



SDG Discussion Guide

"Light In the Darkness" Isaiah 9:1-2

December 1, 2019

For starters:

Describe a recent surprise or event that left you without words - because of frustration or because of delight. What do you remember?

What makes Advent or Christmastime "the most wonderful time of the year" for you?

Guideline: The following is meant to provide interaction with the respective Sunday's sermon topic. Feel free to forward to your small group members ahead of the Sunday. Group members may also find this write up in print on that Sunday.

Before you begin your discussion, pray, and ask God to speak to your group. Listen attentively, and notice, what may God be highlighting for your consideration and learning?

Now that you have prayed, please see the following questions that may assist you in your discussion.

1. Read Isaiah 8:19-22 and then 9:1-2. What do you think Isaiah meant by the "darkness" in which the people walk (v 2)?
2. Read Jeremiah 33:14-16 and Luke 21:25-36. Then complete the following sentence: "During the holiday season I usually feel..." Cheerful? Confused? Sad? Hopeful? At a loss? Other? Elaborate.
3. How does Jeremiah envision the coming of the Messiah? What might it mean for the Messiah to execute justice and righteousness?
4. Advent does not just look back to the first coming of Christ, but also looks forward to the Second Coming of Christ. Complete the following sentence: "Thinking about the Second Coming makes me feel..." Excited? Curious? Fearful? Overwhelmed? I cannot relate? Other? Elaborate.
5. How do the practices of Advent (praying, waiting, and watching) help us to remain calm and stand firm amidst the ebbs, flows, and challenges of our world?
6. How does standing firm during difficult times help prepare the way for others?
7. Where do you notice the Spirit stirring amid deep silence and stillness?
8. How are you being invited to wait with patience and faith for new life to emerge?

Prayer that may be said aloud:

Dear God, you fill our hearts with hope while we wait for Jesus to arrive.
God, you are good. You always keep your promises.
Send your Spirit to help us remember that you are faithful when we cannot see you.
Let your steady flame of hope keep glowing in our hearts and lives.
You are bringing us closer to the day when everyone will know Jesus as Savior.
We worship and praise you, Lord. We wait in expectation of you!

*These questions were adapted from the material at umcdiscipleship.org/worship