



*The Doctrine of Discovery: In the Name of Christ*

# STUDY GUIDE

---

## A Note to Facilitators:

This study guide is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of your congregation and context. There are three key elements to this study guide:

1. **Film:** A 43 minute documentary film, *The Doctrine of Discovery: In the Name of Christ*, is available for free online streaming on our website, [www.dofdmverno.org](http://www.dofdmverno.org). Hard copies of the DVD are also available to order with an optional donation through this contact form: <https://dofdmverno.org/contact/>. The film is structured in three parts: The History of the Doctrine of Discovery and its basis in Christian theology and scripture, Living the Doctrine of Discovery (starting at 20:21), and Undoing the Doctrine of Discovery (starting at 29:50).
2. **Learning Modules:** The Learning Modules follow the basic sections of the film and are divided into the following sessions: (1) Introduction; (2) What is the Doctrine of Discovery?; (3) In the Name of Christ; (4) Living the Doctrine of Discovery; and (5) Undoing the Doctrine of Discovery. Adult Ed or Sunday School classes may choose to watch the entire film together or separately before starting these modules, or may watch each section (app. 5-15 min. each) during each gathering.
3. **Bible Reflections:** Ten settler and Indigenous authors, including Bible scholars, theologians, and activists, have contributed Bible reflections. These reflections are based on Biblical texts that have undergirded theologies that support the Doctrine of Discovery, or texts that offer resistance to it. Bible reflection options for each week are listed at the end of each Learning Module. You may choose to send participants home with Bible reflections to read ahead of time individually, or may extend the series and incorporate the reflections into the group time each week. Below are two options for ways classes and groups can use this guide:

### **Option A: 5 week series (or 6 weeks with additional reflection time)**

- Week 1 - Module 1: Introduction and film showing
- Week 2 - Module 2: What is the Doctrine of Discovery?
- Week 3 - Module 3: In the Name of Christ
- Week 4 - Module 4: Living the Doctrine of Discovery
- Week 5 - Module 5: Undoing the Doctrine of Discovery
- *Optional: Continue series with remaining Bible study reflections, or discernment about how your congregation may join efforts to undo the Doctrine of Discovery*

### **Option B: 9 week series (or 10 weeks with additional reflection time)**

- Week 1 - Module 1: Introduction and film showing
- Week 2 - Bible reflection selected from options in Module 2
- Week 3 - Module 2: What is the Doctrine of Discovery?
- Week 4 - Bible reflection selected from options in Module 3

- Week 5 - Module 3: In the Name of Christ
- Week 6 - Bible reflection selected from options in Module 4
- Week 7 - Module 4: Living the Doctrine of Discovery
- Week 8 - Bible reflection selected from options in Module 5
- Week 9 - Module 5: Undoing the Doctrine of Discovery
- *Optional: Continue series with remaining Bible study reflections, or discernment about how your congregation may join efforts to undo the Doctrine of Discovery*

**Facilitating the Learning Modules:**

Each session begins with a time for an opening prayer or song, followed by a group activity designed to foster group participation and common ownership of learning. Discussion questions provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on themes from the film and can be modified by facilitators as needed. A section with resources for further learning provides links, books, videos and more information for those looking to dive in deeper. Several handouts for participants also accompany the Learning Modules. A case study page at the end of each module offers hopeful stories of people who are seeking to show contrition and/or work for reparative justice. Case studies are intended to foster imagination and creativity within congregations seeking justice in their own particular contexts in relationship with Indigenous communities. Finally, a glossary offers definitions of key terms that may be unfamiliar to participants. For an at-a-glance overview of the entire Study Guide, including learning goals for each session, see the Study Guide Outline at the end of the printed version.

*A note on how we have conversations...*

Many of us have found that using circle process, a tool long used by Indigenous Peoples and adapted by restorative justice practitioners, can help create a space for deep listening, honoring of all voices, and more intentional conversation, especially about difficult subjects. The Introduction includes an activity that uses circle process and a handout that briefly describes how to use it. We invite you to continue to use circle process for group discussions if and when it seems helpful for your group throughout this series.