on earth as it's done in heaven. Give us the bread we need for today. Forgive us for the ways we have wronged you, just as we also forgive those who have wronged us. And don't lead us into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. "If you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you don't forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your sins." [CEB]
  - Why do you think this statement about forgiveness immediately follows Jesus teaching the disciples how to pray?
  - Jesus felt strongly about forgiveness, wanting all God's children to experience it. How does the last sentence of this passage make you feel?
- Have you ever withheld forgiveness from someone? How do you think that might impact their feelings of shame? How might God be leading you toward grace?