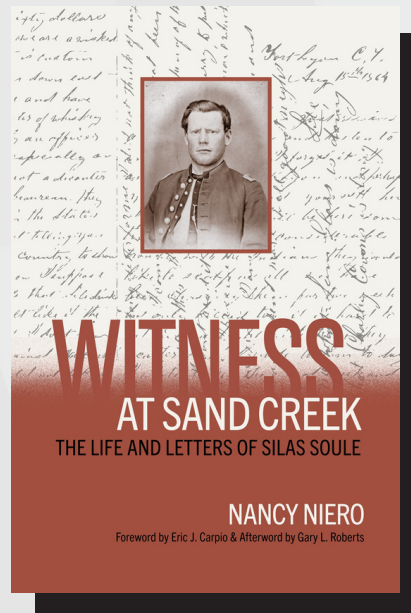


PAGES FOR PROGRESS

Study Guide:

“Witness at Sand Creek:
The Life and Letters of
Silas Soule”

Nancy Niero



Preface

The 2025 Fall cohort of Pages for Progress gathered to read and discuss *Witness at Sand Creek: The Life and Letters of Silas Soule*. The book chronicles the life of Captain Silas Soule, an abolitionist and teenage conductor on the Underground Railroad. Soule refused to participate in the massacre at Sand Creek and was one of the first to testify against Colonel John Chivington after the massacre. His courageous choice to stand against injustice ultimately cost him his life, as he was assassinated shortly after giving testimony on the massacre.

In the following pages, you'll find an overview of each session along with detailed guidelines. This study guide is designed for use in small groups within your local church, district, annual conference, ecumenical groups, or neighborhood communities. Meetings can be held in person or virtually. Additionally, this guide includes supplementary resources on the topic to build awareness and educate.

This study guide is the result of the thoughtful discussions from the fall 2025 cohort. A heartfelt thanks to everyone in the cohort!

If you have any feedback or questions on this study guide, please email seminars@umcjustice.org, we'd love to hear from you!

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Structure

This study is structured into three sessions. Each session is approximately 90 minutes long and features a welcome, communication guidelines, theological grounding, book discussion questions, and a closing.

Reading Assignments by Session

Session One: Foreword/Prologue to Chapter 4

Session Two: Chapter 5 to Chapter 7

Session Three: Chapter 8 to Epilogue/Afterword

Session Overview

WELCOME (10 minutes)

Begin with prayer.

This is also an opportunity to get to know the group and establish communication guidelines. We recommend the [Communication Guidelines](#) created by The Kaleidoscope Institute.

Respectful Communication Guidelines

R take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others

E use EMPATHETIC listening

S be SENSITIVE to differences in communication/cultural styles

P PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak

E EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions

C keep CONFIDENTIALITY

T TOLERATE ambiguity because we are not here to debate. There are no “winners” or “losers”

S STEP UP/STEP BACK If you notice that you are speaking a lot, step back to create space for others to speak. If you notice that you have much to share but not, take courage and speak up so that others can learn from you. (*Not from Eric Law, but from previous study groups.)

(Source: [Eric Law's “Respectful Communication Guidelines”](#))

THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING (25 minutes)

Each theological ground session is intentionally designed to align with that week's assigned chapters. This alignment serves two key purposes: first, to help us integrate our faith with the realities of the world rather than separating the two; and second, to encourage us to put our faith into practice through meaningful action.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (45 minutes)

Each question is designed to deepen engagement with the assigned readings, exploring the chapter's themes and the social, historical, and political analysis through a faith lens. It is recommended to share the questions in advance, allowing participants time to reflect and develop their responses.

If you have a large group, we recommend breaking up into smaller groups/breakout rooms for the book discussion.

CLOSING (10 minutes)

Close each session by asking the group to share any insight from their small group discussion (if small groups were used) for the good of the larger group. Or provide time for individual reflection through journaling.

End each session with a reminder of the assigned chapters for the following gathering and a benediction.

