

# Human Degradation and Spirituality for a New Humanity

*Calendar of Lessons*

**For Liturgical Year 2016-2017, the lessons are subdivided into these four scopes and strands:**

- **Scope 1: Rootedness**  
Strand 1: ***Jesus' Encounters with Human Degradation and its Transformations***
  - Advent and Christmastide (27 November 2016 – 1 January 2017)
  - Epiphany (8 January – 26 February 2017)
  
- **Scope 2: Identity: On Being and Becoming**  
Strand 2: ***Jesus' Choice of the Kind of Messiah***
  - Lent (5 March – 9 April 2017)
  - Eastertide (16 April – 28 May 2017)
  
- **Scope 3: Unity and Solidarity**  
Strand 3: ***The Church United to Respond to Human Degradation***
  - ***Pentecost (4 June – 20 August 2017)***
  
- **Scope 4: Fruitful Lifeworks**  
Strand 4: ***The Church Manifesting the Marks of a Christ-like Life***
  - Kingdomtide (27 August – 26 November 2017)



**Quadrennial Theme: Spirituality for These Critical Times**Year 3 Theme: **Human Degradation and Spirituality for a New Humanity 2016-2017**Scope 1: **Rootedness**Strand 1: ***Jesus' Encounters with Human Degradation and its Transformations***

Included Sundays for Advent and Christmastide Season (6 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(1) November 27, 2016	First Sunday of Advent	<b>Liberating Cultural Breakthroughs</b>	1 Samuel 25:13-34 Matthew 1:18-24	There are cultural practices and beliefs that cause human suffering and degradation, thus, the church should make a cultural breakthrough in the transformation towards a new humanity.
(2) December 4, 2016	Second Sunday of Advent/Family Sunday	<b>Seeds of New Humanity</b>	Isaiah. 7:14 Luke 1:26-35	Like the enslaved people in Egypt, the new humanity emerges from among the victims who long for freedom and wholeness.
(3) December 11, 2016	Third Sunday of Advent/Human Rights Sunday	<b>Challenging Oppressive State Powers</b>	1 Kings 12:1-16 Luke 2:1-6	The church has the duty to expose and challenge state policies that violate human rights.
(4) December 18, 2016	Fourth Sunday of Advent	<b>Jesus as God's Love Incarnate</b>	Isaiah 49:1-3 John 3:11-17	In the midst of a broken humanity, God came in Jesus

				to mend it and make it whole.
(5) December 25, 2016	First Sunday after Christmas	<b>The Birth of Jesus</b>	Psalms 91:11 Luke 2:7-18 John 1:14	We joyfully celebrate the birth of Jesus in a world that longs for fullness.
(6) January 1, 2017	First Sunday after Christmas	<b>Defending Children, Symbols of a New Beginning</b>	Isaiah 43:18-19 Matthew 2:1-16	Upholding the rights and welfare of children makes a just and compassionate society now and in the future.
<b>Included Sundays for Epiphany Season</b> (8 lessons)	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Lectionary Title</b>	<b>Scriptural References</b>	<b>General Concept</b>
(7) January 8, 2017	Epiphany Sunday	Channels of God's Healing	2 Kings 7:1-16 John 9:1-41	We are all healers to one another.
(8) January 15, 2017	First Sunday after Epiphany/Christi an Unity	<b>The Inclusive Healing Ministry of the Church</b>	2 Kings 5:1-19 Mark 1:29-31	"The kingdom of God is present...where healing is given to the sick." (UCCP Statement of Faith)
(9) January 22, 2017	Second Sunday after Epiphany/Nation al Bible Sunday	<b>Healing of Animosities</b>	Isaiah 11:1-9 Galatians 3:28	Respecting and appreciating differences is a condition for creative unity and harmony.
(10) January 29, 2017	Third Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Healing as a Message of Salvation</b>	2 Kings 4:8-37 Luke 8:41-56	Salvation comes whenever healing happens.
(11) February 5, 2017	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Healing of Social Divides</b>	Ruth 1:1-21 Luke 13:10-17	Social division is eradicated when human fellowship, care, respect,

				and dignity are restored.
(12) February 12, 2017	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Healing of Broken Relationships</b>	Genesis 32:1-32, 33:1-4 Matthew 5:24	Where there are broken relationships, it is the duty of the church to bring about reconciliation through forgiveness and repentance.
(13) February 19, 2017	Sixth Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Healing from Demon Possession</b>	1 Samuel 16:14-23 Mark 5:1-20	The Spirit of God drives away the demons of envy, fear, and greed for the Spirit to dwell in.
(14) February 26, 2017	Seventh Sunday after Epiphany/Transfiguration Sunday	<b>Healing towards Transformation</b>	Exodus 34:29-35 Mark 9:2-8	The transfiguration of Jesus is a preview of his resurrection which is our hope and destiny.

