

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

### **The Nurturing and Equipping Power of the Spirit**

*Old Testament:* Exodus 4:1-17

Moses' Miraculous Power

<sup>1</sup>Then Moses answered, 'But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, "The LORD did not appear to you." ' <sup>2</sup>The LORD said to him, 'What is that in your hand?' He said, 'A staff.' <sup>3</sup>And he said, 'Throw it on the ground.' So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake; and Moses drew back from it. <sup>4</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Reach out your hand, and seize it by the tail'-so he reached out his hand and grasped it, and it became a staff in his hand—<sup>5</sup>'so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.'

<sup>6</sup>Again, the LORD said to him, 'Put your hand inside your cloak.' He put his hand into his cloak; and when he took it out, his hand was leprous,\*as white as snow. <sup>7</sup>Then God said, 'Put your hand back into your cloak'-so he put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored like the rest of his body—<sup>8</sup>'If they will not believe you or heed the first sign, they may believe the second sign.

<sup>9</sup>If they will not believe even these two signs or heed you, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.' <sup>10</sup>But Moses said to the LORD, 'O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' <sup>11</sup>Then the LORD said to him, 'Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? <sup>12</sup>Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.' <sup>13</sup>But he said, 'O my Lord, please send someone else.'

<sup>14</sup>Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, 'What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. <sup>15</sup>You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. <sup>16</sup>He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. <sup>17</sup>Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs.'

*New Testament:* Ephesians 4:11-12

<sup>11</sup>The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup>to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,..."

**General Concept: The Holy Spirit instructs the faithful on the enduring faith of the church which equips them to face the challenge of the present realities.**

**N/K/YE: The Holy Spirit teaches us about God.**

**ME/OE: The Holy Spirit teaches us about faith in God.**

**Y: The Holy Spirit nurtures and equips us to face the trials and challenges of the present realities.**

**A: The Holy Spirit instructs the faithful on the enduring faith of the church which equips people to face the challenge of the present realities and gives God's people power to proclaim God's love and faithfulness.**

*Exegesis of the Biblical References*

The second book of the Pentateuch deals with the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt. The account in this story contains the story of the call of Moses to be God's prophet or spokesperson, to be the one to announce to the enslaved Hebrews that the Lord God is going to act in a very powerful and decisive manner to bring them out of the house of bondage. This is in response to the cries of the people earlier, crying for rescue and release from such condition. The Lord then heard their cries and had seen in-depth their affliction and became so moved with pity and compassion that God decided to act in a way that will prove to be a history-altering, game-changing event in the fate of Israel—the event that would mark the birth of the community of the people of God (3:7-10).

To carry out such a radical plan for the Hebrews to become God's people, God called on a fugitive Egyptian prince to be the primary instrument. Initially, Moses was very hesitant and appears even to have a very low regard for his own ability to be listened to and accepted by the people, expressing his fears that they may not believe what he would proclaim to them since he is known as an Egyptian prince just running away from his crime of killing an Egyptian taskmaster.

The Lord then showed to Moses three miraculous signs (4:2ff). All three signs involved changing something into something else. In the case of two signs, (Moses' staff turning into a snake, and his hand turning leprous) what got changed was immediately changed back to its original state, so that change was only temporarily frightening. In the case of the third (water to blood) what got changed stayed changed - and the consequences were far more widespread and life threatening. Moses' first two protests were of the formal sort, properly expressing humility before such a great assignment, but here his words still revealed the presence of uncertainty in his mind (v.10). God had already assured him in unmistakable language that the Israelite leaders would listen to him; now he wondered if he could be sure that this would happen - that they would believe his claim that the Lord had appeared to him and do what he said ("obey me" NIV "listen to me").

Indeed, God calls and equips anyone, even those who think that they are not qualified enough to become God's instruments in realizing the Lord's plan for the transformation of both church and society. It is God through the Spirit who will equip and uphold even those who think so lowly of themselves. It is not by their authority but by God's that they are going to speak and carry out the divine plan for the redemption of God's people.

Ephesus is a city of the Roman province of Asia near the mouth of the Cayster River. It was the most easily accessible city in Asia, both by land and sea. Its location therefore, favored its religious, political, and commercial development, and presented a most advantageous field for the missionary labors of Paul and his disciples.

