

# ABKD ng CYF:

## A Resource Book for the Young People of the UCCP

United Church of Christ in the Philippines  
Manila, Philippines

### ***ABKD ng CYF: A Resource Book for the Young People of the UCCP***

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## Acknowledgments

***ABKD ng CYF: A Resource Book for the Young People of the UCCP*** is born out of the efforts of the many CYF officers and members all over the archipelago. Its inception, content framework, layout and design are of, for and by the CYF. Many people also helped us in editing and reviewing the content.

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To the staff and program workers of the jurisdictions

To our partner, the **United Evangelical Mission**

Our profound gratitude for journeying with the CYF.

To God be the glory, honor and praise.

## Message

**Christian Youth Fellowship**  
**United Church of Christ in the Philippines**

Through: **MS. SHALOM GRACE A. TOMAS**  
National President

Dear Co-worker in Christ,

Together with other General Assembly officers and my fellow bishops along with the National Secretariat, we send you all a joyous Easter greetings and prideful felicitations on the publication of your Membership Book, or the ABKD of your organization.

I am doubly happy to know that your book follows the VMG and the Statement of Faith of our beloved UCCP. It will certainly help the nurturing of our youth in their Christian faith, as well as re-enforce their loyalty to Jesus Christ through the UCCP as their church, too.

Finally, I send you my best wishes for a more meaningful and reinvigorating National Christian Youth Fellowship.

May you achieve the goals you have set for your organization, knowing that the Lord of life and of our history will abide with you all the way!

Very sincerely,

**BISHO ELIEZER M. PASCUA**  
**UCCP General Secretary**

## Message

**My dearest CYF friends,**

The long wait is finally over! After a decade of waiting, and months of labor of love, our membership book, the ABKD ng CYF, is here!

This book is our humble attempt to capture in one document the long, proud history of the young people of our Church. It is hoped that this book will help us appreciate our rich heritage, learn more deeply about who we are as members of the CYF, and participate more actively in the many ministries of our church. Indeed, the CYF has gone far and beyond through the many years of its journey. It has proven itself as an effective partner of the church and has consistently figured in accompanying the UCCP in standing-up for issues that matter most to the youth and the church as a whole.

You will notice that integrated in the book are individual stories of CYF members. We deemed it relevant to include these stories to enrich and further concretize the CYF experience. Further, to expound on the basics of our core doctrines, the CYF Principles had also been dealt with and explored by our theologians - church workers, professors and lay leaders whom we respect and look-up-to.

Own the ABKD ng CYF and use it for reference and guidance. It is ours, as it also deeply seeks to embody our ideals and aspirations and truly represent each and every sector of our membership.

The journey we have started from long before - through our ever-faithful *ates* and *kuyas*, this very same journey continues amidst the prevailing environment of deep-seated poverty, violence and greed, by which we must preach the Good News and act steadfastly on our faith. Together, let us walk through the road ahead with prayer and hope as we further heighten our response towards living and achieving the dream of an abundant life for all, as co-builders of *shalom*.

To each one of you, thank you so much for providing the strong base by which the CYF stands. Remain faithful and steadfast!

Finally, it is my prayer that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Rock and Friend, may be glorified through this humble work.

God bless us all!

Sincerely in Christ,

**SHALOM GRACE A. TOMAS**  
**National President**

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*Noel Pajarillo*

## Introduction

# The ABKD ng CYF as a Useful Resource Material for the Nurturing of the Young People in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines

Rommel F. Linatoc

There is a notion that being born as a UCCP does not automatically mean that a young person would become an automatic member of the Christian Youth Fellowship. This idea reinforced the thought that the membership in the CYF is voluntary, and therefore requires an application process. The nurturing of the individual young person depends on how the CYF as an organization is consolidated. There is also a notion that membership in the CYF starts when a young person participated in any of the activities organized by the CYF. Again, in this notion, the processes of recruitment and nurturing the young people can be achieved if the membership consolidation program of the young people's organization is defined.

In my generation, our elders are always saying that the CYF is the training ground for the future leaders of the church and of the society. This notion, on one hand is an assurance that they are counting the contribution of the young people in the future of the churches; on the other hand it is also underrating the important role of the young people in current affairs of the church and of the society. Especially because there are local churches in which the CYF members are the one leading the Church Council. This increasing role of the young people is posing a greater challenge among the CYF as an organization.

