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# Facilitating Forgiveness...

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**We are called to be a Spark, a Spoke, and a Flashlight!**



CHUCK JANSEN  
Forgiveness Institute, KC, Inc.  
Leader Guide by Kim Sutton  
2023

# Facilitator Tips

**\*Pray for yourself and your group.** Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words He wants you to use to reach those He wants you to reach. Here is a possible facilitator's prayer:

“Oh, Lord, open my mind and my heart so that I see the opportunity for you, Lord, to use my memory, my experiences, my wounds, and my joys as I share the beauty of this ministry that reflects your Divine Mercy. Teach me to be gentle and humble as I hold the hands and the hearts that you send my way. Help me to reassure them that as painful and difficult as the process may be, the finish line carries great rewards and joys and an amazing peace. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.”

~Chuck Jansen

**\*And pray some more!** Begin and end a session by praying with your group. One option is to begin each session with The Transformation Prayer and end with The Prayer to the Holy Spirit. Make copies of these prayers for your group members so they can pray with you.

**\*Trust is crucial for the forgiveness process to take place!** Make the participants feel welcome and comfortable at the first session and always! If possible, greet each person by name and get to know them a little. It's easier to do this if you cap your class number at 9. This will make for a more intimate group in which you and the members can spend time getting comfortable with each other. Being comfortable within the group will hopefully cause them to feel safe in sharing.

**\*Be FLEXIBLE!** Feel free to use anything from the [Forgive...to Become Free](#) workbook and the [yeabut.org](#) website. The lesson plans in this guide are for you to use as a guide only. You can follow it, add to it, take things out, whatever works best for you and your group. You will need to take time to read through the workbook and watch the online videos to familiarize yourself with the wealth of information that they provide. Be prepared to change your lesson plan during your class as the needs of the group change.

**\*Group discussions** will depend on the group. You may find yourself with a quiet group of people, a very chatty group or somewhere in between. It will be up to you to gauge each group's openness to discussion. Therefore, it's not necessary to use all questions in this guide. You are welcome to pick and choose and add your own depending on the needs of your group. Be open to everyone's questions and answers whatever they may be. Echo and affirm their questions and answers. For example, “I think I'm hearing you say. . .” or “That's such an interesting answer, can you tell us more. . .” or “Thank you for that beautiful story. . .,” etc. It is important to affirm each person's level of sharing.

**\*Be Honest, Humble, Humorous!**

**Be honest** about yourself, your journey, and if you don't have answers to something, admit it.

**Be humble.** There is no perfect path to forgiveness. Your way may have worked for you but that doesn't mean it's right for everyone. There is only One who has all the answers, and it's not us.

**Use humor.** Chuck gives us permission to make fun of him, so feel free! But seriously, laughing at ourselves can lighten dark moments and gives others permission to lighten up themselves. Use the videos of Chuck's daily jokes if they serve you.

**\*Consider using "tents"** to display key concepts, quotes, and scriptures on tables. PDFs are included in this guide.

# **Session 1/Introduction**

## **OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:**

- A.** WELCOME-Provide a welcoming, safe, and comfortable environment.
- B.** BASICS OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHY YOU ARE HERE.
- C.** PLANT SEED OF “Forgiving to be Free”

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Prayer to the Holy Spirit, Transformation Prayer, or one of your own choosing.

## **WELCOME:**

Ask each person to introduce themselves and tell the group why they are here. Begin with yourself. Give them a quick explanation of why you have decided to lead Forgiveness 101. Keep it under 2 minutes and ask them to do the same.

## **PLANT SEED OF FORGIVENESS**

Read “The Core Belief System of Forgiveness Institute, KC, Inc.” at beginning of workbook. At this time there is no need to discuss this. But now is a perfect time to plant the seed of forgiveness by sharing a 1-2 minute story that exemplifies someone becoming free. Some of you may have your own story which you might share in your introduction above. If not, feel free to use one of the stories you have learned through this course.

## **INTRODUCE CHUCK:**

Use bio on p. x of workbook.

- Play **Chuck-Welcome to the Adventure** (106v-03:37)
- Play **Larry’s Story** (107v-01:39)

## **DISCUSS**

### **What would you tell Larry’s brother?**

Give everyone time to think about their answers. It may take several moments for some to process and put into words what they want to say. This should be a safe discussion, i.e., there is not one correct answer.