However, the residents of the city of Ephesus were generally known to be adherents of the cult of the goddess Diana. Here, the write is able to look out on the church and view it in its entirety, to see the part it is to play in God's scheme for the restoration of the human race, to see God's purpose in it and for it and its relation to the creator of all. God's eternal and ultimate purpose is to gather into one the whole created universe, to restore harmony and reconciliation and peace among God's creatures and between them and the Lord. Its purpose is to set before the readers this great mystery of the church as God's means by which, in Christ, God may be able to restore everyone to union with Himself. The different gifts which the Christians have for the upbuilding or sanctifying of the church into that

perfect unity which is found in Christ so that in the end it will be able and equipped enough to face the various challenges of the times.

*Companion Guide for the Teachers and Other Users*

The faith received by the church through the apostolic witness to the events surrounding Jesus has endured through times of trials and has remained a vital force for its life and work. Amidst changing circumstances the church is holding fast to its truths, trusting in the Spirit, the Paraclete who is the teacher of truth.

Entire populations today are being held in thrall by information moguls whose access to the most sophisticated tools of technology have monopoly control of what people hear and see. The concept of truth has become obsolete since information on a global scale has turned into an instrument of mind control. This lack of truthful information has also impacted the church's proclamation of its truths.

The contemporary church is weighed down with an inherent handicap. Its symbols of faith remain dressed in the ancient apparels of its historic heritage. It has been slow in adapting to a language that is suitable to a fast changing age. To illustrate, this particular piece of literature written for the first quarter of the 21st century employs concepts, terminology and nuances originating from many centuries ago. The reason is not just the normal difficulties of learning new tools of communication. The problem is inherent in the nature of historical faiths: the fear of losing its historic content in the process of cultural adaptation.

This is a formidable obstacle that appears humanly impossible to hurdle. By all calculations, the Christian faith should have already been swept into the dustbin of history. But the fact that it has remained a vigorous and persistent critique of contemporary realities is a sign that the Christian faith is being kept alive by its author, Jesus Christ through his Spirit. As the author of truth, the Spirit is keeping the church as a repository of the enduring truth that human beings are created in the image of God and the earth is God's creation. The church's truths from the Spirit are a thorn on the flesh that deflates human hubris and cuts down to size the idols that pretend to be God. The church's message to the world is old, its language archaic but it will endure and ultimately prevail.

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## Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

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

1. state that our faith in Christ is enduring;
2. proclaim that through the Spirit of Christ, the church teaches us about God continuously; and
3. express one's joy and appreciation of the work of the Holy Spirit in teaching the faith.

### II. **Concept:** The Holy Spirit teaches us about God.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), song chart, pictures of the story, pictures for the creative activity

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. *Opening Worship*

1. Welcome time: Welcome them happily as they arrive. You may review the past lesson. Allow a "pop corn" style of sharing.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for this beautiful Sunday morning! Through the Holy Spirit, open our eyes, ears, mind, and heart as we study your Word! In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen!"
3. Opening song: "Sunday Is a Happy Day"  
Sunday is today what a happy day  
Boys and girls clap your hands singing all the way!

#### B. *Getting Ready*

1. Prepare several gifts (candies, bread, or fruits) enough for your class. Wrap them and write the names of the children in your class.
2. Ask: What do you see, class? Would you like to receive a gift? How would you feel if find your name on it?
3. Call each child up to receive their gift. Tell the class to sit in a circle. Play some music and pass a box around. Once the music stops, the child holding the box may open his or her gift. Let each child express his or her feelings about the gift received.
4. Emphasize to the children that the gift each received is free. Emphasize to the children that the gift each received is free. All gifts are free. If you have to pay for it, then it is not a gift.

#### C. *Learning Time*

1. Discuss that the children are members of the church. Ask them about the things they do while in the church.
2. Tell the children that God has given each of us a gift—the gift of salvation by faith through the grace of God because God loves us. Share with the children that God, through Jesus, has also sent the Holy Spirit to be our companion. The Holy Spirit has also given us gifts or talents to help in building the church.
3. Prepare pictures about the activities or ask selected children to dramatize the following:
  - a. Children reading the Bible
  - b. Children listening to the teacher
  - c. Children singing songs of praise
  - d. Children reciting memory verses

- e. Children telling others about Jesus
- f. Children sharing one's food and other things with others
- g. Children helping others with their work
- h. Putting biodegradable wastes in the correct bin

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

Discuss the lesson. Ask these questions.

