



# continuing the journey of transforming grace:

## transforming practice

June 16, 2024

### *Second Step:* **Create Common Ground**

This reflection focuses on the second step in the five-part series of skill-building to address polarization. This step helps us develop the skills to create common ground, particularly in interactions where there is disagreement or division. In this reflection, we learn to develop skills by first focusing on our daily interactions with those close to us before proceeding to more demanding situations.

*Opening Song:*  
**A Great Wild Mercy** | Carrie Newcomer

*Opening Thought*  
Mary Oliver reads her poem | **"The Summer Day"**

*Scripture*  
**Mark 4: 30-32**

"To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade."



### *Listen and Reflect*

These three video presentations present pathways to discovering and creating common ground among people of difference. Explore one or more of them as you reflect on how you might use these in your interactions with others.

- [How to find common ground with people you disagree with](#)
- [Explore the Common Ground We Share](#)
- [8 Complete Strangers Tell Their Life Stories](#)

### *Pause for Reflection*

Four "steppingstones" that may help create common ground:

1. Describe your hope(s) for the next generation.
2. Name one or more relationships where polarization has led to distance. When did you first notice a shift?
3. Why is democracy important to you?
4. What spiritual value, quotation, mantra, or principle best describes your "why."

Spend time with each of the steppingstones, offered by fellow travelers on the transforming grace journey. First, answer each one for yourself. Then, share them in a small group or with another person. How might they be helpful on the pathway to creating common ground?

### *Closing Prayer*

May we discover, this day,  
the courage to be builders of bridges across distances  
unseen, but known  
the tender strength necessary to listen twice as much  
as we speak  
the curiosity to be the mustard seed, small in size but  
available to be transformed  
the grace to be instruments of something new instead  
of repetitions of old divisions  
the common ground on which the tree of life  
flourishes. Amen

### *Closing Song*

**Welcome to this Circle** | Trish Bruxvoort Colligan