The cohort ended each session with the benediction given by Bishop Woodie White at the 1996 General Conference in Denver, Colorado. Feel free to close with the benediction by Bishop Woodie White or with another prayer.

Benediction

And now,
May the Lord torment you.

May the Lord keep before you the faces of the hungry, the lonely, the rejected and the despised.

May the Lord afflict you with pain for the hurt, the wounded, the oppressed, the abused, the victims of violence.

May God grace you with agony, a burning thirst for justice and righteousness.

May the Lord give you courage and strength and compassion to make ours a better world, to make your community a better community, to make your church a better church.

And may you do your best to make it so, and after you have done your best, may the Lord grant you peace. Amen.

Background on the Sand Creek Massacre

November 29, 1864, became Colorado's deadliest day in history, with the Sand Creek Massacre leaving a lasting impact not only on the state, but on the history of the United States and American Methodism. Initially viewed as a military victory over hostile Native Americans, the massacre revealed a broader pattern of governmental and ecclesial complicity and support to the many atrocities committed against Native Americans in the name of Manifest Destiny, with Sand Creek standing as a stark example.

The discovery of gold in the Rocky Mountains in the 1850s encouraged many white settlers and miners to head west. This westward expansion disrupted Indigenous life through forced removals, the brutal mistreatment of Native peoples, and the decimation of buffalo herds, which the Plain Tribes relied on for survival.

In the name of peace, many treaties, like the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty and the 1861 Treaty of Fort Wise, were signed between the United States and members of the Plain Tribes. These agreements, however, were frequently and ultimately not upheld by the U.S. government, leading to ongoing and growing conflicts and tensions.

In 1864, Peace Chief Black Kettle, a member of the Council of 44 Chiefs of the Cheyenne people, met with President Abraham Lincoln to negotiate peace. Later that year, he met with Colorado Territory Governor John Evans to negotiate peace once again, all for the sake of ensuring the safety of his people.

Evans was a prominent Methodist layman, physician, railroad promoter, and one of the founders of Northwest University and the University of Denver. He was a close friend to Bishop Matthew Simpson, who had been influential in his appointment to governor.

As tensions between the Plain Tribes and settlers in the Denver area grew, Evans broke from his peace agreements, authorizing in August of 1864 "all citizens of Colorado... to go in pursuit of all hostile Indians and kill and destroy all enemies of the country," while advising

that “friendly Indians could seek places of safety.” When his request for federal forces was denied on account of the Civil War, Evans called for volunteers and raised a 100-day regiment.

The Massacre

John Chivington, a Methodist pastor, abolitionist, Union Colonel, and political opportunist volunteered and was appointed to the Third Colorado Cavalry Regiment under this call for 100-day volunteers.

In the early morning hours of November 29, 1864, the Third Colorado Cavalry, consisting of 675 men under the command of Chivington, opened fire, attacked, killed, and mutilated approximately 230 mostly women, children, and elderly Cheyanne and Arapaho people at Sand Creek, ignoring the American and white flags being flown as a demonstration of peace. Among the victims were at least 23 Cheyanne and 5 Arapaho chiefs, leaving a profound and lasting legacy of loss in tribal leadership and guidance.

Aftermath

Following the massacre, Chivington called the massacre a victory, and for decades it was celebrated as a key event in Colorado’s path to statehood. The truth of the massacre only came to light through the courage of its survivors and the actions of those like Captain Silas Soule, who ordered his men not to fire their weapons that day.

Governor Evans was forced to resign and end his pursuit of higher positions in public office. He remained, however, an active civic leader and was elected as a delegate to General Conference of the Methodist Church from 1872 to 1892. Bishop Matthew Simpson also continued to support his close friend John Evans and did not mention the massacre at Sand Creek.

Two military investigations and one investigation by the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War were conducted. Captain Silas Soule testified to the atrocities, and one week later, was murdered by a soldier under Chivington’s command. Chivington never took responsibility for his actions and was never convicted of a war crime. Until he died in 1894, he remained unrepentant and defended the actions he had committed at Sand Creek. The Methodist Church largely stood by Chivington and believed charges against him to be false, perpetuating the notion that the Cheyanne and the Arapahos were hostile and violent.