1. When the children read the Bible and listened to the teacher, they are **learning about God**. As children, what else do we do to learn about God? (Listen to parents and other siblings, listen to the pastor deliver God's word, read other biblical stories)
2. When the children sang songs, recited memory verses and told others about Jesus, they are actually **telling others about God**. As children, what other activities can we do to tell others about God? (Read stories to other children, talk about Jesus in school, be a model in kindness and humility)
3. When the children shared one's food and other things with others, helped others with their work and threw their trash properly, they were actually **doing good things to others and the environment** because that is what God wants them to do. As children, what can we do to do good things to others and the environment? (Be helpful to the elderly, be polite to others, segregate waste properly, plant trees, clean one's place, use biodegradable things, recycle, share toys to the needy)
4. Say: In all the things that the children can do in and out of the church, the Holy Spirit helps them do the right thing.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How did the Holy Spirit help children in learning about God, in telling others about God, and doing the right thing?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verse: "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12)
2. *Creative activity*: Say: Since we do not see the Holy Spirit, we have a symbol that reminds us that Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit guides us all the time. Do this activity to find out what this symbol is.
  - a. **For N/K**: Prepare a silhouette of a dove. Tell the children to color the symbol of thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who persistently teaches us.
  - b. **For YE**: Prepare different pictures that show ways on how to use the gift of the Holy Spirit and tell the class to decorate it by pasting pieces of paper, or finger painting any activity of their choice to show how the Holy Spirit teaches them about God. Ask them to write a short prayer asking for guidance as they grow in their faith in God.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Ask the children to recite the memory verse.
2. Reflective action: "Thank you for the Holy Spirit who teaches me."
3. Offering
4. Closing songs:
5. Closing prayer: "Loving God, thank you for the equipping and nurturing power of the Holy Spirit! This is our prayer in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen."

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**Middle Elementary/Older Elementary Levels****I. Objectives**

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

1. state that our faith in Christ is enduring;
2. proclaim that through the Spirit of Christ, the church teaches us about God continuously;
3. name the church ministries that teach about God; and
4. express one's joy and appreciation of the work of the Holy Spirit in teaching the faith

**II. Concept:** The Holy Spirit teaches us about faith in God.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), song chart, materials needed in the creative activity

**III. Learning Experiences****A. Opening Worship**

1. Welcome time: Welcome the children warmly/happily as they arrive.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, thank you for this morning! Thank you for our teacher and classmates. May the wind of equipping and nurturing be upon us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen!"
3. Opening song: "Search Me, O God" (HFJ # 216)

**B. Getting Ready**

Prepare the class to do the Messenger relay. Use the following instructions:

1. Give time to introduce Ephesians 4:11-12 and let the learners get familiar with it. For them to be able to memorize it, you can try this game.
2. Form two teams with equal members. Explain that the team will compete in a relay race. Place team members equal distances apart from each other around the track.
3. Say: "This is a three-step relay. I'm going to whisper the sentence with missing words (underlined words). On my signal, each player will whisper to the next player the sentence, but this time include the missing words. Tell the second player they must race to the second players and repeat the verse next to them. We continue until the last runner crosses the finish line and say the complete passage to me. The first team that finishes will give the 10 claps as their appreciation.
  - a. First relay: The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers
  - b. Second relay: To equip the saints for the work of ministry
  - c. Third relay: For building up the body of Christ.

**C. Learning Time**

1. Ask the class to say Ephesians 4:11-12 in unison. Remind the class that the church is helped by the Holy Spirit to teach about God's word.
2. Discuss each of the three major parts of Ephesians 4:11-12.
  - a. First part: The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers
  - b. Second part: To equip the saints for the work of ministry
  - c. Third part: For building up the body of Christ.

3. Write on the board the following table:

Knowing about GOD	Speaking about GOD	Doing things pleasing to GOD

4. Ask the class to determine which among the five gifts mentioned can be included in each category. Expect that all the gifts are included in each of the three categories. Emphasize the truth that the use of each gift needs learning about God, telling about God, and doing things in accordance to God’s will. The three items in the table can be use in building up the body of Christ.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How does God, through the Holy Spirit, teach us faith in God? (The church, being the body of Christ, teaches, nurtures, and equips its members with patience and perseverance, through the intervention of the Holy Spirit, to preserve the enduring faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.)

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verse: “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:12)
2. Present the list of the nurturing and equipping ministries of the church. Ask each learner to choose any one of these ministries that has helped him or her learn about God. Encourage the class to share the impact of this ministry in his or her life as a Christian.

