

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 TimesYear 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	Liberating Cultural Breakthroughs	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	Seeds of New Humanity	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	Challenging Oppressive State Powers	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	Jesus as God's Love Incarnate	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	The Birth of Jesus	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	Defending Children, Symbols of a New Beginning	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.
Included Sundays for Epiphany Season (8 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(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	The Inclusive Healing Ministry of the Church	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	Healing of Animosities	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	Healing as a Message of Salvation	2 Kings 4:8-37 Luke 8:41-56	Salvation comes whenever healing happens.
(11) February 5, 2017	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	Healing of Social Divides	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	Healing of Broken Relationships	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	Healing from Demon Possession	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	Healing towards Transformation	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	Choosing our Destiny	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	Servant Messiah	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	Loyalty to God	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	Peace-building	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	Marks of the True Messiah	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	Jesus Encountering the Powers	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	Resurrection of the Righteous	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	Suppressing the Truth of the Resurrection	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	Moment of Human Frailties	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	Appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene	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	Failure to Recognize the Appearance of Jesus	Genesis 18:1-15 Mark 16:12-13	Due to their extreme grief, the disciples were not able

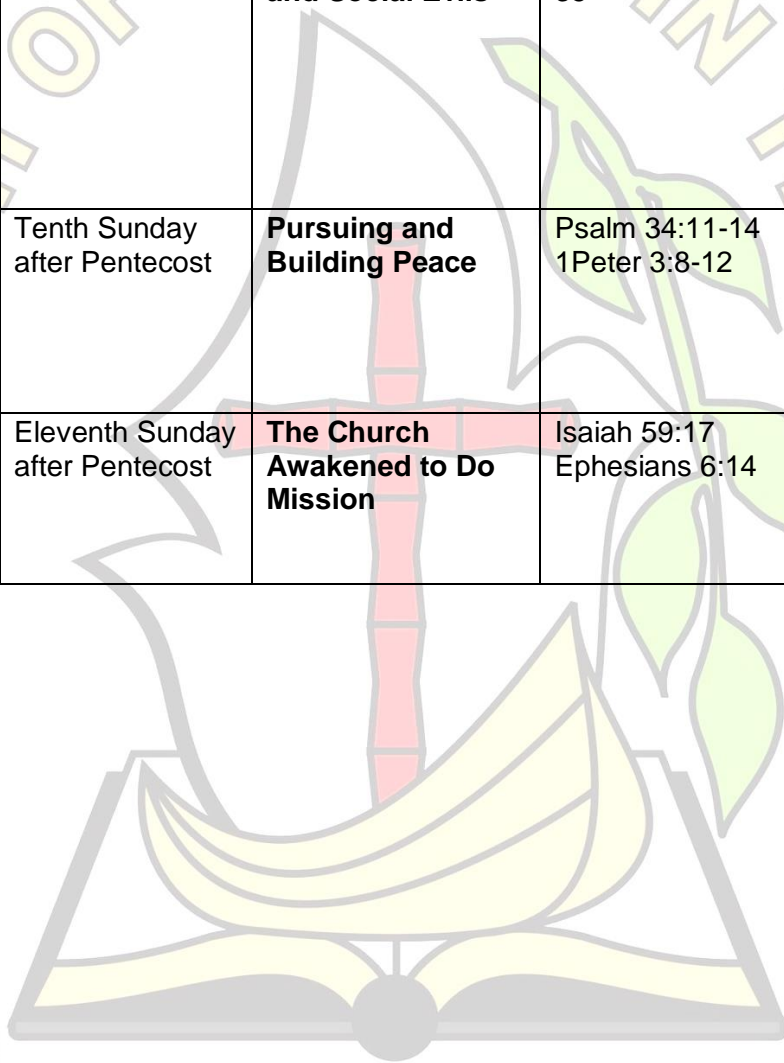
				to apprehend the risen Lord. But Jesus overcomes our failure to discern and communes with us.
(26) May 21, 2017	Fifth Sunday after Resurrection/UC CP Sunday	Celebrating the Resurrection	Exodus 16:1-26 Luke 24:36-46	Jesus comes to commune with us in ordinary, basic, and common activities and struggles.
(27) May 28, 2017	Sixth Sunday after Resurrection/Ascension Sunday	Anticipating the Fullness of God's Reign on Earth	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***

