

First Sunday after Epiphany/Christian Unity

Lectionary Title 7: **Jesus Observing the Rites of His Faith**

Old Testament:

Genesis 17:9-13 (NRSV, 1989)

⁹ God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹²Throughout your generations every male among you shall be circumcised when he is eight days old, including the slave born in your house and the one bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring. ¹³Both the slave born in your house and the one bought with your money must be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant.

Leviticus 12:2-6 (NRSV, 1989)

²Speak to the people of Israel, saying: If a woman conceives and bears a male child, she shall be ceremonially unclean for seven days; as at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean. ³On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. ⁴Her time of blood purification shall be thirty-three days; she shall not touch any holy thing, or come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purification are completed. ⁵If she bears a female child, she shall be unclean for two weeks, as in her menstruation; her time of blood purification shall be sixty-six days. ⁶ When the days of her purification are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, and a pigeon or a turtle-dove for a sin-offering.

New Testament: Luke 2:21, 41-46 (NRSV, 1989)

Jesus Is Named

²¹ After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

⁴¹ Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴²And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

General Concept: The rites of the church embody its historic faith.

Key Concepts in the Different Age Levels in Sunday School

N/K/YE: **Jesus goes to the temple.**

ME/OE: **Jesus learns the traditions of His faith.**

Y: **Jesus observes the traditions of his faith.**

A: **Jesus follows the faith traditions of his faith.**

Exegesis of the Biblical References

The process of circumcision is the physical manifestation of the covenant entered into by God with Abraham. This is an agreement which Abraham is bound to keep in order to manifest his faithfulness to the covenant with his God. Circumcision is the cutting of the excess skin of the male sex organ which is necessary to make one clean or hygienic in the Hebrew tradition. Being clean is a requirement of the special relationship which the Jewish people had entered into with their God. This account of Abraham's circumcision and the legal provision on circumcision in Leviticus is deeply rooted in the priestly tradition of the Jewish community. The priestly writers are very particular in the practice not just because it has become a tradition but because in the practice of circumcision itself is embodied the principle of being loyal to their covenant with God. In being loyal to the covenant through this practice the Jewish community is also able to assert its own unique and distinct identity amidst the diversity of peoples and nations that surround them which generally do not engage in such a ritual practice. It is a practice that somehow assures them that they will always be recognized as a covenanted people of God and each individual is a valued member of this covenanted community. The mark of circumcision also provides each member with a consciousness of their rootedness in their rich and moving history as a people specially chosen by God as initially demonstrated in the story of their great ancestor, Abraham; a person who embodied great loyalty to God and to God's promise. This particular ritual indeed, has become the mark of their covenant loyalty, the mark of their distinct identity as a people called to a special relationship with God who had been so gracious in caring for them and the mark of their being rooted in a history they can always be proud of.

The text presents Jesus undergoing the required rituals of the Jewish community. This text demonstrates how Jesus had been rooted in the community where he belongs. He has the clear mark of identity as a Jew and he also has the mark of being a member of a covenanted community having undergone the requirement in the Jewish law. Here, it is important to see that Jesus has not defied nor was he exempted from the requisites of the Jewish community, rather the story demonstrates the importance of a member going through the required rituals and practices of his community. Thus, the text also shows the reality of the Jewish people who became marginalized in other societies in the course of their practicing the requirements of the law. It could be that the understanding of those who became marginalized because of their zealous observance of the law has become different than those who are in the center and pinnacle of the society. Deeper understanding of how the law was understood in this context is discussed in the following narrative; when Jesus was presented in the temple, again, to fulfill the requirement of the law. It is important to understand that the text did not mention who was doing the circumcision. It could be the parents but in the case of the gospel writers, if the subject had been missing in the statement, it also implies that God himself is the one at work. Again, God remains at work as a covenant partner from the days of Abraham towards the days of Jesus. This means that the covenant has not been forgotten and neither are those in the margins forgotten by God, neither does the marginalized Jew forget God's promise for people like them. The mark of circumcision will always remind them of the gracious, loving God behind this ritual who had always stood by them even in their most critical moments of their history.