Scope 2: **Identity: On Being and Becoming**  
Strand 2: ***Jesus' Choice of the Kind of Messiah***

Included Sundays for Lent (6 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(15) March 5, 2017	First Sunday in Lent	<b>Choosing our Destiny</b>	Jeremiah 1:4-10 Matthew 16:21-23	Jesus chose to obey God's will and it became his destiny. When we make a choice to follow Jesus, it becomes our destiny.

(16) March 12, 2017	Second Sunday in Lent	<b>Servant Messiah</b>	Isaiah 53:4-6 Mark 10:42-45	As a servant messiah, Jesus served the suffering ones. As a result, he suffered with them. When we serve the suffering ones, we also suffer with them.
(17) March 19, 2017	Third Sunday in Lent	<b>Loyalty to God</b>	Ruth 1:16-17 Luke 7:1-10	The love for God is the basis of our unwavering loyalty to God.
(18) March 26, 2017	Fourth Sunday in Lent	<b>Peace-building</b>	Jeremiah 1:9-10 Matthew 10:34	Building peace, as a messianic mission, requires forcible removal of obstacles to peace— inequitable distribution of resources, abusive relationships, and injustice.
(19) April 2, 2017	Fifth Sunday in Lent	<b>Marks of the True Messiah</b>	Isaiah 42:1-7 Matthew 11:2-6	The true messiah is known through his healing, liberating, and restoring deeds.
(20) April 9, 2017	Sixth Sunday in Lent/Palm Sunday	<b>Jesus Encountering the Powers</b>	Zechariah 9:9-10 John 12:12-19	Jesus enters Jerusalem to challenge the powers-that-be that cause human misery.

Included Sundays for Eastertide (7 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(21) April 16, 2017	Resurrection Sunday	<b>Resurrection of the Righteous</b>	Daniel 12:1-3 John 11:25-27 Romans 6:5	Those who remain faithful to the end will not perish but have eternal life.
(22) April 23, 2017	First Sunday after Resurrection	<b>Suppressing the Truth of the Resurrection</b>	Jeremiah 28:15-17 Matthew 28:11-15	The response of the powers-that-be to the resurrection was to cover up the truth with a lie and criminalize those who believe.
(23) April 30, 2017	Second Sunday after Resurrection	<b>Moment of Human Frailties</b>	2 Samuel 21:10 Mark 16:1-8	After Jesus died, the disciples experienced a lacuna moment of mourning, confusion, fear, depression, and disbelief. This experience is not sin but needs to be accepted and brought to the Lord.
(24) May 7, 2017	Third Sunday after Resurrection	<b>Appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene</b>	2 Kings 7:7-20 Mark 16:9-11	The testimony of those who speak the truth are often discredited on account of their status in society.
(25) May 14, 2017	Fourth Sunday after Resurrection	<b>Failure to Recognize the Appearance of Jesus</b>	Genesis 18:1-15 Mark 16:12-13	Due to their extreme grief, the disciples were not able

				to apprehend the risen Lord. But Jesus overcomes our failure to discern and communes with us.
(26) May 21, 2017	Fifth Sunday after Resurrection/UC CP Sunday	<b>Celebrating the Resurrection</b>	Exodus 16:1-26 Luke 24:36-46	Jesus comes to commune with us in ordinary, basic, and common activities and struggles.
(27) May 28, 2017	Sixth Sunday after Resurrection/Ascension Sunday	<b>Anticipating the Fullness of God's Reign on Earth</b>	Daniel 12:13 Mark 16:15-20	Jesus ascends to heaven to receive God's authority to realize God's reign in its fullness.