The structural, historical, sociopolitical, and economic imbalances of the Philippine society forced some of the young people not to enjoy their rights and privilege for being young. Most of them became part of the underpaid labor force or be part of the decadent sub-culture of the young people. The broken promises of 'globalization' became a nightmare to some young people. The ranks of the young people, who can afford the materialist world of globalization, have the tendency to be engulfed with the virtual reality of unreal situation. Hence, their exclusive world is more important to attend to as compared to attending the Christian Youth Fellowship. Therefore, the nurturing aspect of ABKD should address this gap.

The ABKD as a resource material aimed to empower and consolidate the young people of the UCCP church to become an effective witness of Jesus. This is a complimentary document with the different modules of the UCCP that will inspire and give hope to the young people so that their light will shine and give hope to everyone.

In giving our lights let us be reflective on the following thoughts:

- In order to appreciate the ABKD Resource Material, let us open our horizons by reflecting on our experiences within a context of a local church....
- The whole content of the resource material can not be finished in one day; therefore the CYF have to schedule it in series and or in modular basis as the needs arise.
- It is essential that the prospective participants have finished already the communicant class being administered by the church.
- It is also essential that the facilitators of ABKD undergone the above prerequisites.
- Each module can be taken as an independent topic.
- Each module can be a part of the other activities of the Christian Youth Fellowship such as summer camps, leadership trainings, annual conferences, district fellowships, and different chapter activities.
- Each module is a reference material in which the ABKD facilitator can look for other references that will enhance the training of the young people.
- The content of the first part of the module is basic for all the CYF to understand. The second part is compilation of concrete experiences that will inspire the CYF as an organization to contribute in the church ministry.
- The CYF Committee on Christian Education can come up with a training manual that will best serve the interest and capacity of their local members. They can use the ABKD as main reference.
- Each local CYF should come up with a membership consolidation program in which the education and nurturing of the members is continuing aspect.
- This is an orientation material of the CYF as an organization, and therefore it keeps an evolving,

- Your compilation of your CYF experiences will also enrich this resource material, therefore in each raining you conducted an assessment, evaluation, and documentation of those experiences is very essential.
- The training needs assessment of the individual participant is needed in order to situate each topic on the levels and capacity of the CYF.

...let us spread our wings of youthfulness and embrace our being so that we know our path in doing something for the restoration of heaven on earth

## Overview\*

### Our Being

We, the CYF, as the youth arm of the UCCP, are called to carry out the mission of God in the communities we are located. This consciousness of being commissioned leads us to respond together with church workers and members to the challenges and needs of our time. Our understanding of who we are as an organization is essential for us to carry out the tasks given to us by God.

### Our Knowing

We must be equipped and empowered to articulate and build the foundations of a transformed society as stated in our Church's vision. Thus, we emphasize educating and nurturing young people in the Church to enable us to use our gifts as we work to make God's love manifested in our world. Studying our heritage of faith and other skills must be accompanied by our individual practices as we witness to God's liberating message.

### Our Doing

As evidence of the faith we have in the power of Christ's resurrection, we must have concerted action in carrying out our tasks. This can be seen through our *actual* participation in the ministries of our Church. In other words, we put all our *knowing* into practice. By continuously living out our *knowing*, we enrich our faith heritage — our being.

\*From *A Primer-Study Guide to the UCCP Vision, Mission and Goals*. Christian UCCP, January 2000.

## Our Being

## The UCCP:

## A Continuing Journey of Faith

Edna J. Orteza

Protestantism in the Philippines traces its beginnings to the missionary movement established at the turn of the century, when the mission boards of various Protestant denominations in the United States of America sent missionaries to the Philippines.

In the years between 1899-1902, seven Protestant missions opened new work in the Philippines — the Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, United Brethren, Disciples and the Congregationalists. Except for the Episcopalians, who considered themselves as belonging to the "Catholic Tradition", all others were evangelicals (Sitoy, Several Springs, One Stream, Vol 1)

#### **A. Central Affirmations**

The evangelical Protestant missions basically taught the central affirmations of the Protestant Reformation, with emphasis on personal Religion, marked by high ethical and scriptural standards. They gave witness to the centrality of Christ's atonement on the cross. There was emphasis on ethical living according to scriptural standards. Evangelism included service to others, an influence of the "Social Gospel" and the rediscovery in the late 19th century of the social dimensions and implications of the Gospel. (Sitoy)

This was the rationale for Protestant medical, education, and social work. Behind this lay the belief in the inherent value of human life. Missionary zeal and anti-Spanish sentiments of

Filipinos both contributed to the expansion and growth of Protestantism in the Philippines. In fact, at about this time, a significant schism was taking place in the Roman Catholic Church, with the breaking away, and organization of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente from the ecclesiastical rule of Rome, led by Monsignor Gregorio Aglipay.)