Accountability and Response

For over 160 years, Methodists have struggled with the legacy of Chivington and Evans, as well as the church's silence on the massacre. Over the past three decades, the United

Methodist Church has made several attempts to atone for its complicity in the harm done. Recently, the church has renewed its efforts toward repentance through the *United Methodist Responses to the Sand Creek Massacre Interagency Task Force*. This task force is charged with educating the church about its involvement in the massacre, fostering a healing relationship between United Methodists and the descendants of the Sand Creek victims, and developing a coordinated response that commits denominational resources to this work. 2020/2024 Book of Resolutions, #4263 “United Methodist Responses to the Sand Creek Massacre”

Sessions

Session One: Foreword/Prologue to Chapter 4

WELCOME (10 minutes)

Say: Welcome to the first session of Pages for Progress as we read and study, “Witness at Sand Creek” by Nancy Niero. Since this is our first gathering, let’s go around and get to know each other. Please share your name and why you decided to join this study.

Pause for a time of sharing.

Pray: Holy One. We ask that you be with us today as we start our journey in reading and discussing this book together. May our discussions be truth-telling, may our sharing be of hope and reconciliation, and may our fellowship be accepting in your eyes. Amen.

Say: Since this is our first meeting. We will spend a few minutes on communication guidelines to create a safe space for everyone to share and discuss.

Create communication guidelines for the group or introduce Kaleidoscope Institute’s Respectful Communication Guidelines.

THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING (25 minutes)

Say: In our reading for today, we read a description of Silas’ childhood in Maine and Massachusetts. It’s a beautiful image of the family gathered in the parlor every Sunday afternoon,

listening to his mother read out loud excerpts of Uncle Tom's Cabin. It's evident that Silas was being formed by these readings but not by them alone. His formation was shaped by the conversations around the dinner table, by the community that surrounded him, and by the family's decision to live out their values and moving to the Kansas Territory.

The passage that comes to mind for our theological grounding today comes from Deuteronomy 6:5-9. It says "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deut. 6:5–9, NRSV)

This passage sits at the heart of the Shema ("Hear O' Israel") the central affirmation and declaration of faith and is part of God's instruction on how to live.

In verse 7, "Recite them to your children" the verb "shanan" means "to impress upon" means literally "and you shall sharpen them" – it is an image of being intentional and repetitive and that is faith formation. (שִׁנַּנְתָּם) (veshinantam)
Root: שָׁנַן (shanan))

In verse 8 and 9, it says "Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as emblems, write them on doorposts" these acts are ways of embodied remembrance. Faith that is seen, felt and practiced. Or in another way, to live out.

When a child is baptized or dedicated in the church, we make a covenant together to nurture them in faith, to

surround them with steadfast love, and to guide them toward life in Christ. This means that raising children is never just a parent's task it is the calling of the whole Body of Christ.

- **Reflection Questions:**

- What stories do our children hear in our worship, our homes, our classrooms?
- Do they see justice, mercy, and love embodied in us?
- Are we giving them tools to interpret the world through faith?

BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (45 MINUTES)

If you have a large group, break into small groups.

- (Foreword/Prologue) Carpio remarks that while reading this book, he was reminded of the phrase, "God writes straight with crooked lines," attributed to St. Teresa of Avila.
 - What do you think the phrase attributed to Teresa of Avila means for people of faith who are seeking justice?
 - As Niero asks: As people of faith, how do we be accountable today for the history that a Methodist minister led the Sand Creek Massacre? How can people be more like Silas in the world today?
- (Chapter 1) In a letter to his sister from the summer of 1864, Silas mentions a Methodist preacher who was also a Colonel, noting that the preacher was keeping an eye on his character. This Methodist preacher Colonel also ordered his troops to participate in the brutal Sand Creek Massacre, where Cheyenne and Arapaho women, children, and elders were killed. How do we reconcile the contrast between the Christian ideals of "Christian

If you have a large group, break up into small groups for the Book Discussion.

character" and the brutal violence that occurred during the massacre? What does this tension reveal about the disconnect between religious doctrine and the actions taken under the banner of conquest during this period? Does it suggest a failure of Christian ethics in the context of war, or does it point to a deeper moral conflict within the soldiers themselves?