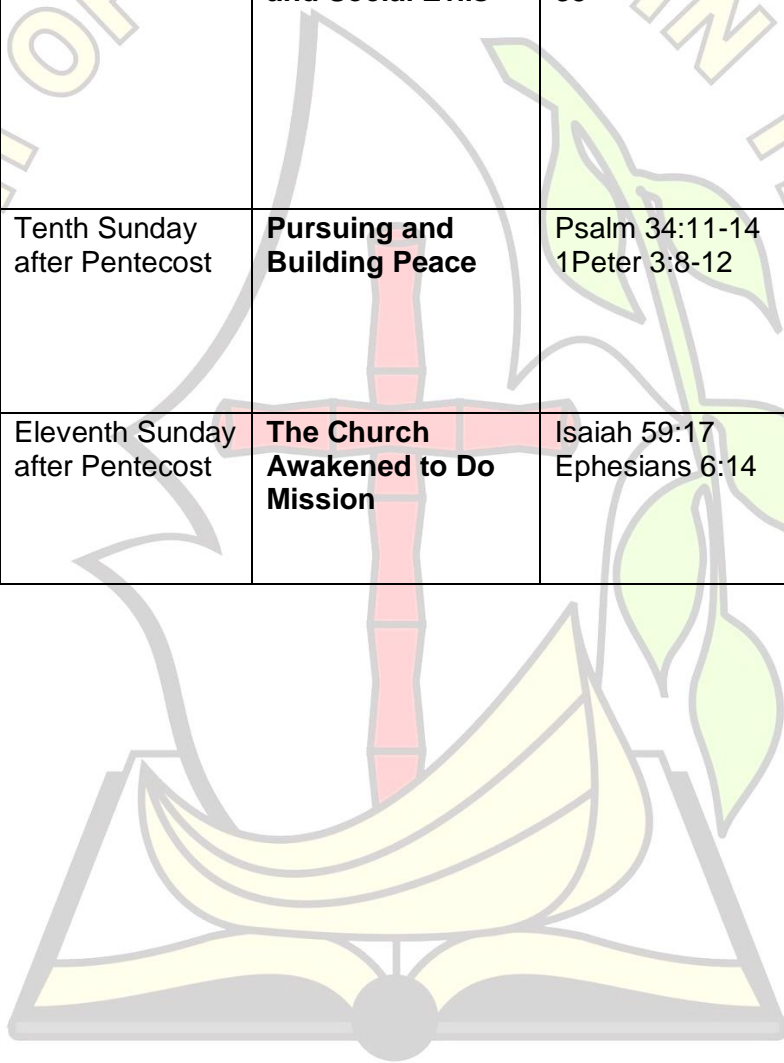
Scope 3: **Unity and Solidarity**Strand 3: ***The Church United to Respond to Human Degradation***

<b>Included Sundays for Pentecost Season (12 lessons)</b>	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Lectionary Title</b>	<b>Scriptural References</b>	<b>General Concept</b>
(28) June 4, 2017	Pentecost Sunday	<b>The Spirit Breaking through Cultural Captivity</b>	Joel 2:28-29 Acts 2:1-12	The Spirit enables the Gospel to be communicated in the languages and cultures of the people.
(29) June 11, 2017	First Sunday after Pentecost/Trinity Sunday	<b>The Holy Trinity in the Faith of the Church</b>	Genesis 1:26-27 Jude vv. 19:21	God is a community of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the source and basis of the

				church as community.
(30) June 18, 2017	Second Sunday after Pentecost	<b>The Holy Spirit Sustaining the Church</b>	Jeremiah 7:1-11 Matthew 23:13-28	The Holy Spirit bids the church to unite with the people to confront the oppressive powers.
(31) June 25, 2017	Third Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Defending the Powerless</b>	Psalms 82:3-4; 146:5-9 Proverbs 31:8-9 James 1:27	The Holy Spirit sustains the church in its ministry of protecting the oppressed and the helpless and upholding their rights.
(32) July 2, 2017	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Breaking Down Walls that Divide</b>	Isaiah 56:3-8 Amos 9:7 Luke 14:12-14	The church, by nature, is inclusive. It embraces differences and does not harbor animosities.
(33) July 9, 2017	Fifth Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Confronting Human Greed</b>	Deuteronomy 5:21 Acts 2:44-47; 4:33-35	The church confronts the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.
(34) July 16, 2017	Sixth Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Casting Out Demonic Powers</b>	Psalms 103:2-5 Mark 1:23-27; 7:24-30	The church's ministry of healing requires the driving out of demonic powers that hold people in their sway.
(35) July 23, 2017	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Being Present</b>	Deuteronomy 31:8 Psalm 40:1-3 Revelation 21:3-4	The church embraces the ministry of presence to embody God who is Immanuel.



