

LESSONS ON THE UCCP STATEMENT OF FAITH

A Sunday School Guide for Youth

WE BELIEVE

That the Church is the one Body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with God's ministry.

Reign of Christ

Fourteenth Sunday in Kingdomtide

November 25, 2018

Lesson 27: THE CHURCH

General Concept: The Church is the people of God, anticipating the fulfillment of God's Reign.

Biblical References: 2 Samuel 23:5; Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: 2 Samuel 23:1-7; Psalm 93; Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

Age-Level Concepts

- The church is a gathered people of God responding to God's goodness.
- We participate in the ministries of the church in response to God's goodness and love.
- The church is a manifestation of God's reign.

Learning Objectives

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

- Define what "church" is
- Express support for the different ministries of the church
- Mention ways by which the church becomes a manifestation of God's reign

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Opening Song "A United and Uniting Church" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 244)

A united and uniting church, that we may all be one,
Reformed and transforming in mission and in faith
Onward UCCP, building God's Kingdom of peace.

Come, let us all remember, a heritage of faithfulness,
Of ardent men and women, devoted to Christ's way;
Covenanting as one together, with God's Spirit sole Enabler.

Come, dreamers, visionaries, examples of true witnesses,
Leaving the trace of footprints for people to tread on,

With a burning faith and commitment, proclaiming God's message of love.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Dear Lord, we are gathered today as your people. We pray for your guidance. Help us heed your call. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Getting Ready

- Brainstorm with the learners their concept of what church is. Encourage everyone to participate and share his/her insight. Answers will vary. You may write their answers on the board.

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Read the biblical texts.
- Encourage the participants to write on their journals or notebooks words or concepts from the texts that are important to them.
- Discuss the texts using the following guide questions:
 - What do you understand about church when you read 2 Samuel 23:5?
 - What are the key words that you get from this text?
 - Emphasize that being a church is about having a covenant with God, of being God's people, especially a people who God loves and who love God.
 - Describe the early church (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35) in terms of their:
 - Service to each other and the community
 - Worship
 - Witness to the community
 - Harmony—how was it maintained?
 - What could have motivated them to be such a kind of fellowship?
 - What came out as a result of their kind of practice?
- Further discuss the passages using the Biblical Background for these texts as guide.

Lessons Learned

- Was the believers' way of serving and witnessing to the community and the way they worshipped and lived together a good example of participating in the ministries of the church?
- Do you think the churches today can practice the same? If not, what could the Church do so that it could truly manifest God's reign?

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Let the learners express their willingness to commit to the work of the Church. They may indicate what particular ministries they want to participate in or be involved with.



Closing Worship

Memory Verse: 2 Samuel 23:5a, "Is not my house like this with God? For God has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure."

Offering

Closing Song "Blessed Be the Tie that Binds" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 268)

Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
The sharing of a common life is like to that above.

Before our God we come and pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts, and our cares.

We share each other's woes, each other's burdens bear;
And often for each other flows a sympathizing tear.

When we are called to part, it gives us inward pain,
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, bless our fellowship as gathered people who have faith in You and love You. Help us fulfill Your ministries and make us truly be a manifestation of Your reign here on earth. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

First Sunday of Advent

December 2, 2018

LESSON 28: THE CHURCH IS THE ONE BODY OF CHRIST

General Concept: The Church belongs to God, redeemed by God through Christ, welcoming, affirming and accepting everyone.

Biblical References: Jeremiah 33:14-16; I Corinthians 12:12-27

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

Age-Level Concepts

- The church is the body of Christ.
- The church is composed of people coming from all walks of life.
- The church manifests God's inclusive nature in celebrating each person's uniqueness.

Learning Objectives

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

- Articulate their understanding about the Church as the body of Christ
- Affirm that members of the body of Christ come from different walks of life



- Express one's thankfulness for the inclusive nature of God manifested through the church

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens, colored construction paper, crayons and/or markers

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Opening Song "Many are the Light Beams"

Many are the light beams from the one Light; our one Light is Jesus.

