

## **A FRESH START**

As preached on Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup>

**Read:** John 8:1-11

1. What do you notice about the different characters in this story? How does each one approach sin, justice, and mercy?
2. Why do you think the religious leaders bring the woman to Jesus publicly? How might their motives reveal the ways power and religion can be misused?
3. Jesus responds by writing on the ground rather than responding immediately. Why do you think he pauses and what effect does that silence have on the situation?
4. “Let any of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” How does this statement reframe the conversation surrounding justice and accountability?
5. Our text says the accusers leave one by one, beginning with those who were oldest. What might this detail suggest about age, experience, or self-awareness?
6. Jesus says, “Then neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin.” How do mercy and moral responsibility come together in his statement?
7. How should this passage shape the way faith communities respond to sin, failure, or public shame today?
8. Jesus issues an invitation to a fresh start to this woman. In what ways can we embrace this invitation as we make our way into a brand new year?