(36) July 30, 2017	Eighth Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Nurturing Hope</b>	Job 5:15-16 Psalm 34:17-20 Matthew 11:28-30	The church journeys with people in the darkness of despair, reviving the hope and keeping it alive.
(37) August 6, 2017	Ninth Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Reaching Out to Victims of Abuse and Social Evils</b>	Isaiah 25:4 Matthew 18:21-35	The church is a community that provides comfort, assistance, shelter, and intervention to victims in their needs.
(38) August 13, 2017	Tenth Sunday after Pentecost	<b>Pursuing and Building Peace</b>	Psalm 34:11-14 1Peter 3:8-12	The church plants peace in a world rocked by conflict, violence, and wars.
(39) August 20, 2017	Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost	<b>The Church Awakened to Do Mission</b>	Isaiah 59:17 Ephesians 6:14	An awakened church girds up and equips itself for mission.



Scope 4: **Fruitful Lifeworks**Strand 4: ***The Church Manifesting the Marks of a Christ-like Life***

<b>Included Sundays for Kingdomtide Season</b> (14 lessons)	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Lectionary Title</b>	<b>Scriptural References</b>	<b>General Concept</b>
(40) August 27, 2017	First Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Mission Sunday	<b>Leaving Everything to Follow Christ</b>	Isaiah 6:1-8 Luke 5:1-11	Obedience to Jesus means letting go of those cares that keep us from following him.
(41) September 3, 2017	Second Sunday in Kingdomtide/ CEN Sunday	<b>Mission to the Periphery</b>	1 Samuel 18:1-5 Philippians 2:5-8 2 Corinthians 8:9	Removing our self from the center of our life so that we can put others in its place.
(42) September 10, 2017	Third Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Children' Sunday	<b>Humility-Powered Mission</b>	Proverbs 15:33, 11:2 Luke 18:9-14	Behind genuine mission is a humble heart that seeks the well-being of others.
(43) September 17, 2017	Fourth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Youth Sunday	<b>Accountability in the Kingdom</b>	2 Samuel 12:1-13 Luke 15:11-24	Being created in the image of God, we are responsible and accountable to each other.
(44) September 24, 2017	Fifth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Fellowship of the Least Coin Sunday	<b>The Kingdom as a Forgiving Community</b>	Genesis 45:1-5 Acts 7:59-60	Being forgiving is a quality of those who belong to the Kingdom of God.
(45) October 1, 2017	Sixth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Worldwide Communion Sunday/ CYAP Sunday	<b>Towards a Reconciled Community</b>	Genesis 45:9-15 Philemon 1:10-20	True reconciliation moves relationships to a higher plane.
(46) October 8, 2017	Seventh Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Peace Sunday	<b>Living the Faith</b>	Esther 4:13-16 James 1:27	Forgiven and reconciled, we

				are freed to do good.
(47) October 15, 2017	Eighth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ UCM Sunday	<b>Being Accepted in the Kingdom of God</b>	Hosea 1: 1-3, 3:1 John 4:7-15	The Christian community is accepting of others unmindful of any advantage.
(48) October 22, 2017	Ninth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Solidarity with Indigenous People Sunday	<b>Reverence for Life</b>	Exodus 2:1-10 Luke 7:1-10	Life is respected beyond social class, ethnicity, and religion.
(49) October 29, 2017	Tenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Reformation Sunday	<b>Discerning God's Ways through Jesus</b>	Job 42:1-6 John 14:5-11	To know Jesus is to know God. The gospel makes faith simple to everyone.
November 5, 2017 (50)	Eleventh Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Church Workers Sunday	<b>Prayerful Life</b>	Daniel 6:6-23 Mark 14:32-38	Communing with God through prayers encompasses all of life.
(51) November 12, 2017	Twelfth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Theological Education Sunday	<b>Audacious Compassion</b>	1 Kings 17:8-16 Luke 10:25-37	Those who have less in life or regarded low are the most compassionate.
(52) November 19, 2017	Thirteenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Migrant Workers Sunday	<b>Learning from the Faith and Witness of Migrants</b>	Psalms 137:1-6 1 Peter 1:1 James 1:1-4	Being steadfast in the faith makes us complete and whole.
(53) November 26, 2017	Fourteenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Stewardship Sunday	<b>Service Motivated by Love</b>	Judges 5:6-13 Mark 2:1-12	Stewardship is manifested through the collective response of the faith community.

