



Readers Discussion Guide
To Mend a Dream
a Belle Meade Plantation novella
by Tamera Alexander

SPOILER ALERT! As would be expected in a discussion guide, crucial plot points and events are revealed in the following questions. So if you haven't finished reading *To Mend a Dream* and don't wish to have these surprises spoiled, you might want to skip reading the readers discussion guide until you have.

A note from Tamera:

Dear friends,

I'm thrilled you've chosen *To Mend a Dream* as your reading group selection, and I hope you enjoyed Aidan and Savannah's story. We first met Savannah in *To Win Her Favor* (Belle Meade Plantation novels, book 2), yet I knew more of Savannah's story needed to be told. And I'm grateful I got the chance to tell it in *To Mend a Dream*. Christ drew me closer to Him as I wrote this story, and my prayer is that somewhere along the way as you read, you took a step closer to Him too.

I'd love to join your group discussion!

If you're interested in having me join your group via a Virtual Book Club Meeting, visit my website (www.TameraAlexander.com) and click on BONUS FEATURES to learn more about Virtual Book Club Meetings. Also, if you're ever in Nashville, please make a point to see the Belmont Mansion. See www.belmontmansion.com for details, and be sure to ask them about the special "novel tour" for readers.

Continued blessings—and thanks for reading!

Tamera

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1. Savannah Darby lost most of her family, her home, and like many Southerners following the Civil War, was forced to leave everything behind when family land went to auction. What family treasure—a portrait, diary, special possession, perhaps—would you miss most if forced to leave behind your home and belongings?
 2. Prejudice was a theme in *To Win Her Favor*, the Belle Meade Plantation novel in which we first meet Savannah Darby. What prejudices are evident in Aidan and Savannah's story? Are those still prevalent today? How so? And do you struggle with them?
 3. If given the chance to get back into a home that had been legally taken from you, do you think you would have made the same decision as Savannah? Do you think her search for what her father left was right or wrong? Why?
 4. Aidan's motivation in moving to Nashville is guided by what happened when he met the Confederate soldier one afternoon during the lull of battle. Are you aware that this really happened in the Civil War? That Union soldiers and Confederate soldiers would converse between battles? In what ways do you think these meetings changed these men?
 5. Have you ever experienced a "chance meeting" (like Aidan and Nashville) and yet knew deep down that chance had nothing to do with it? Share your experience.
 6. Savannah treasures a family letter in the story. Letter writing is all but a lost art these days. Would having a letter from a departed loved one have meant more back then, do you think? Why or why not?
 7. In Ch 12, Savannah reflects on the many possessions she and her family owned. With time's passing, her perspective on those has changed. How has it changed? And can you relate to her feelings?
 8. God worked to weave Aidan and Savannah's lives together in ways they couldn't see and certainly didn't plan. Have you ever made a plan that you

thought was a good one, only to have God intervene and make it even better? Share your experience, and also your thoughts on Proverbs 16:9.

Would you be willing to send Tamera a picture of your book club? She'd love to feature it on her [Facebook Page](#). Send the picture to TameraAlexander@ymail.com with your name(s), your group's name, and the city where you're located. Be sure to hold up your books!

Tamera's website:	www.tameraalexander.com
Facebook:	http://www.facebook.com/tamera.alexander
Twitter:	http://twitter.com/tameraalexander
Pinterest:	http://pinterest.com/tameraauthor
Tamera's group blog:	http://inspiredbylifeandfiction.com
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Recipe Ideas for Group Gatherings--

Savannah's Truly Southern Peach Cobbler

What you'll need:

- 12 to 15 fresh peaches, peeled and sliced (about 15-16 cups)
(You can use frozen peaches if fresh aren't in season, but you'll likely need to drain off some of the extra juice. You can gauge that as you're spooning it in the dish.)
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 cups sugar (Yes, diabetics beware! But if you're counting calories and carbs, Stevia works wonderfully with this recipe.)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2/3 cup real butter (please, no margarine, the Southern cook in me begs of you)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 Old-fashioned pie crusts (recipe below) OR 2 refrigerated pie crusts can be substituted if you really don't love your family and friends (Just kidding. You love them. Just not enough to make homemade, bless your heart)
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans, toasted (Toasting pecans is easy. Chop finely, spread on a cookie sheet sprayed with oil, then bake for 4-5 minutes at 350 degrees. Watch so they don't burn.)
- 5 tablespoons sugar, divided
- Sweetened whipped cream

Now comes the fun part:

If you're making your dough from scratch (which is best and so easy!), make your pie crust dough first and stick them (flattened according to instructions) in the fridge to chill for 15-20 minutes.

Stir together peaches, plain flour, 3 cups sugar, nutmeg, and cinnamon in a Dutch oven. Bring to a boil over medium heat; reduce to low heat, and simmer for 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat; gently fold in butter and vanilla (and somehow resist eating the entire pot). Spoon half of the mixture into a lightly greased 13- x 9-inch baking dish. Preheat oven to 475°.

