



wisconsin conference
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

LIVE, GIVE, LOVE YOUTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES



Think
Greater



INSTRUCTIONS

Each week, the small group discussion will follow a simple format:

- Gather for prayer – joys, concerns, and questions of faith may be raised at this time. (10-15 minutes)
- Read and Reflect on theme verse – what jumps out and catches people’s thoughts and imagination? What are the main points or messages? What questions are raised? (15-30 minutes)
- Discussion questions – take time for a focused discussion on 2-3 questions. (15-30 minutes)
- Song/video + discussion – listen to and reflect on a music video, with discussion of 2-3 questions. (15-30 minutes)
- Action steps – identify something the group can do together or as individuals to put the theme of the week into action. (20-30 minutes)
- Closing prayer (5 minutes)

WEEK ONE – LIVE ENTHUSIASTICALLY

Following the gathering time with prayer, read John 10:1-10.

Discussion Questions:

1. Shepherds and sheep are not as common in our day and culture as they were in Jesus’ day. What are some modern equivalents or analogies that reflect the kind of relationship Jesus is teaching about?
2. Who are the people in our lives who have our best interests at heart – who want us to have rich, full, abundant lives? Who are the people who try to mislead us and destroy our quality of life? How do we tell the difference between them?
3. Describe your vision of “abundant life.” What does it look like? What does it feel like? What will it take for you to have an abundant life?

If Today Was Your Last Day (Nickleback)

(song with lyrics – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pe-Eosmk6oE>)

(music video – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrXlIQ8PeRs&feature=plcp>)

1. Explain what happens in the course of the video. Why do you think they set it up that way?
2. The underlying message is that a meaningful (abundant life) depends on relationships and doing good for others. How does this track with your own understanding of an abundant life?
3. If today were your last day, what would you do? Why?

Action Steps

- What could we do as individuals or as a group to make life more abundant for someone else?
- The word “enthusiasm” means filled with Spirit or breath or wind. How do we bring enthusiasm into other people’s lives?
- What is one thing each of us can commit to this week to help someone else “live enthusiastically” or live more “abundantly?”

Closing Prayer

WEEK TWO – GIVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY

Following the gathering time with prayer, read Matthew 6:19-21.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the treasures Jesus is talking about? Is he talking about more than just money? What are the things you treasure and value most in your life?
2. Why does Jesus say that where our treasure is, there our heart is also, instead of the other way around (our treasure being where our heart is)? What is he saying about the things that are most important to us?
3. Motivations are the things in our lives that get us moving, that we will commit our time, and energy, and effort to? What motivates you? What will you rearrange your time to be able to do? What people are more important than anything else in your life? What things of less importance take up a lot of your time, energy and attention?

How Much is Enough? (The Fixx)

(music video – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xcuGBQWswg>)

1. This is a song about values. How would you answer the question, “How much is enough?”
2. In the midst of all the things trying to get your attention, all the ads trying to make you want what you don’t have, and all the goodies that can make life so much fun, what does the song say is of the greatest value?
3. What are some antidotes to the constant messages for “more, bigger, buy/buy/buy – you need this, you want this, you’ve got to have this!”? How do the words of Jesus address the words of our modern American culture?

Action Steps

- What do we have to give to others in our church or community that is “enough”?
- Who in our congregation needs us to “give wholeheartedly” to them? Who beyond our congregation needs us to “give wholeheartedly” to them?
- What is one thing each of us can give this week that adds value (treasure) to someone else’s life?

Closing Prayer

WEEK THREE – LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY

Following the gathering time with prayer, read Luke 10:25-37.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your definition of “unconditional love”?
2. How do we answer the question, “and who is my neighbor?” Who are the people in our lives that are easiest to love? Who are the people in our lives that are the most difficult to love?
3. How do we show our love for God? How are the first and second parts of the man’s answer related (to love God and to love neighbor as self)?

One Love (Playing for Change – original song Bob Marley)

(music video – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xjPODKslo8>)

1. Are there limits to love? Are some people more worthy of love than others? Are there some people who do not deserve love?
2. What is the vision at the heart of this video? Is such a global unity possible? Is it something you would want to work toward?
3. What are examples of the opposite of love you see in our world today? How can love challenge and change these things?

Action Steps

- Where do we see the possibility of loving more unconditionally in our congregation?
- What can we do to communicate a love and attitude of love in our church? What can our church do to communicate a love and attitude of love in our community?
- What is one thing each of us will do this week to love unconditionally?

Closing Prayer

WEEK FOUR – BEYOND ALL EXPECTATION

Following the gathering time with prayer, read John 14:8-14.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some of the “great works” Jesus did? Which of these great works have you done – either individually or with others?
2. Jesus says that if we believe in him, we will do even greater works than he did. What do you think he means by this? What are the greater works he expects us to do?
3. What does Jesus mean when he says he will do whatever we ask in his name? Do you think this means for selfish purposes or for something else?

Imagine (Playing for Change – original song by John Lennon)

(music video – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvFLKyAGztl>)

1. Why does this song ask us to imagine no heaven or religion? These things are generally thought of as good, but the song indicates that they might keep us from something. What do you think the song is inviting us to imagine?
2. How does the song make you feel? What vision is the song trying to paint? Is such a vision possible? What will it take to achieve such a vision?
3. How do the themes of living enthusiastically, giving wholeheartedly, and loving unconditionally provide a foundation for the kind of peace, harmony, kindness, and unity the song promotes?

Action Steps

- What might we do for someone else this week that goes beyond all expectation?
- What do we want to ask God for in Jesus name that can help us live, give, and love beyond all expectation?
- What is one thing each of us will do this week to grow in our faith and to do the great works that Jesus did?

Closing Prayer