- (Chapter 2) Niero writes: "This is not the only letter where he writes, 'give my love to all,' but this is the first. What would the world like if we shared that expression with fellow justice seekers?" (Niero, 37).
- (Chapter 2) How does the role of friendship influence Silas' life?
- (Chapter 3) In Chapter Three, we learn about both Silas's life as a miner and his involvement with the Immortal Ten. These experiences reveal two different forms of courage: one found in enduring daily hardship, and the other in the moral risk of defying injustice. How do the routines and struggles of ordinary labor compare to acts of extraordinary moral conviction? In what ways might faithfulness in everyday life prepare someone for moments of radical moral action?
- (Chapter 4) In Ch. 4, we read that Silas' account of the Battle of Valverde that he narrates in letter 5 to Walt Whitman is not accurate. Silas describes that the 2nd Regiment New Mexico Volunteers ran at first fire by the Texans, but in actual fact had retreated after a long day of battle ([read more on New Mexico Volunteers](#)). Niero remarks that it is a mystery as to why and how Silas received and passed on this inaccuracy, but that the language of "whites" and "Mexicans" speaks of racial

overtones as the 2nd Regiment was made up of mostly Hispanic men from New Mexico who mostly spoke Spanish. Thinking about this story, what do you think the effect on Walt Whitman might have been in reading this story? Niero also writes about changes in Civil War monuments in Santa Fe and Denver. How do racist, inaccurate stories like the one Soule passed along to Walt Whitman impact the way events and places are commemorated?

- (Chapter 4) At the close of Ch. 4, Niero discusses the idea of nostalgia when thinking about her pilgrimage tracing Silas Soule's steps. We also hear Silas repeatedly write about longing to return to his family while a soldier in the Civil War. Nostalgia or a longing for a return to a place can be so painful especially in times of grief, that historically physicians as recently as during the American Civil War saw it as a neurological disorder. More recently, therapists have surmised that nostalgia can be a coping mechanism that helps someone feel a sense of safety in times of uncertainty or danger. Do you have nostalgia for a place? If you have returned to that place, what did you experience – was it healing, helpful or maybe a homecoming with pain as well?

CLOSING (10 minutes)

Say: I want to thank everyone for the rich discussions we've had today. As we wrap up, let's take a few minutes to hear reflections from today's discussions. Who would like to share any insights or reflections? What stood out to you, and how can that learning be applied to our larger group?

If divided into small groups, bring groups back to the main group.

Pause for a time of sharing. Allow participants to share insights and encourage a brief moment of silence after each contribution to let the ideas sink in.

Say: Before we end, a quick reminder: for our next gathering, please make sure to read Chapters 5 through 7. Here are the questions for our next gathering. If you can, please read the questions before our next meeting and begin to reflect on them.

Closing Benediction:

Close the meeting with the Benediction by Bishop Woodie White (located in “Structure”) or a prayer of your choosing.

Session Two: Chapters 5 - 7

WELCOME (10 minutes)

Say: Welcome to the second session of Pages for Progress!

Remind everyone of the Communication Guidelines created during the first session or the Kaleidoscope Institute's Respectful Communication Guidelines.

THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING (25 minutes)

Say: As followers of Christ, we celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace, the reconciler Jesus the Christ. In the Beatitudes, Jesus tells us, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God." (Matt. 5:9). The prophet Isaiah gives us a vision of peace when he proclaims: "The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." (Isa. 11:6)

Reflection Questions:

- As people of faith, what kind of peace do we envision for our communities? How do we cultivate peace? How do our churches create space for and offer signs of peace to one another and our communities?

