ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

Hope Springs

by Lynne Hinton



About the Book

Welcome back to the charming world of Hope Springs, the small southern town at the center of bestselling author Lynne Hinton's Hope Springs trilogy. In this sequel to **Friendship Cake**, the same delightful women have finished the cookbook that brought them together, showing each the true meaning of friendship. Now these bonds are challenged by Margaret's sudden illness, Nadine's mourning for her lost daughter, and Jessie's desire to see the world outside the confines of a small town. Even Charlotte, the steadfast young pastor, has a spiritual crisis and finds herself questioning her calling.

Standing by each other through tragedies and triumphs, these unforgettable women come to realize that true friendship, like faith itself, is a garden that needs to be tended and nurtured. In the end they learn that there is more to living than just surviving -- they discover a life of health, courage, and freedom. Interspersed throughout this heartwarming tale are amusing and handy gardening tips from Bea's Botanical Bits -- memorable snippets of advice that help to cultivate the spirit, as well as the garden. Watered with tears of laughter and sorrow and fertilized with a touch of humor, **Hope Springs** is just plain good for the soul.

Discussion Guide

1. Lynne has stated that her grandmother, to whom the book and the opening poem are dedicated, taught her to garden. Is there anyone in your life who taught you to love the earth? What does gardening mean to you?

2. Charlotte realizes that she doesn't have anything to offer her suicidal parishioner, Nadine. What do you consider an appropriate pastoral response to a person who attempted suicide?

3. The doctor is concerned about his patient Margaret when they discuss the findings from her mammogram. He wonders "what kind of support systems she had, what gave her purpose, and how well she could fight trouble." What are

the resources you think a person needs when facing an illness?

4. Charlotte decides to see a therapist. What are your thoughts about a minister going into counseling?

5. Jessie discusses her desire to move from Hope Springs, her home town. Have you ever desired to live in a place other than where you live? Where would you choose to move and why?

6. Marion, Charlotte's therapist, asks the young pastor to tell how she thinks of God. How do you think of God? How comfortable are you with a feminine image of God?

7. Margaret, Louise, and Beatrice discuss what makes makes a woman, a woman. What are your thoughts about what distinguishes a woman from a man? Is it physical or emotional?

8. In order for Nadine to begin to heal regarding her loss she must forgive herself for what she considered her responsibility in the accident that killed her daughter. How does a person learn to forgive herself? What helps in encouraging the forgiveness of oneself?

9. Jessie realizes her fears that James will leave her again. Are you surprised that she took him back when she did? How does a couple who has separated and come back together regain the trust that was lost?

10. Why do you think the women decided to shave their heads? What displays of empathy and friendship have you experienced in your life? How important is friendship in facing illness?

11. Jessie and James decide to take a trip to Africa. What trip have you always wanted to take? Where would you go if you could go anywhere?

12. Since there's another book in the Hope Springs Trilogy, another book about the women in Hope Springs, what do you think might happen next? Which character would you like to know more about?

Author Bio

Lynne Hinton is the *New York Times* bestselling author of FRIENDSHIP CAKE and PIE TOWN. She received an undergraduate degree from UNC Greensboro and a Masters of Divinity from Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley. She has served as a hospice chaplain and church pastor. Lynne is a regular columnist with The Charlotte Observer. She lives with her husband in Albuquerque, NM. Visit her website at www.lynnehinton.com.

Critical Praise

"Hinton celebrates the power of women's connections through a story about hope, loss, and the sometimes fragile nature of faith"

Hope Springs

by Lynne Hinton

Publication Date: April 1, 2003
Paperback: 225 pages
Publisher: Harper San Francisco
ISBN-10: 0062517473
ISBN-13: 9780062517470