Companion Guide for the Teachers and Other Users

Liturgy is the employment of the church's sacred symbols – Scriptures, creeds, objects and ritualistic gestures – into forms appropriate for worship. It makes use of music, literature and the arts as vehicles for conveying the symbols with the participation of the congregation.

These symbols capture the primordial sources of faith like time capsules that release streams of meaning that are rendered in contemporary forms across time. Liturgy serves to keep the contemporary connected to its origin and the passage of time. For that reason it contains very old elements as well as new ones just emerging in the present.

Liturgical symbols provide a unique medium of the gathered community to and from the Spirit as they have the power to communicate and evoke meanings too deep to be articulated in the common language. It is in the very nature of faith that its most profound contents can only be preserved and shared through symbols. There is something of the faith that is and will remain a mystery until its final revelation at the end of time. At the apex of the Christian mystery is the incarnation of the Son of God in Jesus of Nazareth. Next to that is the main symbol of God, the mystery of the Trinity and then the mystery of bodily resurrection and the *eschaton*, the end of the present age and the beginning of a new one. The chief symbols of faith are deposited and reenacted in two aspects: the liturgy of the word, the reading and preaching of the Scriptures, and the liturgy of the sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Protestantism which emerged in the late medieval period and the onset of modern intellectual and spiritual culture has had an ambivalent regard towards liturgical reform. At one end, it sought to overcome the church's sacramentalism that stood as a wall separating the clergy from the laity by making worship truly an act of the whole church with emphasis on preaching and singing of hymns in the people's dialect and translation of the Scriptures into the common idiom. At the other end, there was a concern to preserve the liturgical heritage of the church accumulated up to the medieval era. This liturgical tension remains to this day in the Protestant world, including the UCCP.

Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

I. Objectives

At the end of the session and with the consistent example shown by parents and other significant adults, the children will be able to:

1. tell why Jesus was given that name;
2. explain why Jesus went to the temple;
3. describe the place of worship among Christians;
4. express one's willingness to go to church; and
5. sing songs joyfully and recite the memory verse with confidence.

II. Concept: Jesus goes to the temple.

Materials: *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), picture of church with slogan of "I will commit myself to go to Church on Sunday." crayons, pencils, activity sheets

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Greet the children warmly and set an atmosphere of good learning environment.
2. Opening prayer: "Everlasting and ever living Father, we are indeed thankful for your overwhelming love by giving us Jesus. Be with us as we learn new things today and as we listen to the story of the child Jesus. This we ask in Jesus name we pray. Amen! "
3. Let the children sing their welcome songs.
 - a. "Jesus Is A Happy Name"
 Jesus is a happy name
 Jesus is always the same
 Jesus is a happy name.
 We 've got to smile when we talk about Jesus.
 (You may replace Jesus in the first three lines with the names of the children.)
 - b. "Praise God"
 Praise God, praise God all ye little children God is love God is love
 Love God, love God all ye little children God is love God is love
 Thank God, thank God all ye little children God is love God is love
 Serve God, serve God all ye little children God is love God is love
 - c. "Ub-Ubbing"
 Ub-ubbing a babassit ay-aywanan ni Jesus
 Iturongnat sakada a mapam kapilya.
 - d. "Little Children Everywhere"
 Little children everywhere, Jesus Christ is caring them
 Loving, leading them to go to church or temple.

B. Getting Ready

Prepare the class by letting them do the finger play: This poem may also be introduced as a song. Follow this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMGFJJ9Ww7I> for the right words. (Here is the church. Here is the steeple. Open the door, and see the people.)

C. Learning Time

1. Picture study. Show a picture of your church building with people inside, or picture of church people fellowshiping or gathering as one. Then ask:
 - a. What do you see in this picture?
 - b. What do they do when they are in the church?
 - c. What have you heard adult say why they go to church?
 - d. What do you when you are in the church? What do you feel when you are in the church?
2. After hearing their answers, summarize or validate their answer. (The church is the group of people worshipping God. We also call the place of worship the church.)
3. Tell the class that in the story, they will find out the name of the place where Jesus and parents went to worship God.
4. Read the story.