Pray: Oh Great Spirit, when we walk the path of beauty with sincerity, honesty, courage, and truthfulness, we are like the upright basket which can hold the fruits of harvest. We can receive and share the blessings abundantly. But when we strayed from the beauty path and are not trustworthy, honest, or reliable, we are like the basket turned over. We cannot contain, receive, or give of the many blessings of life. When we are upside down we are empty and useless. Help us to always be upright, to receive and share the blessings of life. ("Help Us to Be Upright," Voices: Native American Hymns and Worship Resources, p. 71.)

BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (45 minutes)

- (Chapter 5): In Chapter 5, we find Silas a captain in the Union Army during the height of the Civil War. He is stationed in the Colorado Territory which places him at the center of the rising tensions associated with Western expansion and the Native American tribes in the region. At the same time, he is deeply concerned about his family, who survived the Quantrill's Raid in Kansas. How might these overlapping challenges influence his understanding of his role? What does Soule's experience reveal about moral dilemmas and complexities people face during periods of war and conflict?
- (Chapter 6): In the first letter to Chivington, Silas recounts that he has been travelling between Fort Garland and the town of Conejos. At Fort Garland, there are now veterans of the American Civil War who are being recruited to reenlist. However, we also learn that soldiers are not being paid, and some officers are actively discouraging reenlistment. Meanwhile, in Conejos, the Ute Indian Agency agent Lafayette Head, who also owned enslaved Ute people, was overseeing the relationship between the Indian communities and white settlers. Niero writes: "We add the messy and complicated presence of the military at an isolated fort that is created to protect those white settlers, and it's a chemistry compound for conflict and abuse for those who have been living on the land for generations." (78). In the midst of ongoing conflict and abuse, how does Silas respond? What actions does he take? According to Niero's research, how do others like Col. Tappan, and the Hispano residents of Conejos respond?
- (Chapter 6): In the second half of the chapter, we read in Silas' letters to his mother and sister Annie mention of perhaps needing "to fight Indians." Why does Silas say

If you have a large group, break up into smaller groups for the Book Discussion.

this? What do you make of his comments in light of his earlier abolitionist work?

- (Chapter 7): Silas Soule is compared to Dietrich Bonhoeffer in how they both chose to follow their moral and spiritual convictions, even when it meant standing alone. Adkins reflects that “we fall prey to following the crowd... even if we’d like to think we couldn’t,” and wonders how lonely it must have been “to feel clearly to be morally right and be left alone.” What does faithful discipleship look like when doing what is right means standing apart from others? How can our faith communities help nurture the kind of moral courage that Soule and Bonhoeffer showed?
- (Chapter 7): During the annual Spiritual Healing Run, the runners hear about how the Methodist preacher/colonel and the Methodist territorial governor orchestrated and conducted the Sand Creek massacre. As United Methodists, we are spiritual descendants of those who cause such profound harm. How do we, as people of faith, reckon with this painful part of our spiritual heritage? What does repentance, healing, and solidarity look like today as we seek to live into our Wesleyan call to “do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God”?

CLOSING (15 minutes)

Say: I want to thank everyone for the rich discussions we've had today. As we wrap up, let's take a few minutes to hear reflections from today's discussions. Who would like to share any insights or reflections? What stood out to you, and how can that learning be applied to our larger group?

If divided into small groups, bring the groups back to the main group.

Pause for a time of sharing. Allow participants to share insights and encourage a brief moment of silence after each contribution to let the ideas sink in.

Say: Before we end, a quick reminder: for our next gathering, please make sure to read Chapters 8 through the Epilogue/Afterword. Here are the questions for our next gathering. If you can, please read the questions before our next meeting and begin to reflect on them.

Closing Benediction:

Close the meeting with the Benediction by Bishop Woodie White (located in “Structure”) or a prayer of your choosing.