Nurturing and equipping ministries of the Church	The impact of these ministries on my life
1. Divine Service	
2. Sunday School	
3. Vacation Church School	
4. Summer Camp/Christmas Institute	
5. Campus Ministry	
6. Lay Formation	
7. Retreats/Fellowships	
8. Community Ministry	

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Tell the class to recite the memory verse.
2. Reflective action: “Thank you for the Holy Spirit who teaches my faith in God.”
3. Offering
4. Closing song: “Search Me, O God” (HFJ # 216)
5. Closing prayer: “Loving God, thank you for the equipping and nurturing power of the Holy Spirit! This is our prayer in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen.”

## Youth Level

### I. Objectives

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

1. state that the church, through the Spirit of Christ, teaches us about our enduring faith in God;
2. participate continuously in proclaiming about the love of God using the spiritual gifts given to each of us; and
3. express one's joy and appreciation of the work of the Holy Spirit in teaching the faith.

### II. Concept: The Holy Spirit nurtures and equips us to face the trials and challenges of the present realities.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), song chart, pictures of the story

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Loving God, we know you love and care for us. As your children and with your Holy Spirit's intervention, we may learn more about you. Prepare our hearts and minds as we do our lesson today. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Search Me, O God" (HFJ # 216)

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Group the class into two. Assign the two sets of verses to each group and let the members analyze the verses in Genesis 3:8-9 and Exodus 3:1-5 to show how God talked to some characters in the Bible.
2. Ask each group to share their insights.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Instruct the class to read Exodus 4:1-17 in unison.
2. Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group verses for further study. After they finish discussing the verses, tell each group to role play the assigned verses. Emphasize that the three signs involved changes into something else.
  - a. Verses 1-5. The changes in the staff of Moses
  - b. Verses 6-8. The changes in Moses' hand
  - c. Verse 9. The changes in the Nile River
  - d. Verses 10-17. Reluctance of Moses to obey God and God's solution to Moses' reluctance to do what he is told to do.
3. Tell the class to read Ephesians 4:11-12. Instruct the students to find the meaning of the following words:
 

a. apostles	d. pastors
b. prophets	e. teachers
c. evangelists	

#### D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

Discuss the lesson.

1. Read again Exodus 4:1, 10, 13 and answer these questions.
  - a. What excuses did Moses say about not obeying the command of God? (His audience might not listen to or believe in him.)
  - b. What were these excuses centered around? (His fear and unbelief)
2. Read Exodus 4:11-12, and 14-17 and answer these questions.
  - a. How did God respond to Moses? (God's supremacy in equipping God's people)



- b. What was God trying to tell Moses by God's response? (When God asks us to do something for God, God will provide the means to accomplish this.)
- 3. Read again Ephesians 4:11-12. Examine yourself and answer these questions. Expect varied answers from the class.
  - a. What gifts do you think God has given you? How do you feel about these gifts?
  - b. Why do you think you are inadequate to serve God?
  - c. How can we balance the gifts and strengths we receive from God in serving God knowing that they are not our own?
  - d. In what areas are we tempted to become proud in the use of our gifts?
- 4. Tell the class to think about the biblical texts.
  - a. Say: God sees us in a different from the way we see ourselves. God's sight is more important than our human sight. Ask: How do you see yourself-God's way or your way?
  - b. Say: God is aware that we are inadequate and hesitant because of our fears and incompetence. But God still wants to use our God-given gifts for God's glory. Ask yourself these questions:
    - 1) Are you willing to put aside your fears, hesitations, and inadequacies and to follow God's will for us through the leading of God's Spirit? Why or why not?
    - 2) How can prayer help us in honestly telling God about our fears, hesitations, and inadequacies?

**E. Discovering the Biblical Truth**

Ask: How does God, through the Holy Spirit, nurture and equip us to face the trials and challenges of the present realities?

**F. Applying the Biblical Truth**

- 1. Discuss the memory verse: "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12)
- 2. Ask the class to read the nurturing and equipping ministries of the church Let them write opposite each the impact of these ministries on their lives.

<b>Nurturing and equipping ministries of the Church</b>	<b>The impact of these ministries on my life</b>
1. Divine Service	
2. Sunday School	
3. Vacation Church School	
4. Summer Camp/Christmas Institute	
5. Campus Ministry	
6. Lay Formation	
7. Retreats/Fellowships	
8. Community Ministry	

- 3. Instruct the class to choose one of these ministries in which they would like to be involved in. Let them give the reasons for their choice.

**G. Closing Worship**

- 1. Offering
- 2. Closing song: "Search Me, O God" (HFJ # 216)
- 3. Closing prayer: "Loving God, thank you for the nurturing and equipping power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, this is our prayer. Amen."

