Read a Chapter a Day Small-Group Study Guidelines
By Rev. Mantu Joshi

Overview of Our Small-Group Studies:
Welcome to the summer small-group study! Most participants will journey through this study with their local small group, either in person or online, typically in groups of eight to ten people. For those interested, there is an optional opportunity to join a weekly Zoom gathering with Rev. Mantu Joshi on Sundays at 7 p.m. EDT, starting on June 15. Zoom Link: https://umcdiscipleship-org.zoom.us/j/7330527390?pwd=QjP8a4cIkLBBv0sFsvTi8E0zd3FNB9.1

As each study begins, participants are invited to imagine they are on an art tour, serving as docents or art guides who help bring the passage to life. Together, groups will walk through four key movements:

The Picture Frame/Gathering Time (Theme and Context of Our Times): Any good art appreciator knows that the right frame or backdrop can completely transform an art piece. The *Mona Lisa* in the Louvre has had many frames over time. Its current frame helps set the picture in simple and dynamic terms, and it is designed to protect and keep the painting from warping. It is both structure and part of the artwork itself. In the same way, each week we will begin by looking at our cultural context to frame the scripture so that the group has a structure that keeps the study on track and moving toward active discipleship.

The Big Picture/Group Dialogue (Understand the Biblical Context): Next, we will go to the history of the painting or passage to try to understand what the creator or writer experienced in creating such a piece.

The High-Definition Picture/Go Deeper: We will choose a particular area of focus and identify a word or phrase that might help us see the master strokes and the layers involved.

The Motion Picture/Take Action: Finally, we will challenge ourselves to go and "paint" the world ourselves, learning from the masters, but free to challenge the present circumstances of our lives to make new God-connections in the world.

Rev. Mantu will offer parallel reflections on "Mondays with Mantu "on YouTube at 9 a.m. EDT each Monday during the study. These reflections can enhance participants' weekly meditation, whether used during a prayer walk through nature, resting with earbuds in, or enjoying a favorite chair and a hot beverage. The video reflections are available any time after they are posted and can be an optional supplement to the small-group journey.