

Santa Cruz Fellowship
c/o Colette Sweers, Fiduciary
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Spring 2026

Friends,

*“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”*

In our morning meditations this passage from Micah 6:8 has been popping up on repeat. Of the three calls, “loving mercy” has been drawing our attention more than the others. We find ourselves continuing to ask the question, “Do I truly LOVE mercy,” or do I just practice mercy when it doesn’t cost me much?

As we have been contemplating this call to LOVE mercy we have been exploring some of these questions: Is loving mercy something different than just practicing mercy? Could loving mercy ask us to delight in compassion, to be drawn toward forgiveness, and to extend grace even when it feels undeserved? Could loving mercy mean choosing patience over irritation, understanding over judgment, and kindness over retaliation? Does the call to LOVE mercy reshape how we see others—not as problems to be corrected, but as people to be cared for?

We’ve been noticing that when mercy becomes something we LOVE, not just something we practice, it changes the posture of our hearts. We are becoming more aware of the grace we’ve received, and that awareness spills outward. It softens our words, tempers our reactions, and opens space for healing in relationships that might otherwise remain broken.

In County Jail or Soledad Prison when presented with the life and teachings of Jesus the men begin to exhibit mercy towards themselves. Often this results in an attitude of mercy towards their victims, their families and even the other men in the unit. It is not only the incarcerated persons that are changed it is also taking place among our volunteers who lead the meditations and the Scripture reflections.

Much the same happens in Spiritual Direction. When people are invited to sit under the loving gaze of God they begin to experience their own beloved-ness, offer mercy to themselves and grow in mercy and love for others.

LOVING mercy isn’t a single act but a way of living - an ongoing choice to select goodness, even in small, ordinary moments. A kind word, a second chance, a willingness to listen - these are the quiet expressions of a merciful heart.

May we continue to grow in this, learning not just to show mercy, but to truly LOVE it.

Rich and Jayne