#### **B. Comity Agreement**

In 1901, the Evangelical union was organized. It was a 'council of representatives of various mission groups and organizations allied to the Church. Its primary purpose was to bring about the spirit of comity, unity and cooperation among the mission groups that will eliminate competition. This resulted in:

1. the territorial division of the country among the different mission groups
2. a common name for the newly organized churches
3. a plan to effect the formation of a national church
4. cooperation of work in schools, hospitals, printing presses, newspapers and other fields of endeavor

#### **C. Philosophy of Mission**

After the signing of the comity agreement, the mission boards pursued their evangelization and the expansion programs through religious and secular education and their evangelistic campaigns. Given the philosophy of missions at the time, their endeavors included the building of churches, schools, dormitories and hospitals.

1. In 1901, Silliman Institute was established by Dr. and Mrs. David Hibbard in Dumaguete City. (This later became Silliman University, the first University outside Manila). As part of the Institute's service to the community, an infirmary was set up, which later became hospital. Its buildings were constructed in 1916. Other medical work started by missionaries which became hospitals were Brokenshire Memorial Hospital in Davao City (1908); Bethany Hospital in Tacloban City (1913); Bethany Hospital in San Fernando La Union (1921); and several others in Laog, Bohol, Zamboanga, Abra, and Manila which were later sold when the missionaries returned to US because of the post World War I depression and other factor.
2. In 1902, the American Board of Foreign Missions of the Congregational Church in the US sent Rev. Robert Black and was assigned to Davao. In 1915, the Congregational Church opened its work in Northern Mindanao. Among those who were sent were Dr. and Mrs. Frank L. Laubach who worked among the Muslims in Marawi City. This is where Dr. Laubach developed methods of literacy programs which became internationally recognized.
3. In 1907, the Union Theological Seminary in Manila was formed for the training of pastors, deaconesses and lay leaders. It was a result of the merger of the Ellinwood Bible School of the Presbyterian Mission and the Nicholson Seminary of the Methodists. Later, the disciples joined the cooperative effort



4. In 1910, the Young Women's Bible Training School was founded by Ms. Matilda Weber, a missionary of the Church of the United Brethren, which established the foundation for what was later to be known as Union Christian College.
5. In 1914, the Silliman Bible Training Institute was established as a cooperative venture between the Congregationalists in Mindanao and the Presbyterians in the Visayas for the training of Church Workers. This became the College of the Theology of the Silliman University and much later, the Divinity School.
6. In 1926, Ms. Myrtle Metzger, a missionary of the Church of the United Brethren, founded Ifugao Academy, the first High School in the Region.
7. In 1927, the Church of the United Brethren established Kalinga Academy, also the first in the sub-province of Kalinga.

Dr. James B. Rodgers had summed up the purpose of the missionary endeavor.

Our purpose in preaching to the people of the Philippine Islands is the same purpose we have in preaching to the people of any other country— to win men to faith and fidelity to Jesus Christ, to help them have faith that is in accord with both human and divine wisdom. Our message is to help Christians of all classes to become better Christians.

## **PART II**

### **A. Unity and Cooperation**

As a minority religious tradition in the Philippines, Protestant Evangelical Churches as early as 1901 sought organic union amongst themselves. Their cooperative endeavors became visible in the union of evangelical churches at various points in the history of the Philippine Protestant Church.

In 1929, a Basis of Union was adopted by the Congregational, Presbyterian and the United Brethren churches which brought into existence the United Evangelical Church, the first Protestant Church that covered the whole country. Rev. Enrique Sobrepena was elected as Moderator of the General Assembly and Rev. George Wright as General Secretary.

In 1943, the Evangelical Church of the Philippines was formed with the coming together of the United Evangelical Church, the Church of Christ (Disciples), some segments of the Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Cristo, some segments of the Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en las Islas Filipinas (IEMELIF), Iglesia Evarigelica National, the Philippine Methodist Church and some independent local congregations. it was the first union of churches under the leadership of Filipinos.

After the war, the former Presbyterians and the Congregationalists reconstituted the United Evangelical Church. The former United Brethren, the Church of Christ (Disciples) and the independent congregations remained as the Evangelical Church of the Philippines.

### **B. The Basis of Union**

In 1947, under the initiative of the Philippine Federation of Christian Churches (now the National Council of Churches in the Philippines) a Basis of Union was formulated and was sent to the different churches for study and approval.