## **INTRODUCE the Yea But Faculty:**

Chuck’s “Yea But” Faculty consists of nine people that the Holy Spirit led to Chuck. They are students of Forgiveness 101, experts in forgiveness, and some who have just learned the hard way why forgiveness is so important. He invited each of them to bravely sit and share their stories on video. Bios of each can be found on page ix of the [Forgive...to Become Free](#) workbook. Share them before you play the first video of each faculty member.

- Play **Jim’s Testimony** (128v-03:07)
- Play **Alison’s Story** (115v-03:13)

What did you hear in these two videos?

Did any of this sound familiar? Could you relate? What would you ask Alison or Jim?

- Play **Author John O’Leary’s Testimony & Invitation** (113v-05:46)

Who in your life will tell you the truth?

**Last 20 minutes!**

**-Play Fr. John Riccardo-*“Tell Them About the Gospel”*** Play only the first 9 minutes 26 seconds of the audio. You can find the audio on **youtube.com**. It is not included in the Forgiveness videos.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

## Session 2/Acknowledge Own Process

### OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:

- A. WELCOME
- B. REVIEW
- C. **A**CKNOWLEDGE your hurt to prepare to **O**WN it & **P**ROCESS it.

### OPENING PRAYER:

“Prayer to the Holy Spirit” or prayer of your own choosing.

### TAKE AWAYS

Ask if anything from last week stayed with them through the week or if anything happened in the past week that they want to share.

### WORKBOOK p. 4

Read together/cover more in depth as you watch videos together.

-Play Chuck-Are you a Thermostat? (207v-03:13)

-Play Kim-Hurt People, Hurt People (212v-02:09)

### DISCUSS “Truisms” on p. 5

-Play Dr. Mack-Carrying Our Burdens (138v-01:13)

-Play Dr. Mack- Hurt People Hurt People (213v-01:45)

Talk about **TRIGGERS AND BOUNDARIES** here!

If needed, you can play **Dr. Mack- Frame** (231v-01:21)

**\*\*\*JOKE OF THE DAY\*\*\*** Lenny Dawson Joke (204v-01:35)

### DISCUSS

Empathy in the workbook; use p. 5 discussion questions: Who in your family has experienced the most pain and suffering?

This question can help put their own hurt into perspective.

### BACK TO AOP

Share Louis Smedes’ quote,

“To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover the prisoner was you.”

-Play Jermaine-Prison Confession (217v-01:00)

Shame dies when stories are told in safe places.

### TOOLS

-Play Alison-Adoration (216v-00:39)

-Play Jermaine-Invest in Positivity (121v-01:00)

**PERSONAL REFLECTION:** Ask the group to write down their own answers to the question on page 5: Can you pinpoint your hurt, your biggest toothache? Don't judge, or validate it, just describe it.

-Play John O'Leary-Day 2 Wrap Up (256v- 06:50)

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**Acknowledge your hurt, Own it, Process it!**

**Shame dies when stories are told in safe places.**

**To forgive is to set a prisoner free  
and discover the prisoner was you.  
~Louis Smedes**

**To forgive is to set a prisoner free  
and discover the prisoner was you.**

**~Louis Smedes**

**Shame dies when stories are told in safe places.**

**Acknowledge your hurt, to and Own it, Process it!**



# **Session 3/Forgiveness is a Heroic Choice**

## **OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:**

- A. WELCOME
- B. QUICK REVIEW
- C. Forgiveness is a HEROIC CHOICE

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Transformation Prayer

## **TAKE AWAYS**

Ask if anything from last week stayed with them through the week or if anything happened in the past week that they want to share.

## **SHARE CONTENT**

“We will be watching and discussing videos as usual, then we will break into pairs to process the information, choose a truism or concept and teach it to the rest of the group.”

## **SCRIPTURE OF THE DAY**

Matthew 6:14-15

The Our Father—Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive (MANY, MOST, SOME ALL BUT MY MOTHER-IN-LAW)—It’s NOT a multiple-choice question!

## **WORKBOOK, pp. 13-14**

Truisms

-Play Alison-Forgiveness is a difficult choice (312v-01:30)

## **MRS. CHICKEN & MR. PIG**

Chicken is dedicated because she gives her egg for the breakfast.