Quadrennial Theme: **SPIRITUALITY FOR THESE CRITICAL TIMES**

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost  
**Confronting Human Greed**

*Old Testament: Deuteronomy 5:21* (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup>Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife. Neither shall you desire your neighbor's house, or field, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

*New Testament: Acts 2:44-47; 4:33-35* (NRSV)

<sup>44</sup>All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup>they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup>Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

<sup>33</sup>With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. <sup>34</sup>There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold.

<sup>35</sup>They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

**General Concept: The church confronts the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.**

*Key Concepts in the Different Age Levels in Sunday School*

N/K/YE: The Holy Spirit enables the church to share God's blessings.

ME/OE: The Holy Spirit enables the church to experience the joy of Christian fellowship.

Y: The Holy Spirit enables the church to confront the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.

A: The Holy Spirit enables the church to confront the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.

*Exegesis of the Biblical References*

Deuteronomy 5:21. This commandment addresses the sin of greed. It shows that key in avoiding greed is taking away the desire and covetousness for anything not one's own. Not craving for more and more is important in not falling into the trap of greed.

Acts 2:44-47. What jumps out from this text is verse 45 where it says that the believers sold all their possessions and distributed the proceeds to all those in need. It is clear from this verse that they shared what they had and they were able to sell all their possessions and became one community not only in terms of faith and religious belief but even economically as well. This would only happen when no hint of selfishness is present and greed is obviously absent.

Acts 4:33-35. Again this verse highlights the sharing that happened in the early church. Not only did they share their belongings, they also determined who needed help most and giving was based on this determination. By "laying it on the apostles' feet", the community was more than willing to listen to Jesus' teachings. Despite selling all their belongings, there was no needy person among them. This shows that when selfishness and greed is absent, it is possible that everyone's needs are met.

Confronting human greed is a very important topic for the church. As the body of Christ as seen by the early Christians, when greed is absent, no one would be left behind and will suffer because of economic deprivation. It is the reason why greed has been outlawed based on the 10th Commandment. As a faith community who believes in the benevolence and providence of God, we minister not only to the needy but challenge those who are imprisoned by greed as well.



## Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

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

1. describe how the early Christians devoted themselves to the risen Lord and experience the joy of Christian fellowship;
2. explain how the church spreads God's blessings through fellowship and service to others; and
3. use one's gift in spreading the Good News to others.

### II. Concept: The Holy Spirit enables the church to share God's blessings.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (NRSV), offering plate, drawing paper, markers, crayons

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Loving God, we give our thanks for being with us through your Spirit. Help us to see and feel your love for us as we learn our lesson today. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Come, Holy Spirit"  
*Come, Holy Spirit, I need You, come, Holy Spirit, I pray;  
 Come with Your strength and Your power, come in Your own special way.  
 Come, Holy Spirit, I need You, come, Holy Spirit, I pray;  
 Come with Your strength and Your power, come in Your own special way.*

#### B. Getting Ready

Let the children recall the previous lesson on welcoming new classmates and friends. Let them share how they made friends with classmates who are different from them.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Ask the children some activities that they can do together with their classmates and friends. (Reading together, eating together, playing together, singing together, praying together, etc.)
2. Tell the story.

#### Serving God Together

(Based on Acts 2:44-47)

After Jesus went up to heaven, the Holy Spirit came down. The disciples spoke about Jesus Christ and many people believed in Jesus Christ. The new believers repented and were baptized.

These early Christians did all things in common.

First, they sold their possessions and goods.

Second, they distributed the money to all who were needy.

Third, they spent their time together in the temple. They prayed together, broke bread together, and praised God together.

