**Book Club Discussion Guide for *SUNFLOWERS UNDER FIRE***

1. At the beginning of the novel, Lukia argues with her husband, Gregory, about his decision to volunteer for the Tsar’s army. She believes his first loyalty should be to her, not to his country. Is she right?

2. When her eldest daughter falls in love with a young man deemed unsuitable because of a certain rule in their religion, Lukia is faced with a difficult decision—to support her daughter or side with the church. What are your thoughts on this?

3. Gregory returns from war a changed man. Back then, post-traumatic stress wasn’t even considered by those who fought and those who ordered them into battle. Are there people in your family tree who suffered as a result of their time on the battlefield? How did it affect their lives?

4. Faith pulls Lukia through the harshest of times. With religion on the decline, what are people relying on today, if they don’t have any faith? Is it enough?

5. Lukia and her children become refugees. Today, there is so much focus on refugee populations and people fleeing from conflict. Did this story change your views or did it confirm what you already believed about refugees?

6. The Romanovs were executed by the Bolsheviks. Many of their leaders became consumed by greed, the very thing they accused the royal family of. Some believe that power corrupts. What are your thoughts on this?

7. Lukia believes her dreams can forecast the future; therefore, she needs to pay attention to them. What are your thoughts on the power of dreams? Is there anything to them?

8. In this story, one battle after another affects those fighting and those fleeing. There are different reasons for the different wars. After reading about them, do you believe some wars are justified? Which disputes do you believe are worth the sacrifice?

9. Annual prayers for the dead are commonplace in Ukrainian culture. Other cultures have similar practices. Discuss the value for the living of remembering the deceased and what’s missing without that remembrance.

10. Much of the history of life in Ukraine before World War II has been lost due to the many wars on her soil. Family records were often kept in churches, which were destroyed by different enemies. What is the value of carrying on traditions even when there is little family history?