Many are the light beams from the one Light; we are one in Christ.

Many are the gifts giv'n, love is all one; love's the gift of Jesus.

Many are the gifts giv'n love is all one; we are one in Christ.

Many ways to serve God, the Spirit is one; servant spirit of Jesus.

Many ways to serve God, the Spirit is one; we are one in Christ.

Many are the members, the body is one; members all of Jesus.

Many are the members, the body is one; we are one in Christ.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Merciful God, we thank you for this time that we can study your Word. Teach us how to be Your Church. In Jesus' name, the Head of the Church, we pray. Amen.

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

"We believe that the Church is the one Body of Christ..."

Getting Ready

- Present the following question; let the learners share their thoughts on it: What do we mean by "the Church as one body of Christ"?

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Have the class read the biblical references.
 - Jeremiah 33: God's Promise of Mercy
 - I Corinthians 12: Each Individual Member of the Church is Important
- Encourage the participants to write on their journals or notebooks words or concepts from the texts that are important to them.
- Share with the learners the Biblical Background for today's texts.
- Have a discussion on the faithful of Biblical times and of the Church of today.
 - How is the church of today similar to the "righteous branch" Jeremiah talks about?



- Why does Paul need to emphasize the importance of each one that comprises the Church, the body of Christ?
- Why did Paul say that as one body there should be proper coordination so that there will be proper functioning of each part?
- Why is the element of being united important in the work of the church?
- How does the functioning of the church as the body of Christ similar to the functioning of the different parts of the human body?

Lessons Learned

- Have the class briefly reflect on a portion of a poem by Annie Johnson Flint, “The World’s Bible”:
Christ has no hands but our hands to do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet to lead others in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongue to tell how He died;
He has no help but our help to lead them to His side.
- Ask: How can we as a church show our welcoming, affirming and accepting nature?

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Have the class meditate on the following:
 - Our body needs to be healthy in order to function properly. As a Church, we need to be united in order to properly function.
 - We need one another. We should accept one another. In order for the Church to be healthy, we must share in the work.
 - We need to respect one another. We must affirm one another as God’s children, considering the uniqueness of each one, making room for the body of Christ to grow and bear fruit.
 - We need to sympathize with one another. We need to welcome everybody with open arms and hearts and include everyone in the Church as part of the family.
- Have the learners make a greeting card to encourage other members of the body of Christ.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: I Corinthians 12: 12 “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.”

Offering

Closing Song “Bind Us Together, Lord”

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together with cords that cannot be broken;
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together Lord, bind us together with love.

There is only one God, there is only One Lord, there is only one body
And that is why we sing.



Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for making us part of Your body. Thank you for accepting us, affirming us and welcoming us. May your Holy Spirit continue to bless us. In Jesus Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

**Second Sunday of
Advent**

December 9, 2018

LESSON 29: THE CHURCH IS A COMMUNITY OF PERSONS

General Concept: The Church is a redeemed community of persons having God in their midst; each member possessing different gifts, each equally important, everyone working together.

Biblical References: 1 Corinthians 12:27-31; Ephesians 1:7-8; 4:11-17; Philippians 1:3-6

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

Age-Level Concepts

- All members are equally important in the Church.
- Each member is unique and possesses different God-given gifts.
- Having different gifts, we work together to serve God and the people.

Learning Objectives

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

- Reason out how members have equal importance in the church
- Identify the different skills and talents that manifest the uniqueness of each member
- Commit oneself in working together to serve God and people through the church

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Opening Song "Great is Your Faithfulness" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 49)

Great is Your faithfulness, O God, Creator,
With You no shadow of turning we see,
You do not change, Your compassions they fail not;
All of your goodness forever will be.

Refrain:

Great is Your faithfulness! Great is Your faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;



All I have needed Your hand has provided—
Great is Your faithfulness, God, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Your great faithfulness, mercy and love. (Refrain)

Pardon for sin and a peace so enduring,
Your own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! (Refrain)

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Dear Lord, we ask your divine presence as we study Your Word. May our lives and deeds reflect Your will. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

“We believe that the Church is the one Body of Christ, the whole community of persons....”