Then, the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Through the help of the Holy Spirit, all these people built the early church. Then the members shared God's blessings to many people.

#### D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

Discuss the story. Tell the children to use their emoticons to express how they felt as they answer the questions about the story.

1. What happened after Jesus went up to heaven? (The Holy Spirit came and the disciples spoke about Jesus Christ.) Tell the children to show the emoticon that tells about their feelings.
2. What did the disciples do? (The disciples spoke about Jesus Christ.) Tell the children to show the emoticon that tells about their feelings.
3. Who believed what the disciple said? (The listeners) What did they do? (They repented and were baptized.) Tell the children to show the emoticon that tells about their feelings.
4. What happened to the new Christians? (List the things they did together.) Tell the children to show the emoticon that tells about their feelings.
5. How did the Holy Spirit use the church to serve the people? (The early church was used to share God's blessings to many people.) Tell the children to show the emoticon that tells about their feelings.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: "How did the Holy Spirit help the early church? (The Holy Spirit enables the church to share God's blessings.)"

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. **N/K/YE:** Ask the pupils what they notice about trees that they see on the way. (Trees are tall. Leaves fall from trees. Trees have big leaves. Trees are dry. Trees give shade. etc.)
2. **YE:** Give each child drawing paper, marker, and crayons. Have them recall a tree and let them give the details that they saw—leaves that fall, fruits that are picked, and flowers that are appreciated.
3. **N/K/YE:** Tell the class that the church is similar to the tree that gives up some of its parts to others. The members of the church share the blessings they received from God to others especially to the poor.
4. Let the class discuss the memory verse: "Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people." (Acts 2:46-47a) Emphasize the manner by which they served God—doing things together with love.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Call on some pupils to recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "The More We Get Together"
5. Closing Prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for opening our eyes in serving you by doing things together. Through your Spirit, may we always remember that we do these things in the church because that is pleasing to you. Please help us also to love and appreciate your church. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

## Middle and Older Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

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

1. explain how the early Christians devoted themselves to the risen Lord;
2. describe how the Holy Spirit enables the church to teach the joy of fellowship; and
3. demonstrate how to help the church in strengthening Christian fellowship in and out of the church.

### II. Concept: The Holy Spirit enables the church to experience the joy of Christian fellowship.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (NRSV), offering plate, song chart, verse chart, crayons, white cartolina

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Smile and greet the children as they come. Check the attendance.
2. Opening prayer: "Merciful God who indwells the Church through the Spirit of Christ, continue to inspire us to study your word and grow in it. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."
3. Opening song: "O Holy Spirit" (HFJ # 182) first and second stanzas

#### B. Getting Ready

Discuss the meaning of fellowship.

1. In the dictionary, fellowship is defined as a community of interest, activity, feeling, or experience.
2. The word fellowship is the translation of the Greek word, "*koinonia*" whose root word, "*koinos*," a prefix in Greek. When this prefix is added to living, it could mean "living in community together" and with the word fellowship, it could mean "holding on to something in common."

#### C. Learning Time

1. Ask the class about the things that can be done together at home, in church, or in school.
2. Tell the class to read in unison from their own Bibles the verses in Acts 2:44-47 and Acts 4:33-35.

#### D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. Ask all the boys to read again in Acts 2:45-47a what the early Christians did together. (sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need; spent much time together in the temple; broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts; and praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.)
  - a. How can you describe the early Christians? (They did the will of the Lord. They were not selfish. They gladly helped those who are in need. They did things together—praising God, eating bread, praying, and talking about the Lord Jesus.)
  - b. Read. Acts 2:47b. What is the result of their fellowship? (The Lord added to their number those who were being saved.)
2. Ask the girls to read again in Acts 4:33-35 what the early Christians did together. (The apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many



as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.)

- a. How were the early believers convinced in believing in Jesus Christ? (The disciples described the love of God when he sent his son Jesus to die on the cross for their sins and his victory over death by resurrecting from the dead.)
  - b. Because of this belief, how did the early Christians respond? (They shared their wealth to the poor and needy.)
5. Ask for the common things done by the early Christians in both references. (The early Christians did good things together. They were generous.) What is the result of all that happened? (The early church was born. They experienced the fellowship of living together and holding on to something common—their love for Jesus Christ. They worked a a church and became an avenue to share God's blessings.)
  6. Ask the class if they have experienced in their own life any of the things experienced by the early Christians? (Expect varied answers.)