For N/K:**The Boy Jesus**

Based on Luke 2:21, 41-42

Jesus is circumcised eight days after he is born. Joseph and Mary name the boy Jesus as what the angel has told Mary.

Every year Joseph and Mary go to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival (It runs for eight days). The Hebrews celebrate it to remember being freed from slavery in Egypt. Jesus and his family usually go to the festival. They travel for days. They bring lots of food. Jesus sees lots of people.

For YE:**The Boy in the Temple**

Based on Luke 2:41-52

Every year Joseph and Mary go to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival (It runs for eight days). The Hebrews celebrate it to remember being freed from slavery in Egypt. Jesus and his family usually go to the festival. They travel for days. They bring lots of food. Jesus sees lots of people.

When the Passover is over, they start to trek back home, but the boy Jesus could not be found anywhere. Joseph and Mary worry because they could not go without Jesus. They have to find him!

They search everywhere and find him in the Temple sitting with the Jewish teachers. He listens to them and asks them questions. All who hear him talk are amazed at his intelligent answers!

Joseph and Mary are surprised when they see him, and his mother says to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find you."

He answers, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I have to be in my Father's house?" But they do not understand his answer.

Finally, Jesus starts the trek with his parents back home to Nazareth and he continues to obey them.

D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

Ask these questions as you show pictures of the story.

For N/K:

1. When was Jesus circumcised? (8 days after he was born)

2. Who told Mary to name the child Jesus? (An angel)
3. Where does the family of Jesus go every year? (Temple in Jerusalem) Why? (To celebrate the Feast of the Passover)

For YE:

1. Where does the family of Jesus go every year? (Temple in Jerusalem)
2. What is this great event for them to go to Jerusalem? (to celebrate the Feast of the Passover)
3. What happened when the family left Jerusalem? (Jesus is left behind.)
4. Where did they find Jesus? (In the temple sitting with the Jewish teachers)
5. What did Jesus say why he has to be in the Temple (He needs to be in his Father's House.)

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: "Where does Jesus go to know about his faith? Where do we go to know about our faith?"

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Say: "Our church is like what the Temple during Jesus' time does. The Church is a community of people who worship God." Ask the learners why it is important to go to church. Let them say what they do in the church.

2. Teach the memory verses.

For N/K: "Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. (Luke 2:41)

For YE: "After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions." (Luke 2:46)

3. Prepare the class to play "Show and Tell!" Do a trip around the church (organized movement of the children) showing the pulpit, the pastors, the people, the cross, the pews, the choir, the flowers, the candles, etc.... Then draw from the class the sentences: "Jesus goes to the Temple to worship God. We go to the church to worship God."

4. Creative activity:

For N/K: Tell the class to color the picture and teach them to read the label. (It is fun to go to church.)

For YE: Tell the class to decorate the picture with recyclable materials and read the sentences below the picture. (Like Jesus, we learn many things about our faith in church. I promise always to go to church.)

G. Closing Worship

1. Let the class recite the memory verse.

2. Offering

3. Commitment: I promise to go to church to know more about Jesus."

4. Closing song: "I Was Glad"

I was glad when they said unto me, let us go to the house of our faith
I was glad when they said unto me, let us go to the house of our faith.

5. Closing prayer: Dear God, help us to be like Jesus who go to the Temple to know You. Thank you for wanting us to be your friend even when we often forget to do what pleases you. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Middle and Older Elementary Levels

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. explain how Jesus learned about his faith aside from the teachings of Mary;
2. describe how Christians learn about the Christian faith; and
3. demonstrate one's desire to go to church.