Included Sundays for Pentecost Season (12 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(28) June 4, 2017	Pentecost Sunday	The Spirit Breaking through Cultural Captivity	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	The Holy Trinity in the Faith of the Church	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	The Holy Spirit Sustaining the Church	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	Defending the Powerless	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	Breaking Down Walls that Divide	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	Confronting Human Greed	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	Casting Out Demonic Powers	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	Being Present	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	Nurturing Hope	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	Reaching Out to Victims of Abuse and Social Evils	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	Pursuing and Building Peace	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	The Church Awakened to Do Mission	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***

Included Sundays for Kingdomtide Season (14 lessons)	Celebration	Lectionary Title	Scriptural References	General Concept
(40) August 27, 2017	First Sunday in Kingdomtide/ Mission Sunday	Leaving Everything to Follow Christ	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	Mission to the Periphery	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	Humility-Powered Mission	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	Accountability in the Kingdom	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	The Kingdom as a Forgiving Community	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	Towards a Reconciled Community	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	Living the Faith	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	Being Accepted in the Kingdom of God	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	Reverence for Life	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	Discerning God's Ways through Jesus	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	Prayerful Life	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	Audacious Compassion	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	Learning from the Faith and Witness of Migrants	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	Service Motivated by Love	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**

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Casting out Demonic Powers

Old Testament: Psalm 103:2-5 (NRSV)

²Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits- ³who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, ⁴who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, ⁵who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

New Testament: Mark 1:23-27; 7:24-30 (NRSV)

²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, throwing him into convulsions and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching-with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."

²⁴From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syro-Phoenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁸But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." ²⁹Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go-the demon has left your daughter." ³⁰So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

General Concept: The church's ministry of healing requires the driving out of demonic powers that hold people in their sway.

Key Concepts in the Different Age Levels in Sunday School

N/K/YE: The Holy Spirit helps children to bring their fears and doubts to Jesus in prayer.

ME/OE: The Holy Spirit helps the church to strengthen the faith of her members that is needed in the healing process.

Y: The Holy Spirit helps in the church's ministry of healing by driving out demonic powers that hold people in their sway.

A: The Holy Spirit helps in the church's ministry of healing by driving out demonic powers that hold people in their sway.

Exegesis of the Biblical References

Psalm 103:2-5 is part of a hymn that is sung by the Jews in the Day of Atonement and each morning by Greek Christians in their morning praise, thanking God for a return to health. These particular verses speak of important ingredients of a blessing: moral strength and physical health. It is a post-exilic writing, thus speaks not only of personal restoration but of communal restoration as well. Healing involves the whole community, speaking of social justice, and the entire cosmos, speaking of the earth's ecological balance.

The texts in Mark speak about the inauguration of the public ministry of Jesus, of which an important component is healing whether of an individual or a group. Exorcising of mental demons that hound individuals or physical demons that destroy communities was a vital part of Jesus' ministry. It is in the Gospel of Mark where stories of exorcism are told in a vivid manner. These texts introduce Jesus as the powerful Son of God who confronts the power of evil and brings restoration. Jesus then becomes the real and physical manifestation of God's healing, restoration and salvation.

The proper response to this, aside from gratitude and praise, is faith that is alive and courageous, as exemplified by the Syro-Phoenician woman. It is a faith that compels the believer to follow Jesus and share in His ministry. As Christians and as members of the Body of Christ that is the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, this is what we must do. By God's empowerment through the Holy Spirit, we can do this, despite all the obstacles.

Companion Guide for the Teachers and Other Users



Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

I. Objectives

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

1. share experiences when one is sick or when a loved one gets sick;
2. explain how faith can help in the healing process;
3. describe how Jesus uses his authority in healing; and
4. get involved in the healing ministry of the church at home and in school.

II. Concept: The Holy Spirit helps children to bring their fears and doubts to Jesus in prayer.

Materials: The Holy Bible (NRSV), offering plate

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Loving God, we thank you for today when we will learn more about your healing power. May the Holy Spirit guide us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Amazing Grace" (HFJ # 208) first stanza

B. Getting Ready

Ask the children if they have ever been sick or if a member of the family got sick. Let them share the things their family did to them or what they did to the sick member of the family until they got well.