*Whereas, the unity of the Church is founded upon loyalty to Jesus Christ the Head and Lord of the Church, and an fidelity to the craze of his Kingdom.*

*Whereas, any unity is first of all a unity of spirit and life.*

*Whereas, having the same spirit and owning the same Lord, we nonetheless, recognize the diversity of gifts and ministrations for whose exercise due freedom must always be afforded in the differences of interpretation in the forms of worship and modes of operation.*

*Whereas, the Evangelical Church in the Philippines, the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, the Philippine Methodist Church, the Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Cristo and the Evangelical Church of the Philippines, by their respective General Assemblies, Conferences or Conventions did here fore appoint commissions on church union.*

*Whereas, these commissions at "joint session held on the 3'd day of November: 1947, by joint action did agree upon, approve and adopt a Plan and Basis of Union of the organic union of these churches and thereafter presented said plan and Basis of Union for the United Church of Christ in the Philippines to their respective denominational bodies;*

*Whereas, the Bishops, Moderators, and Secretaries of these churches did issue a call for sessions of their respective General Assemblies, Conferences or Conventions, and for a subsequent Joint Session to the Uniting Assembly of at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.*

*Whereas, the Uniting Assembly, now in Session, is authorized to constitute itself as it does hereby constitute itself the first General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.*

### **C. The Uniting Assembly**

In 1948, 167 representatives of the United Evangelical Church in the Philippines, the Evangelical Church in the Philippines and the Philippine Methodist Church signed the Basis of Union and the Declaration of Union, which proclaimed that the three churches "shall be one church known as the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, the UCCP."

Now, therefore, the delegates to this Uniting Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines do hereby solemnly publish and declare in the presence of God and before all men the following statements of facts.

1. That the Evangelical Church in the Philippines, the Philippine Methodist Church, and the United Evangelical Church of the Philippines are now and shall be One Church known as the United Church of Christ in the Philippines;
2. That the United Church of Christ in the Philippines places itself in the readiness to continue to negotiate for an ever-expanding Church union with those new in negotiation as well as with others.
3. That the United Church of Christ in the Philippines as thus constituted is and shall be the ecclesiastical successor of these uniting churches, namely, the Evangelical Church in the Philippines, the Philippine Methodist Church, and the United Evangelical Church of the Philippines, permitting, however, in the meantime, the holding of properties by these Churches by the different corporations registered under their respective name, until such time as proper adjustments shall have been made with regard to such holdings.
4. That by adoption of the name "United Church of Christ in the Philippines". for this Union, no right, interest, or title in and to their respective names by which the Uniting Churches have been identifies and known has not been surrendered, but all such rights are specifically reserved against claims of all persons associations and organizations whatsoever; and
5. That we delegates to the Uniting Assembly, hereby formally adopt the plan and Basis of Union formulated by the Joint Commission on Church Union of the Uniting Churches, as the fundamental declaration of faith and plan of government of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and forthwith proceed to organize ourselves accordingly for furtherance of the redemptive work of Christ in the World.

The union in 1948 brought together three different types of policy or church government:

1. spiritual oversight of Bishops in the United Brethren and in the Methodist tradition
2. the collegial process of policy and decision making and administration of the Presbyterian Church, and
3. the autonomy of the Local Church of the Congregational Church and the Disciples

# A Brief History of the CYF

Michelle Dayo

The CYF traces its roots from the Christian Endeavor Society (CES) formed in 1881 in Portland, Maine under the direction of Francis E. Clark. The society was formed in order to bring the youth to accept Christ and work for Him. The youth were shown that the church cared for the young people. The Society enabled the youth to express themselves while participating in useful tasks. It stressed a devoted, evangelistic spirit that was expressed in the Christian Endeavor pledge. Christian Endeavor created publications for the youth, devised youth programs and sponsored events. Christian Endeavor was maintained through private donations that often came from the youth.

With the coming of the first Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines in the 1900, the said protestant youth organization was also introduced in the country. And there are two versions as to when it started. One report says that the first CES was established in 1904 in North Luzon. Another says that the first CES complete with a constitution was organized in Pagsanjan, Laguna in 1908. Whichever year it started, in 1926 the Christian Endeavor Society of various evangelical churches came together and formed the National Youth Organization. Then in 1939 the National Christian Endeavor Union was organized with Rev. Onofre Fonseca as its first president.

In 1943 many young people who had experienced the devastation of the 2nd World War made efforts to organize themselves. With the formation of the Philippine Federation of Christian Churches (PFCC), now known as the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, the young people were able to do it ecumenically.

As if such ecumenical undertaking was not enough, our ancestors from the Presbyterian Church, The Church of Christ (Disciples), the Congregational Church, the Philippine Methodist Church and the United Brethren came together and gave birth to the formation of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines or UCCP. This historical event which took place in May 25, 1948 is the realization of the Lord's prayer found in John 17:21 that they may be one."