II. Concept: Jesus learns the traditions of His faith.

Materials: *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), song chart, crayons, pencils, activity sheets

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Smile and greet the children as they come. Check the attendance.
2. Opening prayer: Everlasting Father, we are thankful for your overwhelming love by giving us Jesus. Be with us as we learn new things today and as we listen to the story of the child Jesus. This, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.
3. Opening songs
 - "Jesus Is a Happy Name"
 - Jesus is a happy name. Jesus is always the same.
Jesus is a happy name. We've got to smile when we talk about Jesus.
(You may change Jesus by the name of the students)
 - "Praise God"
 - Praise God, praise God all ye little children.
God is love (thrice), love God all ye little children.
God is love (twice). Thank God (twice), all ye little children.
God is love (twice). Serve God (twice), all ye little children. God is love (twice).
 - "Ub-Ubbing"
 - Ub-ubbing a babassit ay-aywanan ni Jesus
Iturongnat sakada a mapam kapilya.
 - "Little Children Everywhere"
 - Little children everywhere, Jesus Christ is caring for them.
Loving, leading them to go to church or temple.

B. Getting Ready

1. *Sentence Completion.* Tell the class to complete these sentences:
The first time I learned about Jesus was _____.
I learned how to pray when _____.
_____ showed me how to use the Bible.
2. *Pair and Share.* In pairs, let them talk about one's completed sentences. Have each learner share with the class what the other partner shared.
3. *Search and Tell.* Ask the class to find out in our text where Jesus and his parents journeyed to every year.

C. Learning Time

1. *Responsive Reading.* Divide the class into two groups. Have the groups read the text in the Bible responsively.

2. Then ask the class to read the verses in unison.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

You may want to let the class answer these exercises using the activity sheets.

For ME:

1. *Search and Find Relay.* Prepare two sets of seven questions written on strips of paper. Give one set to each group. (Use the same group in responsive reading.) The objective of the relay is to search the Biblical text for the specific detail that answers the written question and to find the verse number where the detail is found. There may be items which cannot be answered in the text. Ask the groups to write, "Not found in the text."

Have each group form a line. Place a Bible and a pen in front of each line. The group that finishes first gets 3-point advantage. The group that gets the most correct answer gets a 7-point advantage. Teacher gives the signal to start the relay.

- a. What feast did Joseph, Mary, and Jesus attend in our text?
- b. Why was Jesus' visit to the feast at age 12 especially important for Him?
- c. How did children get religious training in ancient Israel?
- d. Why did Joseph and Mary not know that Jesus had remained behind in Jerusalem?
- e. How long did it take Joseph and Mary to find Jesus?
- f. Where was Jesus found, and what was He doing?
- h. What did Jesus do that astonished the rabbis?

For OE:

2. *Paraphrase and Answer Activity.* Tell the class to read first the given verse, paraphrase it and answer the following questions.
 - a. What feast did Joseph, Mary, and Jesus attend in our text? (v41)
 - b. Why was Jesus' visit to the feast at age 12 especially important for Him? (v42)
 - c. How did children get religious training in ancient Israel?
 - d. Why did Joseph and Mary not know that Jesus had remained behind in Jerusalem (v. 43)?
 - e. How long did it take Joseph and Mary to find Jesus (vs. 44, 45)?
 - f. Where was Jesus found, and what was He doing (vs. 46, 47)?
 - g. What did Jesus do that astonished the rabbis? (v.47)

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Say: "Jesus was taught by his parents about the Jewish faith. Ask: "How else did Jesus learn about his faith? How do we learn about our faith?"

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Teach the memory verse: "After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions." (Luke 2:46)
2. Say: The Church is a community of people who worship God. The church plays a very significant role in the life of believers. The Bible also plays a very significant role in our lives. The more we grow in our relationship with Jesus, the more we desire to come to church and worship God."

3. *Creative activity.***For ME**

Tell the class to color and write something about the persons they see in the picture. Below the picture, tell them to write: "We are the church."

For OE

Tell the class to color the picture and read the label "We are the church together." Then let them decorate the rest of the page by using recyclable materials.

Using the same picture, ask the learners to underline the sentence or sentences that best describe their thoughts.

- a. God will bless me when I am faithful to Him.
- b. God has some surprises for me.
- c. Learning God's word is exciting.