Session Three: Chapters 8 to Epilogue/ Afterword

WELCOME (10 minutes)

Say: Welcome to our last session! Before we begin, let's begin with a word of prayer.

You may ask a participant to lead the group in prayer. If no one volunteers, you may lead the group in your own prayer or open with the prayer below.

Remind everyone of the Communication Guidelines created during the first session or the Kaleidoscope Institute's Respectful Communication Guidelines.

THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING (25 minutes)

Read: Deuteronomy 8: 1-11

Say: Scripture is filled with stories of people on journeys: Abraham setting out for a land he did not know, the Israelites wandering through the wilderness, and the disciples walking the dusty roads of Galilee are just a few examples. As our reading this week reflects, Nancy Niero's pilgrimage to the places Silas mentions in his writings highlights that a pilgrimage is not just about seeing but that it's about being moved and shaped by the journey itself.

Today, I want to focus on Deuteronomy 8:2, where Moses tells the Israelites, "Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you..." Moses is reminding the people to recall their forty-year journey through the wilderness, a journey in which God was present every step of the way. This act of remembering was not for nostalgia's sake, but it had a purpose: to help people to remain faithful.

When we go on pilgrimages, we enter into the sacred act of remembering. We reflect on what God has done and

acknowledge where humanity has fallen short. For people of faith, remembering is not a mental exercise; it is embodied. In communion, we are asked, “do this in remembrance of me.” In our pilgrimages, remembering is not only a journey of the mind but one that also engages our bodies, hearts, and souls. Our act of remembering, especially in communion, is not passive; it is active and transformative, meant to shape the way we live.

Remembering is also holy work.

Through it, we remember the lives of our spiritual ancestors, even when those memories are painful. When we remember the Sand Creek massacre, where over 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho women, children, and elders were murdered, we are confronted with the painful truth that we, as the people of God, must face. We are called to remember; not wallow in guilt but to actively confront the truth. As we engage with the past, we can acknowledge where we have failed and seek healing, so that we may move toward justice and reconciliation.

In Deuteronomy 8:11, Moses warns, “Do not forget” reminding both the Israelites and us that forgetting is not an option. This is not a call to live in shame or guilt, but to live in the truth of God’s ongoing work in the world and our role in it. Through remembering, we are invited to be shaped by the journey, to embody transformation, and to live into the fullness of God’s kin-dom.

Reflection Questions:

- Knowing that Chivington and Evans are our spiritual ancestors, what does it mean to “remember” the painful and uncomfortable aspects of our Methodist history? How can remembering these difficult truths help us toward healing and reconciliation?
- How can the church move beyond “passive acknowledgement” of past wrongs to “active truth-

telling” and reparative action? What specific steps could the church take to live into this call?

Pray: Holy God. You are the One who leads your people through the wilderness and into new life. As we run, as we walk, as we remember, move in us the courage to face our past, and the grace to live differently. May each footstep honor those who were lost. May each breath honor those who survived. Make this pilgrimage a path of transformation for us, for our Church, for this land. Through Christ our Redeemer, who still walks the road with us. Amen.

BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (45minutes)

- (Chapter 8): In Silas’ letter to his mother in the beginning of 1865, Silas describes two aspects of life – the personal and social. He describes to his mother his work of counting native and indigenous people massacred at Sand Creek and expresses his hope that military officials including Colonel Chivington will be punished for his actions. The following paragraph, he assures his mother that he is “reforming” his “bad habits” including chewing tobacco and drinking alcohol. We have read previously in an earlier letter that it was Col. Chivington himself who chastised Silas about his drinking and smoking habits. And yet Chivington is the same person who led the massacre. In light of this contrast, what makes social holiness and personal holiness challenging, and how are they both morally significant? Is one more morally important than another?
- (Chapter 8): Dr. Rita Nakashima Brock when interviewed by Niero says the following about Silas’ experience and moral injury: “Moral injury is moral distress that wakes them up at night. Witnesses to horrific violence in the military, like Silas, can ask questions like ‘why did I sign

If you have a large group, break up into smaller groups for the Book Discussion.

up for this,' or could be angry at God." How does Brock suggest Silas responds to moral injury? How might we as Christians and as a church support veterans of war in their efforts to recover from moral injury?