Mr. Pig is committed because he gives his life for the breakfast.

We have to be committed to the process, not just dedicated. This is an extremely hard thing to do.

Make sure you show empathy for the difficulty of being committed.

## **GEORGE’S STORY**

Share George’s mantra FIRST!

-Play Chuck-George’s Story (310v-08:21)

**DISCUSS** “*Yea Buts...*” middle of p. 14

-Play Kim-Can’t Fix Him/Follow the Steps-(321v/322v-00:38/00:37)

## **PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY EXERCISE**

Set aside at least 20 minutes for this exercise!

You will need to make up cards in advance to hand out to the group. Make matching pairs to help them partner with each other. For example: peanut butter & jelly, salt & pepper, chips & salsa, eggs & bacon, etc. You can hand them out randomly or determine the partners yourself.

Have them partner up and process one of these truisms/concepts. Prepare a 2-3 minute presentation to share with the group.

- 1) Matthew 6:14-15
- 2) Chicken & the Pig/Commit not just dedicate
- 3) George's Mantra
- 4) Forgiveness is a heroic choice

**If time...** Play Jermaine & Jim-([331v](#)-04:06)

**LAST 10 MINUTES-** John O'Leary-Day 3 Wrap Up ([333v](#)-07:04)

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Matthew 6:14

If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

We have to be committed to the process, not just dedicated.

“Oh God, clear my mind and heart of judgment. Let me seek to understand. Let me listen to understand, not listen to respond.”  
~George's Mantra

“Oh God, clear my mind and heart of judgment. Let me seek to understand. Let me listen to understand, not listen to respond.”  
~George's Mantra

We have to be committed to the process, not just dedicated.

If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.  
Matthew

# **Session 4/Victim to Survivor!**

## **OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:**

- A. WELCOME
- B. QUICK REVIEW
- C. DROP IT, LEAVE IT, LET IT GO
- D. From VICTIM TO SURVIVOR
- E. IDENTIFY YOUR BANISTER/PRAYER SERVICE

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Transformation Prayer

## **TAKE AWAYS**

Ask if anything from last week stayed with them through the week or if anything happened in the past week that they want to share.

## **SCRIPTURE OF THE DAY**

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” Matthew 7:1-3

-Play Chuck-Go From Victim to Survivor (414v-02:16)

## **WORKBOOK, pp. 19, 20**

-Play Jermaine-Go From Victor to Survivor (415v-02:10)

-Play Alison-Choose to Be a Survivor (416v-01:02)

-Play Jim-The Load is Lifted (417v-00:50)

**DISCUSS** Victim to Survivor-invite your group to be specific in examples from family and friends.

## **PRAYER SERVICE- MEDITATION, AND BURNING OF THE FEARS**

Plan on 20 minutes for your prayer service.

- 1) Have ready: paper, pens, matches and fireproof bucket or bowl for burning.
- 2) **Play Chuck-The Banister Story** first to explain the concept of holding onto your banister.
- 3) It is your choice whether you play one of the provided audios:
  - Meditation-Alison (415a-04:52)** or **Meditation-Chuck (452a-07:52)**
  - OR** read the meditation provided below (In this case practice reading slowly, making sure to pause where you think they need a moment to think or process. Do not hurry through the meditation.)
  - OR** provide a meditation of your own.

- 4) After they have written their banisters or fears, take the papers outside and burn them to symbolize letting them go.
- 5) Play the song, ***“Holy Spirit, You Are Welcome Here,”*** when you return in order to give them quiet time to pray on their own and meditate. You can find many versions of this song on any music app or YouTube.

### **THE FINISH LINE**

p. 34-signs that you have truly forgiven

Characteristics of those who have truly forgiven:

- 1) Filled with joy and peace
- 2) Have a desire to help and tell others
- 3) Can authentically pray for the well-being of the perpetrator

**Play John O’Leary-DAY 5 Wrap Up (525v-09:46) -OR- Fr. Tom Tank (535a-07:59)**

### **CALL TO ACTION**

Before they leave invite them to a “Call to Action,” for example,

- Make that phone call.
- Write that letter or email.
- Develop your own mantra.
- Invite someone to take this course.
- Make a one-time contribution to FIKC.
- Help FIKC take this course to others.
- We are in great need of facilitators! Are you called to lead a group?