G. *Closing Worship*

1. Let the class recite the memory verse.
2. Request the learners to stand and hold their commitment paper. Let them say their commitment: (I will go to church to know more about Jesus. I will go to church to learn about my faith with my friends. Expect other commitments.)
3. Offering
4. Closing prayer: Almighty God, thank you for giving us time to know more about your love for us when we go to the church. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.
5. Closing Songs

"I Surrender All"

All to Jesus I surrender all to him I freely give.

I will ever love and trust him in His presence daily live.

I surrender all (twice). All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

"I Was Glad"

I was glad when they said unto me, let us go to the house of our faith.

I was glad when they said unto me let us go to the house of our faith. Amen!

Youth Level

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. explain how Jesus learned more of the Jewish faith;
2. elicit the reason why Christians go to church;
3. describe some forms of liturgy being used by the church; and
4. express one's conviction to participate in the different forms of liturgy observed by the church.

II. Concept: Jesus observes the traditions of his faith.

Materials: *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), hymnal, activity sheet, song chart, YouTube videos and laptop/video player, 2.5 x 5 inches colored meta cards, masking tape

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: *Eternal God, grant us the growing desire to study your word. Guide us to search the hidden treasure of your truth and righteousness as we journey in our faith life. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

3. Opening songs

“Who is the Man of the Fa Fa Faith?”

Who is the man of the lo la love?

Who is the man of the ho ho hope?

Who is the man of the gra gra grace?

Who is that man I want to shake his hand?

Because He gave His life and He died for you and me.

Deep diririp, diririp, diririp (2X).

“Halina't Sama-sama”

Halina't sama-sama purihin natin Siya.

Halina't sama-sama awitan natin Sya.

Ipalakpak ang iyong kamay, itaas at ikaway.

Lahat ay magsabing Diyos ay buhay. (Ulitin 3x)

“May Galak”

May galak, may tuwa, may saya sa piling ng Diyos.

Na hatid ng pusong pinagpala N'yang lubos

May awit, may sayaw at papuri para sa Diyos

Sapagkat hirap ng puso ay naglalaho.

Handog N'ya ay kapayapaan, handog N'ya ay kagalakan.

Handog N'ya ay kalakasan, sa bawat pusong napapagal.

Kaya ang awit ng papuri, awit ng pasasalamat

At ang awit ng pagsamba ay para lang sa Kanya.

B. Getting Ready

1. Tell the class to prepare to play the game “The Singing Battle Game”.
 - a. Group your class into 3 groups.

- b. Let each group sing songs of praise one after the other. The group that is able to sing the most number of songs is the winner. Remind the group that they cannot repeat the song that is already sang.
 - c. After the game, ask: "What did you feel while doing the game? Did you enjoy the game?"
2. Say: "Songs are very important in our faith tradition. This is the language of our soul."

C. *Learning Time*

1. Let them read consecutively the texts of the Bible by verse. Maintain the groupings. Assign each group the three texts and let them paraphrase the verses. Each group will report in the class and tell what they have discovered in the text. Instruct each group to use the given guide questions.

Group 1: **Genesis 17:9-13**

- a. What is the covenant between God and Abraham?
- b. What do the Israelites need to do as a sign of God's covenant with them?
- c. What are the benefits of abiding by the sign the covenant?

Group 2: **Leviticus 12:2-6**

- a. What are the traditions to be practiced?
- b. What is the purification rite or tradition that the Israelites should follow?
- c. What are the benefits of keeping the rite or tradition?

Group 3: **Luke 2:21, 41-46**

- a. What were the Jewish traditions that Jesus' parents followed according to this text?
- b. Why did Jesus and his parents have to go to Jerusalem when Jesus turned twelve?
- c. What do you think did Jesus stay behind in the temple?

D. *Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time*

Discuss further the lesson. Say: The Jewish people have their own faith traditions. Watch the following videos to know more of their traditions.

1. Jewish rite of circumcision: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0fkhV4TxM>
2. Jewish traditions - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcT6yq_L0uE&list=PLT3E92DW2Hbhn4PSTTWW2870ZNR2AZ4wt&index=10

E. *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How did Jesus observe the traditions of his faith?

F. *Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Discuss the memory verse: "After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions." (Luke 2:46)
2. Say: Choose one Jewish tradition from the videos that you have seen. Ask: What Christian faith traditions are similar to that of the Jewish faith that your parents taught you to observe? (Going to the synagogue, studying the Torah, listening to the teachers of the law, etc.)