#### *E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: Who helped the early Christians to become instruments of God in making the people experience the joy of Christian fellowship? (The Holy Spirit)

#### *F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Discuss the memory verse: "Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people." (Acts 2:46-47a)
2. Let the class express their agreement or disagreement on the following statement: "Fellowship Is God's way of accomplishing His plan of glorifying Christ." Call on selected pupils to share their thoughts orally.
3. **ME:** Tell the class to express their answer through paper tearing.
4. **OE:** Ask the class to express their answer through finger painting.

#### *G. Closing Worship*

1. Have the children recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "O Holy Spirit" (HFJ # 182) third and fourth stanzas
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for opening our eyes in serving you by doing things together. Through your Spirit, may we always remember that we do these things in the church because that is pleasing to you. Please help us also to love and appreciate your church. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

## Youth Level

## I. Objectives

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

1. define the meaning of the words fellowship, greed, and covet
2. explain how the early Christians devoted themselves to the risen Lord through fellowship
3. describe how the Holy Spirit enables the church members to experience the joy of Christian fellowship as experienced by the early Christians and that it has a positive impact on human relationships;
4. explain how the Holy Spirit enables the church to confront the issue of human greed with coveting as its source and that devotion to God and his word can protect us from human greed; and
5. list ways by which one can be involved in the ministry of promoting Christian fellowship.

II. **Concept:** The Holy Spirit enables the church to confront the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (NRSV), worksheets

## III. Learning Experiences

A. *Opening Worship*

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Merciful God who indwells the Church through the Spirit of Christ, continue to inspire us to study your word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "O Holy Spirit" (HFJ # 182) first and second stanzas

B. *Getting Ready*

1. Discuss the meaning of the following words:
  - a. In the dictionary, fellowship is defined as a community of interest, activity, feeling, or experience. The word fellowship is the translation of the Greek word, "koinonia" whose root word, "koinos," a prefix in Greek. When this prefix is added to living, it could mean "living in community together" and with the word fellowship, it could mean "holding on to something in common."
  - b. The dictionary defines greed as a selfish and excessive desire for more of food, money, or possessions over and above one's needs and is motivated by ambition.
  - c. The word covet is described as a desire to get something that belongs to another.
2. Encourage the class to share their experience related to the words that have been defined.

C. *Learning Time*

1. Divide the class into three groups and assign them a particular reference and what to do with each set of verses.
  - a. Group 1: Read Acts 2:44-47 and answer the following questions:
    - 1) What happened to the early Christians after hearing the disciples shared about the mission of Jesus Christ? (They believed in Jesus Christ, repented, and baptized, became Christians and started the early church.)
    - 2) What kind of fellowship did the early Christians do to be able to please God? (They did things in common to express their love and gratitude to God for giving his son Jesus.)
    - 3) What did the early Christians show when they sold their possessions and shared the proceeds to those who are poor and needy? (Emphasize the true sense of generosity and kindness among the early Christians and the absence of greed and coveting among them.)