Getting Ready

- Encourage the young people to show their talents to the rest of the class. Let them share how they use their God-given talents in the church.

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Have the class read the biblical references.
- Encourage the participants to write on their journals or notebooks words or concepts from the texts that are important to them.
- Discuss the text by asking the following questions:
 - What is the significance of redemption to us as individual believers and as a church?
 - As a community of persons with different gifts, how can the Church work together in building up the body of Christ, and in doing service and witness?
- Share and discuss with the learners the Biblical Background for today's texts.

Lessons Learned

- How can you use your gifts and talents to achieve unity in the church?
- What are the ways by which you can participate in the church's mission?
- How can we show our concern for others?



Applying the Lessons Learned

- Tell the class to list down things they can do to help in the ministry of the Church.
- Allow the students to state their commitment to continually give their talents to God by participating in Church ministries.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: Philippians 1:6, "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."

Offering

Closing Song "Life of the World" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 240)

Life of the world and God's beloved Son,
Jesus, the Christ, in whom we are all one,
One body we, one spirit and one call,
One mighty God, above and in us all.

We are your hands to lift up people's load,
We are our feet on path where sufferings goad,
We are your voice of witness to the Word,
We are your Church, your gift of love unfurled.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, we surrender to You our lives, talents, time and treasure. Bless us, O Lord, and make us truly worthy to become Your presence in the world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

**Third Sunday of
Advent**
December 16, 2018

LESSON 30: THE CHURCH IS RECONCILED TO GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

General Concept: Being a reconciled community, the Church becomes an agent of reconciliation in the world.

Biblical References: Zephaniah 3:14-20; II Corinthians 5:18-20

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Isaiah 12:2-6; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

Age-Level Concepts

- The Church is a community of people whose broken relationships are healed through Jesus Christ.
- We are tasked to work for the healing of broken relationships between persons and God, and among fellow human beings.



Learning Objectives

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

- Discuss that the church is a community of people whose broken relationships are healed through Jesus Christ
- Formulate some plans on how to work for healing relationships as a response to the reconciling power of Jesus
- Prepare creative activities to demonstrate commitment to help reconcile broken relationships

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Opening Song “They’ll Know We are Christians by Our Love”

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
And we pray that our unity will one day be restored.

Chorus:

And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they’ll know we are Christians by our love.

We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
And we’ll guard each one’s dignity and save each one’s pride. (Chorus)

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Dear Lord, we ask Your Divine Presence as we study Your Word. May our lives and deeds reflect Your will. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

“We believe that the Church is the one Body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ....”

Getting Ready

- Have the students study and appreciate the following poem by Annie Johnson Flint, “The World’s Bible” (amended):
Christ has no hands but our hands to do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet to lead people in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongues to tell people how He died;
He has no help but our help to bring them to His side.



We are the only Bible the careless world will read;
We are the sinner's gospel, we are the scoffer's creed;
We are the Lord's last message, given in deed and word;
What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred?

What if our hands are busy with other work than His?
What if our feet are walking where sin's allurements is?
What if our tongues are speaking of things His lips would spurn?
How can we hope to help Him and hasten His return?

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Have the class read the biblical references in unison.
- Have them form dyads and briefly discuss with each other the texts using the following guide questions:
 - What is the message of these verses from Zephaniah for you?
 - What is the message of these verses from II Corinthians for you?
 - How is friendship related to reconciliation?
- Share and discuss with the learners the Biblical Background for today's texts.

Lessons Learned

- Ask: How can each one, as a member of the Church, be an agent of reconciliation?
 - Between oneself and God
 - Among each other

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Have each learner write in their journals their personal commitment to the Church's reconciling mission. They may complete the following sentences:
 - As God's feet, I will _____.
 - As God's hands, I will _____.
 - As God's tongue, I will _____.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: Zephaniah 3:17, "The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; God will rejoice over you with gladness, God will renew you in love...."