C. Learning Time

1. Present the question: Who should you listen to about...? Let the children choose any one of the two options. If they choose the first one, let them stand. If they choose the second, let them wave their hands. After the activity, ask the children for the reasons for their choice. (They have the authority.)
 - a. homework: parents or neighbor
 - b. bedtime: parents or neighbor
 - c. fire safety: fireman or veterinarian
 - d. crossing the street: traffic officer or librarian
 - e. staying healthy: doctor or grocery store cashier
 - f. obeying the law basketball player or police officer
 - g. the Bible: pastor or newscaster
2. Tell the story.

Driving an Unclean Spirit (Based on Mark 1:23-27)

Jesus is speaking in the synagogue.

Suddenly, a man with an unclean spirit cries out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God."

Jesus rebukes him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"

Then the unclean spirit comes out of the man.

All those who are there are all amazed, and they ask one another, "What is this?"

A new teaching-with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."

D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

Discuss the story.

1. Who was speaking in the synagogue? (Jesus)

2. Who interrupted Jesus? (The man with an unclean spirit)
3. What did Jesus do? (Jesus asked the unclean spirit to get out of the man.)
4. What happened? (The unclean spirit left the man's body.)
5. Why do you think the unclean spirit obeyed Jesus? (Jesus had the authority or power to cast out unclean spirits.)
6. What happened to the man when the unclean spirit left his body? (The man was healed.)
7. Say: We feel sick when we are afraid and when we are in doubt. Ask: When we feel that way, who can we go to to help us get well? (Jesus) How can our faith in God help us? (We believe that God can heal us.)
8. How can we get help from God? (Through praying, studying God's word in the Bible), Why can we trust Jesus? (Jesus has the authority to heal diseases.)
9. Who else do we listen to in order to get well? (Parents and teachers and other persons of authority)

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: "Who can help us get healed from our fears and doubts? (Jesus) Who can help children bring their fears and doubts to Jesus in prayer? (The Holy Spirit helps children to bring their fears and doubts to Jesus in prayer.)"

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Present the memory verse: "But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit... came out of him." (Mark 1:25-26)
2. **N/K:** Provide each child a get-well card. Let them write the name of the sick person they know. Have them decorate the card and instruct them to give the card.
3. **YE:** Ask the children to write a prayer for a sick person at home or in school. Provide each child the needed materials. Have them complete this letter. They may want to write more than one get-well-soon letter. Ask the children to decorate the letter before giving it to the sick person.

Dear _____ ,

I know you are sick with _____. You have not been with us for _____ days. We miss you.

This is my prayer for you. I pray that God will heal you so that you will be strong and healthy. Get well soon.

Your friend,

G. Closing Worship

1. Call on some children and let them recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Amazing Grace" (HFJ # 208) second stanza
5. Closing Prayer: "Dear God, thank you for making us know that you are the great healer and that we can come to you in prayer when we are afraid and in doubt. Please be with us always through your Spirit. 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. define authority, healing, and demonic powers;
2. describe how Jesus used his authority to heal and to cast out demons;
3. explain how the Holy Spirit helps the church in its ministry of healing; and
4. gets involved in the ministry of healing of the church.

- II. **Concept:** The Holy Spirit helps the church to strengthen the faith of her members that is needed in the healing process.

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: "Loving God, we thank you for today when we will learn more about your healing power. May the Holy Spirit guide us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Amazing Grace" (HFJ # 208) first and second stanzas

B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare the class to play the game "Who Is Leading Whom?" Tell the class that leaders cannot be perfect all the time. Leaders are difficult to find but when they allow Jesus to be the leader in their lives, they will be led correctly to do what is right. Tell the class to form a big circle and have them sit. Ask one volunteer to step out of the room and wait to be called back. Inform the rest of the class to choose a leader. This leader will do actions that the group will follow.
2. When the volunteer returns to the room, he or she will identify the leader whom the rest of the class is following. The leader should change the action every 15 seconds and makes sure to do it when the volunteer is not looking. Examples of actions are: raining the arms alternately, touching one's ears, rubbing one's face, etc. Once the volunteer identifies the leader, the leader becomes the next volunteer to leave the room and a new leader is chosen. Changing volunteers depend upon the time allotted for the preparatory activity.
3. Ask these questions after the game: If chosen leader of the group, how would you feel when the rest of the class follows you? If chosen a volunteer, how would you feel when you are able to identify the leader? If you are part of the followers, how would you feel if the leader does desirable things? What would you do if the leader does questionable things? Given any of the roles, how would you feel if you know the leader is Jesus? (Emphasize our trust in Jesus' leadership.)

