



SHINE:
Light for Dark Days
John 8:1-12
Weekly Life Group Guide
3 of 4

1) Start your group with the following questions:

On a scale from 1-10 how would you describe your overall readiness for Spring? Why is it we feel that way?

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church is debating allowing LGBTQ persons to be ordained and also appointed as pastors and to be married in the Church. Being respectful of the opinions of others, what is your opinion?

2) Share joys and concerns. Then prepare use this prayer or another prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer.

O God above every other, you brought light to the world when all was darkness and chaos. And in the fullness of time you sent your Son, Jesus, to be the world's light. He healed and taught and showed us the ways of true life in your name. In him we have found forgiveness, peace and everlasting life. Lead us to so live by his light, that the world may know more of your justice and compassion. And may we dedicate our lives to that outcome. In Christ's holy name. Amen. (Followed by the unison praying of the Lord's Prayer)

3) Which of the following sources of literal or other kinds of darkness identified in Dr. Gardner's sermon are a challenge or concern for you or someone you know?

- Snowy, icy and dark winter days.
- Gun Violence in Schools and workplaces.
- Health struggles for you or someone in your family.
- Loss of loved ones, friends or family members.
- Financial concerns for you or your family.
- Divorce or marriage issues.
- Fatigue due to the frantic pace of life.

Where do you find light for your darkness?

4) Look up this week's Scripture (**John 8:1-12**) and read it as a "readers theatre" with members of your group taking the parts of a narrator, Jesus, the woman, etc.

Then discuss the following questions verse by verse:

Vs. 1-2: What was Jesus doing and where was he?

Vs. 3: What did the woman do. What did the Scribes and Pharisees do? What would it have felt like to be the woman? What about the man?

Vs. 4-5: What did they say to Jesus? Why did they ask him a question?

Vs. 6: What did Jesus do in response to their questioning? Why did he do that? What do you think he wrote? What are the possibilities?

Vs. 7: What did Jesus say in verse 7? Why was it important? Who among is without sin? Read romans 3:23.

Vs. 8: What did Jesus do in this verse? Why did he do it again?

Vs. 9: What did the Scribes and Pharisees do next? What is the significance of the Elders going first? Who was left at the end?

Vs. 10-11. What did Jesus say to the woman? What did she say to him? What did he say next? What would she have felt? What was his point?

Read Romans 8:1. Does Jesus ever condemn us? Is judgement and condemnation ever warranted? Is anything beyond forgiveness?

5) Read these quotations used in Sunday's sermon.

"It is far better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."

President John F. Kennedy

"Condemning words are easier and cheaper than good works."

Dr. Wm. Lonsdale Watkinson

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Which do you find most compelling and why?

What are issues that you feel compelled to speak up about?

6) In Dr. Gardner's message Sunday, he said the following:

"Hatred and condemnation will not thrive, if someone finds the courage to speak up. Dark days will not continue if someone is brave enough to shine the light."

What are issues that you feel compelled to speak up about?

7) Be sure and attend on Youth Sunday, March 3. Review the description for the new series that starts March 10.

The "Beauty for Ashes" worship series focuses on the promise from Isaiah 61:3 that God brings "beauty for ashes, gladness for tears and a spirit of praise instead of a downcast spirit." Week after week, we will see how Jesus brought this promise to fulfillment from the very beginning of his ministry to ordinary people like us, and we will claim his healing power for today.

8) Announce your next Life Group or Class meeting. Close your meeting in prayer for one another and Old Mission.