Offering

Closing Song "Friend to Friend" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 274)

Let us now, as God's own people, give the sign of peace,
Proclaiming our love for one another, binding friend to friend.

Refrain:

Christ Jesus calls us to love one another, to be one in Him,
Friend to friend, in love to each, we shall give our hand.



In our care for one another, by each kindly word,
By every loving deed, we make known the love of Jesus Christ. (Refrain)

We feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to those who thirst,
For Jesus came in love as a servant, and we follow him. (Refrain)

Closing Prayer

Loving God, we thank You for the reconciling power of Jesus Christ. May that power be with us as we continually involve ourselves in the redemptive ministry of the church to teach and nurture each other on the Scriptures, and to do outreach and mission programs. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 23, 2018

LESSON 31: THE CHURCH IS ENTRUSTED WITH GOD'S MINISTRY

General Concept: The only ministry of the Church is the ministry of God, and this we must do faithfully and in unity.

Biblical References: Micah 5:4-5a; Hebrews 10:7a; Luke 1:46b-55

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1: 39-45; 46b-55

Age-Level Concepts

- The Church does God's ministry.
- We participate in the ministries of the Church.
- We unite ourselves with other members of the community to faithfully do God's work.

Learning Objectives

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

- Describe the ministry of God that the church does
- Participate in ministries that maximize their gifts as young people
- Resolve to use the ministries to equip the youth to do the work of God faithfully and in unity

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

Suggested Lesson Outline

Greeting Time

Opening Song "My Task" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 311)

To love someone more dearly every day,
To help a wandering child to find the way,
To ponder o'er a noble thought and pray,



And smile when evening falls, and smile when evening falls.
This is my task.

To follow truth as blind ones long for light,
To do my best from dawn of day till night,
To keep my heart fit for Christ's holy sight,
And answer when He calls, and answer when He calls.
This is my task.

And then my Savior by and by to meet,
When faith has made her task on earth complete,
And lay my homage at the Master's feet
Within the jasper walls, within the jasper walls.
This crowns my task.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

God of life, thank you for your life-giving Word. Empower us through the Holy Spirit and create in us a heart that loves your Gospel. Help us to live by your Word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

"We believe that the Church is the one Body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with God's ministry."

Getting Ready

- Ask the students to identify which ministry they are involved in. Expected answers are: music ministry, youth ministry, campus ministry, shepherding ministry, humanitarian response ministry. Let them recall how teamwork, degree of involvement and participation are factors that can determine success in the work. Encourage the students to share first-hand information.

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Have the class read aloud the biblical texts together.
- Divide the class into two groups. Assign Group 1 the two Old Testament texts and Group 2 the New Testament text. Have each group creatively dramatize their assigned texts.
- Have Group 2 react and give their comments on the message of the presentation of Group 1; have Group 1 react and give their comments on the message of the presentation of Group 2.
- Share and discuss with the learners the Biblical Background for today's texts.



Lessons Learned

- Ask: What message can we get from the presentations regarding what the ministry of God is all about?

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Have the class help prepare the ministry plan of the Church by offering the following strategies:
 - For the Worship and Christian Education ministries
 - Intensive and functional study of God's word to impact the next generation
 - Joyful worship practices with optimal participation of families, children, youth, adults, and church organizations
 - Alternative and indigenous worship practices
 - For the Shepherding and Outreach ministry
 - Address the needs of the lost, last and downtrodden
 - Start a food ministry for the hungry and needy
 - Get involved in the church or conference humanitarian response ministry, deeper engagement from God's people and a generous embrace of new worshippers
 - For all the ministries
 - Have frequent fellowship for all the members to do things together.

Closing Worship

Memory Verse: Hebrews 10:7a, "Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God'"

Offering

Closing Song "Called as Partners in Christ's Service"

Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment, fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.

Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering reconciling folk on earth.
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together, gracious gifts from God unfold.

Thus, new patterns for Christ's mission in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.

So God grant us for tomorrow, ways to order human life



That surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for the ministry you've given us. Help us to live it out. In
Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