- 4) What is the result of this Christian fellowship? (Many believed in Jesus Christ and were saved.)
  - b. Group 2: Read Acts 4:35-37 and answer these questions.
    - 1) What happened to the early Christians after the disciples shared their testimony about the resurrection of Jesus Christ? (They believed in Jesus Christ, repented, and baptized, became Christians and started the early church.)
    - 2) How did the early Christians demonstrate their kindness and generosity in obedience to God? (They sold their lands and houses and brought the proceeds to the apostles' feet, who, in turn, distributed the proceeds to the needy so that there was no needy person among them.)
    - 3) What could happen when people are ready to share God's blessings? (They are guided by God's word that can protect them from greed and coveting the possessions that belong to others.)
    - 4) What is the result of this Christian fellowship? (Great grace was upon all of them.)
  - c. Group 3: Read Deuteronomy 5:21 and answer these questions.
    - 1) What things that belong to others that we cannot desire? (Neighbor's wife, house, land, slaves, animals)
    - 2) Why can't we covet? (It is a violation of the tenth commandment.)
    - 3) What could happen if we continue to desire for things that belong to others? (We will develop greed. We will break human relationships.)
    - 4) What can we do to avoid greed? (Our devotion to God and his word, putting value to relationships, being content with what we have, being generous without asking for anything in return)
    - 4) Why do you think Christian fellowship is important? ("Fellowship Is God's way of accomplishing His plan of glorifying Christ.")
- D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time**
1. Ask each group to share their thoughts and insights from the study of the biblical references?
  2. Tell each group to act out what they have found out in their study.
- E. Discovering the Biblical Truth**
- Ask: Who enables the church to teach the joy of Christian fellowship? (The Holy Spirit enables the church to teach the joy of Christian fellowship in order to confront the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.)
- F. Applying the Biblical Truth**
1. Let each group choose a memory verse from their assigned biblical reference.
  2. Ask the youth to sponsor a fellowship in the church and emphasize its significance in confronting human greed. Have them submit a plan of action.
- G. Closing Worship**
1. Offering
  2. Closing song: "O Holy Spirit" (HFJ # 182) third and fourth stanzas
  3. Closing prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for opening our eyes in serving you by doing things together. Through your Spirit, may we always remember that we do these things in the church because that is pleasing to you. Please help us also to love and appreciate your church. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

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

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

1. define the meaning of the words fellowship, greed, and covet
2. explain how the early Christians devoted themselves to the risen Lord through fellowship
3. describe how the Holy Spirit enables the church members to experience the joy of Christian fellowship as experienced by the early Christians and that it has a positive impact on human relationships;
4. explain how the Holy Spirit enables the church to confront the issue of human greed with coveting as its source and that devotion to God and his word can protect us from human greed; and
5. list ways by which one can be involved in the ministry of promoting Christian fellowship.

- II. Concept:** The Holy Spirit enables the church to confront the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (NRSV), worksheets

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

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Merciful God who indwells the Church through the Spirit of Christ, continue to inspire us to study your word and grow in it. This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."
3. Opening song: "O Holy Spirit" (HFJ # 182) first and second stanzas

**B. Getting Ready**

1. Discuss the meaning of the following words:
  - a. In the dictionary, fellowship is defined as a community of interest, activity, feeling, or experience. The word fellowship is the translation of the Greek word, "koinonia" whose root word, "koinos," a prefix in Greek. When this prefix is added to living, it could mean "living in community together" and with the word fellowship, it could mean "holding on to something in common."
  - b. The dictionary defines greed as a selfish and excessive desire for more of food, money, or possessions over and above one's needs and is motivated by ambition.
  - c. The word covet is described as a desire to get something that belongs to another.
2. Encourage the class to share their experience related to the words that have been defined.

**C. Learning Time**

1. Tell the class to read the biblical references in unison.
2. Tell the students to retell the story in each of the three references and express their thoughts on the main point of the story and what it is about and the lessons learned on obedience, generosity, faithfulness, stewardship, and the joy of Christian fellowship.

**D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time**

Discuss the significance of Christian fellowship in the life and works of the church.

Encourage the class to express what they think about the following statements:

1. The church has naturally been established by the fellowship of the early believers.

2. Christian fellowship is a means of God to accomplish the purpose of God for the church.
3. Christian fellowship is an avenue to share God's blessings and to receive God's blessings from others.
4. Christian fellowship is an instrument to strengthen one's faith and that of others.
5. Christian fellowship is a natural activity for praying and making petitions, studying God's word, and serving others.
6. Christian fellowship will open our eyes to true generosity and healthy relationships that will protect us from human greed.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: "Who helps the church in making her members experience the joy of Christian fellowship? How can this fellowship help the church? (The Holy Spirit enables the church to make her members experience fellowship in order for it to confront the issue of human greed which is the root of many evils and broken relationships.)"

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Tell the class to get involved in the shepherding and fellowship ministry of the church.
2. Offer your services in preparing Bible study related to the development of healthy relationships between and among church members.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "O Holy Spirit" (HFJ # 182) third and fourth stanzas
3. Closing prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for opening our eyes in serving you by doing things together. Through your Spirit, may we always remember that we do these things in the church because that is pleasing to you. Please help us also to love and appreciate your church. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