### **SURVEY**

Hand out, then collect the class surveys

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

# MEDITATION

## WHAT ARE YOU HANGING ONTO? WHAT DO YOU NEED TO LET GO OF?

The first paragraph is an affirmation of the Holy Trinity. Depending on the make-up of your class you can begin either with the first or second paragraph.

At this point in the course, we are going to ask for Divine Intervention to help us in the difficult process of letting go and moving out of victim mode and into survivor mode. This is not easy, in fact it can be very tough. I see God the Father active, and I honor him, and I worship him. Jesus Christ has touched many, many lives. We feel the power of Jesus Christ after he rose from the dead. The apostles were scared because they didn't know what to do, where to go, or what was coming next. But Jesus breathed life into them. He breathed the Holy Spirit into them. Because we see all three so active, I confidently can say we do this in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

We need divine help. A lot of us have been hurt; we've been hurt deeply-maybe because of a life changing event. Some of us have been hurt by family; we love our family a lot therefore they hurt us a lot. Maybe it's a close friend who has hurt us. Whatever or whoever it is we've got a lot of hurt and many of us feel like we're a victim.

Dear God, we're asking for your Divine Intervention. We've been too comfortable sitting with our hurt. We've been clinging to our hurt. We've been hanging on to it. It's scary to surrender. It's scary to let go of the banister.

Drop it, leave it-don't pick it back up-and let it go! The Bible tells us 365 times "fear not." Jesus tells us we should fear not!

So right now, I'm going to ask you to write down on that little piece of paper what you are most fearful of or what you're hanging on to. Write it down, name it, own it. God has a dream for you, and it is not to live in fear or to be a victim. There is a beautiful prayer in the Mass, right before we receive the Body of Christ, about the lamb. The lamb is a sacrificial animal and Christ, the lamb of God, suffered in his sacrifice, but He was also victorious and triumphant. You and I and Christ are no strangers to suffering. We have suffered much. So, we say, "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us."

We were not made by our creator to live a life of fear or to be a victim. We humbly bow and we ask for the transforming power of Jesus Christ. We surrender the past. It creates us but it doesn't define us. We are now responsible for our future only. We are 100% responsible for our future. Our destiny is too important to not let go of the hurt that burdens us. Our destiny is what God created us for in our mother's womb. We want to fulfill our destiny.

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

We've failed to let go, Lord. We need help. We can't do it by ourselves. Many of us have tried but it just lingers on and on and on. So, we call on you, God. It is through the waters of baptism that we are given new life-we have become your children. Jesus sent to us the Holy Spirit who has given us the gifts of

wisdom, courage, understanding, counsel, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Help us to use all you have given us to drop this horrible burden we carry.

We confidently plead, Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, grant us your peace- the peace that surpasses all understanding. As you have suffered and as you were victorious, help us to find victory over our suffering.

It's scary to surrender, but God wants to help us. We just have to let go of what we're hanging on to. It's not easy, but how long are we going to hang on to that event or to that person or to that injustice or to that wrongdoing? How long? How long are we going to allow that narrative in our minds play over and over again? Tonight is the night to let go of it.

This is the place.

This is the time.

The time is now.

**As a group, take the papers outside and burn them.**

**When you return, play “Holy Spirit, You are Welcome Here” in the background as you continue:**

Now I'm going to play a song because music has a way of touching our minds and our hearts and our souls. The Holy Spirit often uses music to get a message to us.

We acknowledge what we have written on our paper. We own it and we offer it up to you, Lord. We pray that we can now move on, that we no longer live as victims; we want to live as survivors. We've been carrying this weight too long; it has shackled us, it has weighed us down. Now it is time to move on and receive your peace. Dear God, we accept your mercy, you have freed us from sin, you have created us for you, help us to live that way. Help us to lighten our load, follow your path, and share your love and mercy with others. Amen.

**Give them time to pray and meditate as the song continues and ends.**

~Chuck Jansen

~Kim Sutton

3) Can authentically pray for the well-being of the

2) Have a desire to help and tell others

1) Filled with joy and peace

Characteristics of those who have truly forgiven:

Matthew 7:1-3

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?”

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?”