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**Adult Level****I. Objectives**

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

1. explain how the church nurtures and equips her members about our enduring faith in God through the Spirit of Christ;
2. discuss how the enduring faith of the church helps the believers in addressing their challenges in life; and
3. Express one's joy and appreciation of the work of the Holy Spirit in teaching the faith.

**II. Concept:** The Holy Spirit instructs the faithful on the enduring faith of the church which equips people to face the challenge of the present realities and gives power to proclaim God's love and faithfulness among his people.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), song chart, pictures about the story

**III. Learning Experiences****A. Opening Worship**

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Loving God, we know you love and care for us. As your children and with your Holy Spirit's intervention, we may learn more about you. Prepare our hearts and minds as we do our lesson today. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Search Me, O God" (HFJ # 216)

**B. Getting Ready**

Prepare the class to react to the following quotes:

1. "To learn strong faith is to endure great trials. I have learned my faith by standing firm amid severe testing" —George Mueller
2. "Endurance is not just the ability to bear a hard thing, but to turn it into glory."—Philip Yancey

**C. Learning Time**

1. Instruct the class to read Exodus 4:1-17 and Ephesians 4:11-12 in unison.
2. Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group verses for further study. After they finish discussing the verses, tell each group to role play the assigned verses.
  - a. Group 1: Exodus 4:1-9. Tell the group to discuss the changes in the staff of Moses, in Moses' hand, and the changes in the Nile River and that the changes are the three signs that involved changes into something else to stress the point of God's supremacy..
  - b. Group 2: Exodus 4:10-17. Ask the members to discuss the reluctance of Moses to obey God and God's solution to Moses' reluctance to do what he is told to do.
  - c. Group 3: Ephesians 4:11-12. Instruct the students to find the meaning of the following words: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.
3. After the groups have finished analyzing the verses, ask each group leader to share their insights before the class.

**D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time**

Discuss the lesson.

1. Read again Exodus 4:1, 10, 13 and answer these questions.
  - a. What excuses did Moses say about not obeying the command of God? (His audience might not listen to or believe in him.)

- b. What were these excuses centered around? (His fear and unbelief)
- 2. Read Exodus 4:11-12, and 14-17 and answer these questions.
  - a. How did God respond to Moses? (God's supremacy in equipping God's people)
  - b. What was God trying to tell Moses by God's response? (When God asks us to do something for God, God will provide the means to accomplish this.)
- 3. Read again Ephesians 4:11-12. Examine yourself and answer these questions. Expect varied answers from the class.
  - a. What gifts do you think God has given you? How do you feel about these gifts?
  - b. Why do you think you are inadequate to serve God?
  - c. How can we balance the gifts and strengths we receive from God in serving God knowing that they are not our own?
  - d. In what areas are we tempted to become proud in the use of our gifts?
- 4. Tell the class to think about the biblical texts.
  - a. Say: God sees us in a different from the way we see ourselves. God's sight is more important than our human sight. Ask: How do you see yourself-God's way or your way?
  - b. Say: God is aware that we are inadequate and hesitant because of our fears and incompetence. But God still wants to use our God-given gifts for God's glory. Ask yourself these questions:
    - 1) Are you willing to put aside your fears, hesitations, and inadequacies and to follow God's will for us through the leading of God's Spirit? Why or why not?
    - 2) How can prayer help us in honestly telling God about our fears, hesitations, and inadequacies?
- 5. Tell the class to look at their local church. Relate the quotes that they have talked about earlier to what the church can do to show endurance, patience, and perseverance in serving God?

**E. Discovering the Biblical Truth**

Ask: How can God, through the Holy Spirit, instruct the faithful on the enduring faith of the church which equips people to face the challenge of the present realities and gives power to proclaim God's love and faithfulness among God's people?

**F. Applying the Biblical Truth**

Tell the class to analyze the following table and complete the first and second columns. Have them choose one ministry that they can commit to get involved in and the reason for their choice.

<b>Nurturing and equipping ministries of the Church</b>	<b>The impact of these ministries on my life</b>	<b>Ministry that I can commit to do my part</b>
1. Divine Service		
2. Sunday School		
3. Campus Ministry		
4. Lay Formation		
5. Retreats/Fellowships		
6. Community Ministry		

**G. Closing Worship**

- 1. Offering
- 2. Closing song: "Search Me, O God" (HFJ # 216)
- 3. Closing prayer: "Loving God, thank you for the Holy Spirit who teaches us, keeps us, and gives us the power to proclaim God's message to humankind. In Jesus' name, this is our prayer. Amen."