C. Learning Time

1. Discuss the following words and their meanings.
 - a. *Authority*. It is defined as the "power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience." Some synonyms include: jurisdiction; command; and control. It also represents a person or an organization that has power or control in a particular field.
 - b. *Healing*. It is the process of making someone sound or healthy again.
 - c. *Demon*. It is an "evil spirit, especially one thought to possess a person or act as a tormentor in hell." Its synonyms include devil and fiend. Its antonym is an angel. It is also something that causes a person or a group a lot of suffering.
2. Tell the class to read each of the biblical references in unison. Let the class give their thoughts on the verses before presenting a summary of each reference.
 - a. *Psalm 103:2-5*. This psalm is a song the praises to God for his greatness and goodness. The writer always says, "Praise the Lord."

- b. *Mark 1:23-27; 24-30.* These verses show how Jesus used his authority to heal a demon-possessed man in the synagogue and the daughter of a Syro-Phoenician woman.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. How do the verses 2-5 in Psalm 103 show the greatness and goodness of God? (God remembers to provide blessings. God forgives all our sins. God heals our diseases. God redeems us from our forsaken lives. God shows his steadfast love and mercy. God renews our strength.)
2. How can we express our gratitude to him? (Our souls praise him. Our souls express our thanksgiving and gratitude for his goodness.)
3. What does Jesus possess when we read the verses in Mark? (Jesus possesses the authority from God to heal diseases.)
4. What other things does Jesus have authority to do? (Jesus has the authority from God to provide blessings, forgive sins, redeem our lives, show love and mercy, and renew our strength.)
5. How did Jesus use his authority over the demon-possessed man and the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman? (Jesus healed them both. Jesus drove the demons that had control of their bodies. He demonstrated servant authority in order to help and not an authority to lord it over.)
6. When we are sick, where can we take them for healing? (Jesus)

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: Who helps the church to strengthen the faith of her members? (The Holy Spirit helps the church to strengthen the faith of her members that is needed in the healing process.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Discuss the memory verse: "But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit, ... came out of him." (Mark 1:25-26)
2. Ask the class to acknowledge the intervention of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of education and ministry in healing of the church.
3. **ME/OE:** Let the children get involved in the teaching ministry of the church to recall any of these things to strengthen their faith. (Reading God's word before sleeping or upon waking up; attending Sunday school, praying, fellowship, meditation)
4. **ME/OE:** Have the class choose the kind of involvement in any of the activities in the healing ministry of the church (visitation, medical and dental missions, praying over the sick, doing household chores for sick people, finding financial assistance for families with a sick member)

G. Closing Worship

1. Have the children recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Amazing Grace" (HFJ # 208) third and fourth stanzas
4. Closing prayer: "Merciful God, we acknowledge your healing power and your kindness to use it to heal us. Through your Spirit, may we always be grateful for this privilege and use our spiritual gifts to reach out to others who are sick physically and spiritually. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Youth Level

I. Objectives

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

1. define authority, healing, and demonic powers;
2. describe how Jesus used his servant authority to heal and to cast out demons;
3. compare and contrast the effect of having authority;
4. explain how the Holy Spirit helps the church in its ministry of healing and ministry of strengthening of the faith; and
5. get involved in the ministry of faith strengthening and ministry of healing of the church.

II. Concept: The Holy Spirit helps in the church's ministry of healing by driving out demonic powers that hold people in their sway.

Materials: The Holy Bible (NRSV), worksheets

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Loving God, we thank you for today when we will learn more about your healing power. May the Holy Spirit guide us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Amazing Grace" (HFJ # 208) first and second stanzas

B. Getting Ready

Discuss the following words and their meanings.

1. *Authority*. It is defined as the "power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience." Some synonyms include: jurisdiction; command; and control. It also represents a person or an organization that has power or control in a particular field.
2. *Healing*. It is the process of making someone sound or healthy again.
3. *Demon*. It is an "evil spirit, especially one thought to possess a person or act as a tormentor in hell." Its synonyms include devil and fiend. Its antonym is an angel. It is also something that causes a person or a group a lot of suffering.