Matthew 7:1-3

Characteristics of those who have truly forgiven:

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~John O'Leary

"We cannot control what happens to us in life, but we can always control our attitude as to how we deal with it."

Be prepared by your past, but not defined by it. Go from victim to survivor. Your destiny is too important not to.

God has a dream for you , and it is not to live in fear or to be a victim.

God has a dream for you , and it is not to live in fear or to be a victim.

Be prepared by your past, but not defined by it. Go from victim to survivor. Your destiny is too important not to.

"We cannot control what happens to us in life, but we can always control our attitude as to how we deal with it."

~John O'Leary

# FORGIVENESS SURVEY

1. Please list 1, 2 or 3 points that you found very helpful in this class.

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2. Please list 1, 2 or 3 points that we need to improve or alter in this class.

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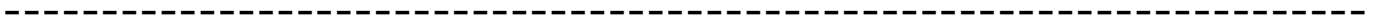
3. What was your biggest "takeaway"? Acceptable to list more than one. Please be succinct.

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Thanks for joining us for this journey. Please tell your family and friends that "FORGIVENESS EDUCATION WORKS"!!!

Please include your email and name if you wish to be on our monthly newsletters.

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# PRAYERS

## **Prayer to the Holy Spirit**

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful and kindle in them the fire of Your love.  
Send forth Your Spirit, and they shall be created,  
and You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray.

Oh God who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful,  
grant that by the same Holy Spirit  
we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation.  
Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

## **Transformation Prayer**

Lord, Here I am.  
I trust that you have an incredible plan for me.  
Transform me. Transform my life.  
Everything is on the table.  
Take what you want to take and give what you want to give.  
I make myself 100% available to you now.  
Transform me into the person You created me to be  
so that I can live the life you envisioned for me in the womb.  
I hold nothing back. I am 100% available.  
Lead me, challenge me, encourage me,  
and open my eyes and heart to all your possibilities.  
Show me what it is YOU want me to do,  
And I will do it.

Empty me of me, fill me with you.  
Empty me of me, fill me with you.  
Empty me of me, fill me with you.  
Amen.

**On the following pages you will find examples of bulletin announcements for Forgiveness 101. Feel free to use any or all of the information provided, adding in your own details.**

### **FORGIVENESS EDUCATION WORKS!!!**

We will study the "common denominators" of the difficult journey of forgiving others or ourselves, as we study 9 people who have previously taken the class. This is NOT a lecture. Watch a video, small group discussion, large group wrap up is the procedure of the workshop. No one has ever fallen asleep!

Come alone or bring friends. Open to all faiths, and you do not have to be an Ascension parishioner to attend.

There is a 12 people maximum.

Friday: 1:00-5:00 PM, Half-Day Workshop Date: April 5, 2024

Location: St. Matthew/Mark Room Facilitator: Chuck Jansen

Cost: \$20 (Workbook received at the workshop)

## **FORGIVENESS PRESENTATION**

Forgiveness is one of the key themes of the Gospels. Forgiveness is seemingly also one of the most difficult things for us to do. Chuck Jansen, a friend of mine from Kansas City, started a forgiveness program at the behest of his pastor, over ten years ago. I have had Chuck present at my previous parishes. His presentation is a combination of speaking, short videos, with questions and answers. The program will go from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm. The feedback from parishioners was that time flew by and they learned a lot! All are welcome – feel free to bring a friend.

**Date: March 13<sup>th</sup> / Wednesday @ 6:30 pm**  
**St. Andrew's church.**

Fr. Anthony Viviano



**"He who knows how to forgive prepares for himself many graces from GOD. As often as I look upon the cross, so often will I forgive with all my heart."  
~ Saint Faustina Kowalska ~**

**"Forgiveness 101" offers a safe and supportive experience of healing for anyone suffering from unresolved conflict and past trauma. The path towards healing is a Journey of Hope.**

*This is a 4-Week Lenten Program held in the Parish Center  
March 2, 9, 16 & 23: 11:00am - 12:30pm*

Attendance to all 4 sessions is highly recommended.  
A workbook (\$10) for self reflection, personal testimonies, and intriguing discussion of forgiveness "truisms" is time well spent.

The theme of this program is a song by Cody Carnes called, "Run to the Father"

How long have you carried your burden?

Are you ready to lay it down and fall into GOD's Grace?

