



## FOR THE NEXT TWELVE WEEKS THE PARLOR CLASS WILL BE EXPLORING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The *American Revolution* (2025) is a six-part, 12-hour PBS documentary series by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David McMahon that explores the American struggle for independence and the nation's founding. Covering the period from 1754 through the early 1780s, it brings together a wide range of perspectives—including those of women, Native Americans, and African Americans—to illuminate both the ideals that animated the revolution and the complex realities and contradictions embedded within it. The series traces how the fight for liberty and self-determination unfolded amid deep tensions over freedom, power, and belonging, and how its legacy continues to shape American democracy today.

**We will watch one hour each week and reflect upon the series by exploring one of the faith formation questions below:**

1. What moment, idea, or image from today's episode stayed with you—something that intrigued, provoked, disturbed, challenged, encouraged, warmed, warned, helped, or surprised you? What is it about that moment that won't let you go?
2. Where did you glimpse something that feels like God's character—justice, mercy, a longing for freedom, truth-telling, compassion, or the honoring of human dignity? What did that glimpse reveal about who God is?
3. Where did you notice beauty in this story—courage under pressure, solidarity between people, endurance, sacrifice, hope, or even the beauty of land and place? What might that beauty be revealing about God's presence in the world?
4. What seems to matter most to God in this episode—especially in relation to power, suffering, conflict, fear, or liberation? Whose pain is seen? Whose voice is heard? Whose is ignored?
5. Where might the Spirit be inviting us to see our own moment in history more clearly through what we've witnessed here? What patterns feel familiar? What is being asked of us now—in our communities, our relationships, our public life?
6. Where do you imagine God smiling in this story? What action, gesture, or quiet act of integrity or courage carries a trace of joy, faithfulness, or love?
7. Where do you imagine God weeping? In the loss of life, the breaking of trust, the hardening of hearts, the dehumanizing of enemies, or the suffering of the vulnerable—what reveals the ache of God?
8. Biblical exploration
  - How do the lectionary texts speak into this episode?
  - What other biblical stories come to mind as you reflect?
  - Which stories of Scripture echo what we've seen—stories of empire, resistance, exile, liberation, or reconciliation?
  - How might different people or groups in the episode use Scripture to justify their actions or perspectives?
  - Where do those interpretations align—or clash—with the life and teachings of Jesus, especially his way of mercy, truth, and peacemaking?
  - And where might Scripture be inviting a deeper reading—not as a weapon, but as a witness to God's liberating love?