- (Chapter 9): In Chapter 9, Nancy Niero recounts her pilgrimages to locations mentioned in Silas's letters. Many of these places are also sites of more recent racial violence, such as Japanese American internment camps and the protests following the murder of George Floyd. These locations reflect both the efforts to remember and attempts to erase painful chapters in U.S. history. One plaque in a dog park reads: "History is a valuable teacher only if we do not forget our past." How does confronting the full truth of these events change our understanding of identity, justice, and belonging in the U.S.? What is gained when we learn and acknowledge these truths, and what is lost when we ignore or distort them?
- (Chapter 9): Niero expresses gratitude to Smith, Coates, and Cone for the ways their work challenged and transformed her thinking. Smith reminds us that stories can be told incorrectly or not told at all. Coates emphasizes the importance of memory, ancestral storytelling, and pilgrimage to sites of suffering as a way to counter dominant, oppressive narratives. And Cone in his essay identified four realities that contribute to the ongoing silence in white theology around racism: the luxury of disengagement, guilt, fear of Black rage, and resistance to redistributing power and wealth. Considering these authors, how can majority white churches and denominations (like the United Methodist Church) move beyond passive acknowledgement of racism to active truth-telling and reparative action? What would it look like for a church to truly confront the four

realities as described by Cone not just in belief but in practice? How might faith communities create space for difficult truths, tell the full stories of their own histories and live into the kin-dom?

- (Epilogue/Afterword): In the Epilogue, Nancy Niero invites the reader to think about where you have been inspired in the story of Silas: “As this book comes to an end, you kind reader have an opportunity to bear witness to Silas’ life in ways that are now part of your story.” How have you been inspired by Silas’ story? What opportunities do you have to bear witness to Silas’ life through ways that are part of your story?
- (Epilogue/ Afterword): How do you see Soule’s commitment to testifying before the military commission reflective of how he conducted his life? What do you think sustained him in the midst of such a risky decision?

CLOSING (10 minutes)

Say: I want to thank everyone for the rich discussions we've had today. As we wrap up, let's take a few minutes to hear reflections from today's discussions. Who would like to share any insights or reflections? What stood out to you, and how can that learning be applied to our larger group?

If divided into small groups, bring the groups back to the main group.

Pause for a time of sharing. Allow participants to share insights and encourage a brief moment of silence after each contribution to let the ideas sink in.

Closing Benediction:

Close the meeting with the Benediction by Bishop Woodie White (located in “Structure”) or a prayer of your choosing.

Additional Resources

Read:

- [2020/2024 Book of Resolutions, #4263 “United Methodist Responses to the Sand Creek Massacre”](#)
- Roberts, Gary L. Massacre at Sand Creek: How Methodists Were Involved in An American Tragedy
- Kelman, Ari. A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek
- Brock, Rita Nakashima, and Gabriella Lettini. Soul Repair: Recovering from Moral Injury after War, New York: Beacon Press, 2012.
- [UM News “Church Restarts Response to Sand Creek Massacre”](#)
- Reséndez, Andrés. The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America. United States: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016.

Participate/Support:

[Sand Creek Spiritual Healing Run](#)—Established in 1999 by descendants of the survivors of Sand Creek, this yearly 173-mile relay run from the massacre site to the State Capitol in Denver, represents the route used by the soldiers returning to Denver after the massacre. The Healing Run is a memorial for the victims and a charge to raise awareness and healing through positive and active commemoration. [You can support here.](#)

Visit:

- Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site – Began in 1990 by the descendants of the massacre to protect the

site. It became part of the National Park Service in 2007. It is the only National Historic Site that includes the word “massacre.”

- History Colorado has a core exhibit titled, “The Sand Creek Massacre: The Betrayal that Changed Cheyenne and Arapaho People Forever”

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