C. Learning Time

1. Ask the class what they think of servant leadership. Then discuss the meaning of servant authority. Encourage the class to think that having been given the authority by God to perform different tasks, Jesus used his authority to serve and not to be served. That is the example Jesus gave to us—that we use our authority at home, at work, or in school to help others. Ultimately, the class will be led to concretize servant leadership and servant authority as something one has that will be used to serve.
2. Have the male students read Psalm 103:2-5 and the female students read Mark 1:23-27; 7:24-30 a

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

Discuss the verses and help the students deepen their understanding of authority as demonstrated by Jesus.

1. Jesus has a mission to serve. What are the tasks given to him by God in the OT with full authority that had an impact on his mission? (Remembering to provide blessings; forgiving all the sins; healing the diseases; redeeming from the forsaken lives; showing his steadfast love and mercy; and renewing the strength of all his people.)
2. As children of God, how do express our gratitude for these tasks that were fulfilled by Jesus as the one sent by God? (We praise his name. We study his example. We follow his concept of servant authority. We serve others.)
3. Why do you think the demon followed Jesus? (The demon knew the power of Jesus over all creation on account of the authority given to him by the Father.)

4. What do you think was in the Syro-Phoenician woman that made Jesus heal her daughter? (Her great faith and belief in God)
5. What do you think about when the Syro-Phoenician woman said that “even the dogs eat the children’s crumbs?” (The Syro-Phoenician woman was a Gentile and the Jews considered them as only second to them in God’s sight. The Jews discriminated on the Gentiles and did not expect Jesus to heal people who are not Jews. However, when Jesus tested her faith by saying that the food should be given to the children (the Jews) and not to the dogs (Gentiles), she demonstrated her great faith by saying that even though she was a Gentile, she knew that Jesus cared for her and the other Gentiles with the same love as Jesus showed to the Jews. She was there, patiently waiting for Jesus to extend his compassion to her and her daughter.)
6. When do we demonstrate our faith in God the same way the Syro-Phoenician woman demonstrated hers?
7. When Jesus showed his authority to heal the man and the Syro-Phoenician woman, was his action a blessing or a curse? (Accept the answers of the students and explain that when we serve, we bring blessings to others because we obey God. When we serve because of our vested interests, our service is watered down and it can be a curse to the people we serve. Tell the class to refer to Proverbs 29:2 (When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan).)
8. What are some of the demons (fears and doubts) in your life that you would like Jesus to cast out? What are the demons in our society that cause majority of the people, especially the poor, so much suffering? (Expect varied answers.)

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: Who helps the church to strengthen the faith of her members to be able to serve people who are sick and dis-empowered? (The Holy Spirit helps in the church's ministry of healing by driving out demonic powers that hold people in their sway.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Ask the class to choose a verse from the biblical references that made an impact on them. Have them write this verse on their journal.
2. As the youth of the church, now is the time to volunteer in the ministry of the church. Choose from these activities that you think your spiritual gifts can be put to good use: praying, praying over the sick, fellowship, study of the Word, meditation, listening to sick people as they share their experiences, financial help, and visitation.

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing song: “Amazing Grace” (HFJ # 208) third and fourth stanzas
3. Closing prayer: “Merciful God, we acknowledge your healing power and your kindness to use it to heal us. Through your Spirit, may we always be grateful for this privilege and use our spiritual gifts to reach out to others who are sick physically and spiritually. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.”

Adult Level**I. Objectives**

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

1. define authority, healing, and demonic powers;
2. describe how Jesus used his servant authority to heal and to cast out demons;
3. compare and contrast the effect of having authority;
4. explain how the Holy Spirit helps the church in its ministry of healing and ministry of strengthening of the faith; and
5. get involved in the ministry of faith strengthening and ministry of healing of the church.

II. Concept: The Holy Spirit helps in the church's ministry of healing by driving out demonic powers that hold people in their sway.

Materials: The Holy Bible (NRSV), worksheets

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

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Loving God, we thank you for today when we will learn more about your healing power. May the Holy Spirit guide us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Amazing Grace" (HFJ # 208) first and second stanzas

B. Getting Ready

Discuss the following words and their meanings.