Take your two homemade pie crusts—or for those of you who don't love your friends and families as much, unroll the two store-bought pie crusts, she says with sweet Southern sass <g>—and roll to a 14- x 10-inch rectangle. Sprinkle 1/4 cup toasted pecans and 2 Tbsp. sugar over the first pie crust. Place pastry over peach mixture in dish, trimming sides to fit the baking dish.

Bake at 475° for 20 to 25 minutes or until *lightly* browned.

Meanwhile, roll your second crust to a 14 x 10-inch rectangle (or unroll the second pie crust). Sprinkle 2 Tbsp. sugar and remaining 1/4 cup toasted pecans over the piecrust as you did the first one. Next, cut into 1-inch strips with a knife. If you want to get fancy, use a fluted pastry wheel but you don't get extra jewels in your crown.

Remove the peach cobbler from the oven where it's already been baking. Spoon remaining peach mixture over baked pastry. Arrange pastry strips over peach mixture, latticing if you want to, then sprinkle with remaining 1 Tbsp. sugar. Bake 15 to 18 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve warm or cold with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.

Let me know if you make this! Better yet, post a picture of you and your cobbler on www.Facebook.com/tameraalexander, and I'll give you a shout out.

Savannah's Old Fashioned Pie Crusts (makes 2)

Ingredients:

1-1/2 cup Crisco
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg, beaten
5 Tablespoons cold water
1 Tablespoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon salt

Let the fun begin:

In a large bowl, with two knives (or a pastry cutter), cut the Crisco into the flour until it resembles coarse meal. In a small bowl, beat an egg with a fork then add to flour/shortening mixture. Add 5 tablespoons of cold water, 1 tablespoon of white vinegar, and 1 teaspoon of salt. Stir together gently until all ingredients are blended. Separate dough into two parts.

Form two evenly sized balls of dough and place each into a large Ziploc bag. Using a rolling pin, slightly hand flatten each ball of dough (about 1/2 inch thick) to make rolling easier later. Seal the bags and place them in the freezer until you need the dough. (If you'll be using it immediately, it's still a great idea to put in the freezer for about 15 to 20 minutes to chill. Chilled dough is easier to work with.)

When you're ready, remove the dough from the freezer and allow to thaw for 15 minutes (if frozen). On a floured surface roll the dough, starting at the center and working your way out. (Sprinkle some flour over top of the dough if it's a bit too moist.)

If the dough sticks to the countertop use a metal spatula and carefully scrape it up, flour it well, then flip it over and continue rolling until it's about ½ inch *larger* in diameter than your pie pan. Or for a cobbler, make sure it's about the size of your dish for latticing.

Using a spatula, carefully lift the dough from the surface of the counter into the pie pan. I fold my pie dough into quarters to move it, but it has to be well floured to do this. Gently press the dough against the corner of the pan (or use as directed for the peach cobbler). Go around the pie pan pinching and tucking the dough to make a clean edge. I love making pie crusts. It just makes you feel good! Enjoy!

**Recipes from all of Tamera's novels are available
at www.TameraAlexander.com**

Tamera's Complete Book List--

Fountain Creek Chronicles series

Rekindled, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 1 (ISBN 0-7642-0108-5)

Revealed, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 2 (ISBN 0-7642-0109-3)

Remembered, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 3 (ISBN 0-7642-0110-7)

Timber Ridge Reflections series

From a Distance, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 1 (ISBN 978-0-7642-0389-3)

Beyond This Moment, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 2 (ISBN 978-0-7642-0390-9)

Within My Heart, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 3 (ISBN 0-7642-0391-6)

Stand-alone novel (not part of a series)

The Inheritance, *Women of Faith Fiction* (ISBN 978-1-59554-632-6)

Belmont Mansion novels (3 book stand-alone novels)*

A Lasting Impression, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 1 (ISBN 978-0764206221)

A Beauty So Rare, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 2 (ISBN 978-0764206238)

A Note Yet Unsung, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 3 (February 2017) (ISBN 978-0764206245)

Belle Meade Plantation novels (3 book standalone novels)*

To Whisper Her Name, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 1 (ISBN 978-0310291060)

To Win Her Favor, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 2 (ISBN 978-0310291077)

To Wager Her Heart, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 3 (Fall 2017)

*To Mend a Dream***, a Belle Meade Plantation novella (ISBN B00PWOGZVM)

* I've written these two three-book Southern series (**the Belmont Mansion novels and the Belle Meade Plantation novels**) to be read individually OR together (your choice!), because the families in the mansions knew one another. So seeing that their lives connected in the 1800s, it only makes sense that they should connect *again* on the page of these novels.

**"To Mend a Dream" is available by itself as an ebook, or in print form in the Southern novella collection entitled *Among the Fair Magnolias* (ISBN 978-1401690731).