

CONVERSATION STARTERS DECEMBER 3, 2017

This is a guide to help start a conversation about this week's message. Feel free to pick, choose, re-order and adapt as you see fit. You know your group best and can facilitate their experience by modifying as necessary.

ICE-BREAKER

1. How many people in the group have seen *The Lord of the Rings*? Has anyone seen all the movies? Has anyone read the novels? What do you love about *The Lord of the Rings*? What makes it such an epic story? What makes for a great epic in general?

REVIEW

1. You may want to watch this week's message with your group as a refresher. Or, try picking a spot with 10-15 minutes to go to review the main application(s). Messages are found at southridgechurch.ca/messages.
2. Feel free to try one or two of these. What did you hear in this week's message? What ideas stood out? What did you agree with? Disagree with? What questions came to mind? How did it make you feel?

REFLECT

1. What do you feel is the most overwhelming problem in the world today? Poverty? Violence? Terrorism? Clean water crises? Famine? Refugee crises? Cancer? Health epidemics? Dictators? Threats of war? Other?
2. How do you feel the problems of Jesus' day described in the message are similar or different to the challenges of today's world?
3. Share this quote from J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. "It is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love." How do you react to this idea? Do you agree or disagree? How come? Have you seen examples of this in your life?
4. [Read Isaiah 9:1-7](#). You may want to try a slow approach, taking turns reading the passage 2-3 times and inviting the group to highlight words or phrases that catch their attention. Where do you see hope in this passage? How does this passage inspire you to bring hope to others this Christmas season?

RESPOND

As a group, commit to working through the [Hope Lives Advent Devotional](#) that can be found at southridgechurch.ca/advent. The devotional consists of 5 readings and reflections each week (Mon-Fri) as well as weekend exercises intended to bring hope this Christmas season. Throughout our *Hope Lives* series, we're inviting our entire church to participate in this journey.

The online copy can be accessed as a PDF or downloaded into a reading app on a portable device. Or if you prefer, hard copies can be picked up at the Welcome Centre.

Over the next three weeks, let's join together to practice the presence of Jesus and practice bringing his hope to the world.



hope lives