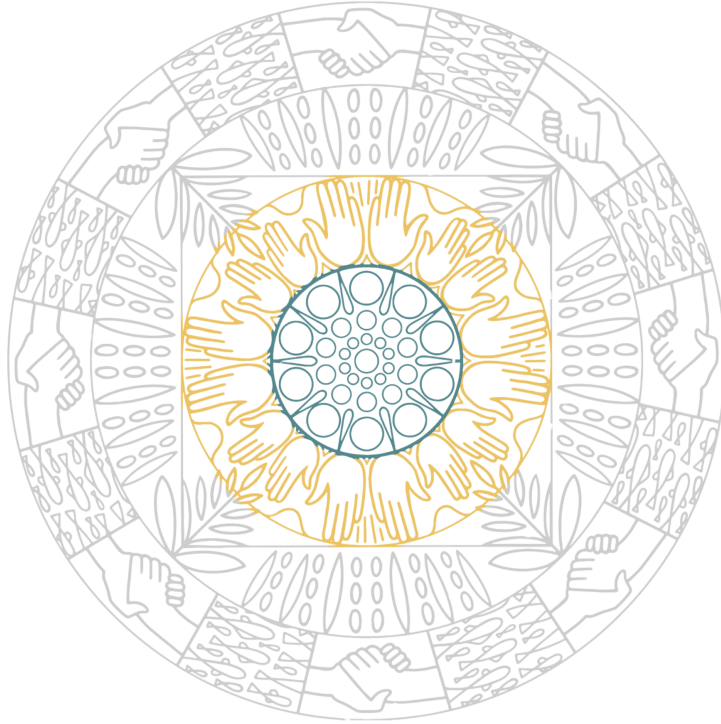


OUR MONEY STORY · WEEK TWO

Release

October 18, 2026



*Today the mosaic grows to its second ring, the ring of open hands.
Our coffee filters, holding the debts we are letting go, will become its flowers.*

Deuteronomy 15:1–15

OUR MONEY STORY

We all have a money story, whether we have named it or not. It was handed to us before we could choose it, by our families, our church, our neighborhoods and our work, and we carry it into every paycheck, purchase, gift, and worry. This season we are telling that story out loud and setting it beside God's story of money: a story of enough, of release, of liberation and healing for all. Over six Sundays we remember, release, reimagine, return, restore, and respond, so we can begin to live the story God is inviting us into.

THIS WEEK: RELEASE

To release is to set down what confines, burdens, or oppresses us. This week we look at the debts in our money stories: what we owe, what we are owed, and the shame that so often comes with both.

IN GOD'S STORY

In God's story, debt has an expiration date. Every seventh year, God's people canceled their neighbors' debts, because God had released them first: "Remember how each of you was a slave in Egypt."

IN WORSHIP TODAY

During the offering, each of us wrote a word or drew a picture on a coffee filter: something we owe, something we are owed, or a debt we carry for someone else. We folded it into the plate with our gifts, and at the end of worship we dipped a neighbor's filter in water and watched it turn into color. *What word did you write? What was it like to watch someone else blur it into color?*

READ

Deuteronomy 15:1–15

ABOUT THE TEXT

Deuteronomy is Moses' last long speech before Israel enters the promised land. Here he puts release on the calendar: every seventh year, debts are canceled, so that no one's hard season becomes a life sentence. The chapter is honest that poverty will not disappear on its own, which is exactly why it commands, "You must open your hand."



"Release" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

REFLECT

- 1 *What would it feel like if a debt you carry were canceled tomorrow? Think of someone you know who is stuck under one. What would it change for them?*
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2 *Where does debt, yours or someone else's, feel like a verdict on who you are? What would it mean to believe that you are not what you owe?*

3 *Who owes you something (money, an apology, a phone call) that you have been holding on to? What might it look like to open your hand?*

PRAY

God who opens your hand to us, you set us free before we knew how to ask. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lift what we cannot carry, loosen what we grip too tightly, and teach us to live like people who have been released. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Each time you notice your hand clenching (around your phone, your wallet, a worry), take a breath and open it.

NEXT SUNDAY

October 25 · Reimagine · Mark 12:38–44 · Reformation Sunday

TO CARRY THROUGH THE WEEK

So we can let go of what we grip. We do not have to hold the whole world together.

JOURNAL

Finish these quickly: I think rich people are _____. I think poor people are _____. God thinks poor people are _____. How did it feel to write them?

Art: "Release" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity.

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Reflection prompts adapted from the Our Money Story Study Journal.