Are you done with the hiding and your excuses (yea buts) for waiting?

Does your heart need a surgeon and your soul need a friend?

Run to the Father and Join Us!

This course is entirely free and refreshments will be served.  
All are Welcome. Register by email to Matt Savoie: [mmsavoie3@gmail.com](mailto:mmsavoie3@gmail.com)

Chuck Jansen - Founder/CEO  
Matt Savoie - Facilitator & Parishioner BSJ

Forgiveness Institute KC  
<https://www.yeabut.org>

**"The Only Way to Peace is Forgiveness" ~Saint John Paul II~**



# Adult Faith Classes

## AN EVENING ON FORGIVENESS

We all have been hurt by someone, maybe even a family member, and we are in need of reflection, prayer and an open forum.

Spend an evening on Tuesday, September 20 at 7:00 PM, in the St. Mark room. An introduction to the Forgiveness journey, followed by a prayer service of scripture, slides, and music will be followed by a sharing and discussion of the Journey of Forgiveness. Closing will be a reflection on Divine Mercy. Bring a friend. Open to all.

This optional evening of prayer and discussion on Forgiveness will precede the class offering below.

### One Night Talk

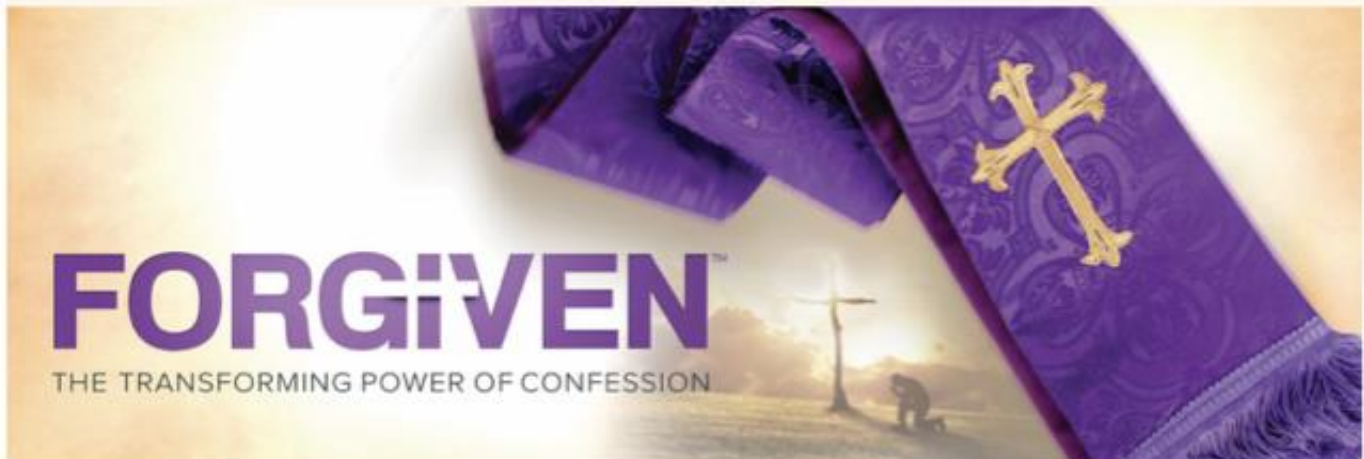
**Tuesday:** 7:00-8:30PM

**Date:** September 20

**Location:** St. Mark Room

**Facilitator:** Chuck Jansen

**Fee:** No Cost



## FORGIVENESS CLASS

FORGIVENESS is such a natural, spiritual, necessary and complicated process. Come explore the dynamics of the process of Forgiving. Personal stories and scripture will be used in studying this beautiful process. Is someone in your family holding a grudge against someone? Have you been upset with someone for a long time? Is there possibly a failing or sin in your past that you've ignored and has put a wedge between you and the One who loves you most?

**Tuesdays:** 10:00-11:30AM

**Start Date:** October 11

**Duration:** 3 Weeks

**Location:** St. Mark Room

**Facilitator:** Chuck Jansen

**Fee:** No Cost

OR

**Tuesdays:** 7:00-8:30PM

**Start Date:** October 11

**Duration:** 3 Weeks

**Location:** St. Mark Room

**Facilitator:** Chuck Jansen

**Fee:** No Cost