1. *Authority*. It is defined as the "power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience." Some synonyms include: jurisdiction; command; and control.
2. *Healing*. It is the process of making someone sound or healthy again.
3. *Demon*. It is an "evil spirit, especially one thought to possess a person or act as a tormentor in hell." Its synonyms include devil and fiend. Its antonym is an angel. It is also something that causes a person or a group a lot of suffering.

C. Learning Time

1. Ask the class what they think of servant leadership. Then discuss the meaning of servant authority. Encourage the class to think that having been given the authority by God to perform different tasks, Jesus used his authority to serve and not to be served. That is the example Jesus gave to us—that we use our authority at home, at work, or in school to help others. Ultimately, the class will be led to concretize servant leadership and servant authority as something one has that will be used to serve.
2. Have the male students read Psalm 103:2-5 and the female students read Mark 1:23-27; 7:24-30 a

D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

Discuss the verses and help the students deepen their understanding of authority as demonstrated by Jesus.

1. Express your thoughts on the following statements about Psalm 103:2-5.
 - a. This psalm is a hymn of praise to the Lord. Do we express our amazement to the greatness and goodness of God? How? Why is the "Praise the Lord!" significant?
 - b. God granted authority to the Lord to do all these benefits to his people with love and compassion—(Providing blessings; forgives all our sins; healing our diseases; redeeming us from our forsaken lives; showing his steadfast love and mercy; and renewing our strength.) How do we show our gratitude for all the deeds of our Lord?
2. When Jesus came to live with us, how did he fulfill his mission? (Jesus provided blessings. Jesus forgave our sins and died on the cross to make us righteous. Jesus healed the sick. Jesus took us out of our forsaken lives. Jesus demonstrated his love

- and mercy to all especially to the poor and weak and marginalized. Jesus renewed our strength like that of the eagle.) What is our responsibility to show gratitude for all the things Jesus did for us?
3. What did the demon do with the man in the synagogue and the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman do? (The demon left their bodies because this spirit knew the power and authority of Jesus given to him by the Father over all creation.)
 4. What do you think was in the Syro-Phoenician woman that made Jesus heal her daughter? (Her great faith and belief in God) How did the Syro-Phoenician woman react when Jesus said “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs?” What did she mean when she answered Jesus “even the dogs eat the children’s crumbs?” (The Syro-Phoenician woman was a Gentile and the Jews considered them as only second to them in God’s sight. The Jews discriminated on the Gentiles and did not expect Jesus to heal people who are not Jews. However, when Jesus tested her faith by saying that the food should be given to the children (the Jews) and not to the dogs (Gentiles), she demonstrated her great faith by saying that even though she was a Gentile, she knew that Jesus cared for her and the other Gentiles with the same love as Jesus showed to the Jews. She was there, patiently waiting for Jesus to extend his compassion to her and her daughter. Jesus was never affected by racism. Instead Jesus showed full compassion and fairness to the Gentile woman.)
 5. When Jesus showed his authority to heal the man and the Syro-Phoenician woman, was his action a blessing or a curse? (Accept the answers of the students and explain that when we serve, we bring blessings to others because we obey God. When we serve because of our vested interests, our service is watered down and it can be a curse to the people we serve. Tell the class to refer to Proverbs 29:2 (When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan.).)
 6. What are some of the demons (fears and doubts) in your life that you would like Jesus to cast out? What are the demons in our society that cause majority of the people, especially the poor, so much suffering? (Expect varied answers.)
- E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*
- Ask: Who helps the church to strengthen the faith of her members to be able to serve people who are sick? (The Holy Spirit helps in the church's ministry of healing by driving out demonic powers that hold people in their sway.)
- F. Applying the Biblical Truth*
- As the adults of the church, how can we walk with Jesus as we get involved in the ministry of the church—praying, praying over the sick, fellowship, study of the Word, meditation, listening to sick people as they share their experiences, financial help, and visitation?
- G. Closing Worship*
1. Offering
 2. Closing song: “Amazing Grace” (HFJ # 208) third and fourth stanzas
 3. Closing prayer: “Merciful God, we acknowledge your healing power and your kindness to use it to heal us. Through your Spirit, may we always be grateful for this privilege and use our spiritual gifts to reach out to others who are sick physically and spiritually. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.”