3. Prepare metacards and present them to the class and let them say how these practices can help them to learn about the Christian faith. Let the learners emphasize the tradition of the church and their related experiences.
 - a. Going to Sunday school or attending Bible study
 - b. Using technology gadgets
 - c. Listening to the message of the pastor/lay minister
 - d. Listening to the message of the choir
 - e. Fellowship with peers
 - g. Joining medical missions, sports festivals, family oriented activities
 - h. Others
4. *Group activity.* Let learners make a Sunday service liturgy based on what they like most about their church worship experience. Challenge them to lead the Sunday service during CYF Sunday using the liturgy service they have created. Suggest the following forms of liturgy:
 - a. Contemporary worship/Praise and Worship
 - b. Traditional worship
 - c. Worship used by indigenous people
 - d. Worship in places other than a regular church building
 - e. Liturgy for a retreat/camp/workshop
 - f. Youth ministry/CYAF/UCM/CWA

G. Closing Worship

1. Reciting of the memory verse by selected learners
2. Reflective action: I will participate actively in the liturgy during the Sunday service.
3. Offering
4. Closing song:
5. Closing prayer: Lord and Father, thank for giving us wisdom and guidance through the Holy Spirit that we may understand the traditions of our faith. May this knowledge nourish us physically and spiritually so that we will serve you better. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Adult Level

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. draw from Jesus' example of learning in the temple with the learning given by the church;
2. describe the forms of liturgy that help in the understanding of the Christian faith;
3. demonstrate respect and tolerance of the different ways of learning the Christian faith among the members of the church; and
4. share one's insights on the specific liturgy that helps them in understanding the Word.

II. Concept: Jesus follows the faith traditions of his faith.

Materials: *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), hymnal, activity sheet

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: Eternal God, grant us the growing desire to study your word. Guide us to search for the traditions of our faith so that these traditions will be included in our liturgy. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.
3. Opening song:

B. Getting Ready

Tell the class that this Sunday's celebration is also on Christian unity. Ask the adults to share their thoughts on how unity is achieved in the church. Let them name some of the ministries that they have been involved and how their involvement helps in unifying the church members.

C. Learning Time

1. Divide the class into three groups and assign each group the biblical texts.
 - a. Group 1: **Genesis 17:9-13**
 - 1) Covenant between God and Abraham
 - 2) A sign of God's covenant with them
 - 3) Benefits of abiding by the sign the covenant
 - b. Group 2: **Leviticus 12:2-6**
 - 1) Traditions to be practiced
 - 2) Purification rite of the Israelites
 - 3) Benefits of keeping the rite or tradition
 - c. Group 3: **Luke 2:21, 41-46**
 - 1) Jewish traditions that Jesus' parents followed
 - 2) Reason why Jesus is brought by his parents when he was 12 years old
 - 3) Reason why Jesus stayed behind in the temple
2. Have each group share the highlights of each text.

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Say: "Jesus follows the faith traditions of his faith." Ask: "Why do we observe the traditions of our faith?"

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Let the class discuss some of the faith traditions of the UCCP. Tell them that these faith traditions are chief symbols of faith deposited and reenacted in the liturgies used by their churches.
 - a. Use of the Holy Bible
 - b. Formal study of the Word
 - c. Liturgy of the Word as read, sang, or delivered in the message
 - d. Baptism
 - e. Lord's Supper
 - f. Congregational singing
 - e. Symbolic articles and crafts
 - h. Adherence to the UCCP Statement of Faith, Constitution and By-Laws
2. Encourage the adults to describe their roles as parents or significant adults in their respective families to abide by the faith traditions and practices.

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "The Baptism of Water" (Hymnal of a Faith Journey # 248)
3. Closing prayer: Involve one of the attendees to lead the class in prayer. Remind them about Jesus as a model of manifesting the significance of adhering to the faith traditions.