In that same year the Division of Youth Work and Ministry in Higher Education was created to take care of the youth and student ministry of the church guided by a Youth Work Committee. This Youth work Committee was organized by the UCCP Youth Commission to recommend and make policies with general oversight of the youth program of the church. This desk was first headed by Rev. Paul Dotson. After a year, the Division organized the 1st Planning Conference for the PFCC held in Cebu City.

It was also in 1949 when CHRISTIAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP (CYF) became the official name of the group of young people of UCCP.

Years passed and in 1961, the Division launched the 1st National Youth Seminar (NYS) in order to meet the needs for Christian leadership, fellowship and sense of oneness among the youth nationwide. The idea of creating a national organization for the CYF also started during this activity which was held in Dagupan. Three years after, during the 2nd NYS, the CYFers from North Luzon initiated to organize the CYF nationally but to no avail.

Then during the 4th NYS held in 1970 in Tacloban City, CYFers from South Luzon revived the proposal to organize the CYF nationally based on three major points:

*A National CYF best articulates the collective sentiments of the UCCP youth on important issues.*

*A National CYF best serves the interest of the UCCP youth on matters related to their welfare as a major sector of the church and society.*

*A National CYF could best decide for the youth on matters of representation to higher judicatories.*

But these 3 major points were blocked by the following assumptions:

*A national body might just be an added bureaucracy which would further burden the CYF organization.*

*No organization could best serve the grassroots CYF beyond the conference level, as it knows best the pulse of the constituency*

*Leadership in this proposed body might just be monopolized by people from Luzon and Manila who are more accessible to the UCCP main office.*

The effectiveness of a national leadership was also questioned due to the terrible communication and transportation facilities. In short, no consensus was reached.

After 24 years of existence, the Division on Youth Work and Ministry was abolished in 1972 due to the declaration of a moratorium on foreign donations to our church. Work was then delegated to the Jurisdictions.

During that time, with the implementation of Martial Law, the church was not able to give much attention to the formation of a national youth organization and to national youth activities. But the CYF in the local and conference levels continued with their programs and activities, accepted and performed their responsibilities on youth ministry even without the national guidance.

Few years later, some CYF leaders from Luzon and Mindanao resurrected the plan for a National Christian Youth Fellowship.

In 1978, during the General Assembly (GA) in Cagayan de Oro, a preparatory committee was tasked to hold a national convention to decide on the issue of having a national organization for the CYF and to formulate the necessary legal documents. Back then, the young people from the Visayas Jurisdiction who started to develop unity among its eight conferences through annual Caravan Training and work camps, wanted the Jurisdiction CYFs to strengthen themselves first and for the youth leaders to gather and study as a group what kind of a national organization will work in the 7,107 islands of the Philippines.

In spite of the numerous arguments, the National CYF (NCYF) was created during the National Consultation held in Dumaguete City. The year was 1979.

The following year the first activity of the NCYF was held, a Constitutional Convention which took place in Cebu City. With the theme "The CYF: Moving Towards the New Tomorrow" the said convention drafted the NCYF Constitution and By Laws. It also created an Interim National Youth Council to ensure order within the organization.

And in May 21-25, 1982, the 1st National Youth Assembly took place in Malolos, Bulacan. During the said assembly the National CYF CBL was ratified, the 1st set of national officers was elected and the National Youth Development Program, a proposal articulating the aspirations and sentiments of the young people, was adopted. "The CYF: Towards a Transformed Community" was the theme of the first NYA. And since then the NYA meets every four (4) years.

The first four years of the NCYF was a struggle. They encountered problems in launching nationwide activities. But with the help from volunteers and concerned individuals who pooled their resources and worked with the officers financial and manpower constraints were addressed. The first activity for the quadrennium, a National Youth Consultation on Human Rights was organized in 1984. The need to employ a full time working staff or NCYF Coordinator was recognized in this activity to systematize operations.

During the 2nd NYA, with the theme "The CYF: Towards Unity in Christ with the People", held in Episcopal Noviate in Antipolo, Rizal the NCYF initiated a Membership Consolidation Program (MCP) the purpose of which is to determine the organization's population and to generate funds through the "Piso sa CYF" campaign. This MCP was successfully implemented in most of the conferences but the "Piso sa CYF" component was not due to poor mechanism and conflicts with some of the conferences.

## Timeline

1881

Christian Endeavor Society

1900

Protestant Missionaries came to the Philippines

May 25, 1948

The UCCP was born

1949

Christian Youth Fellowship became the official name of the UCCP's youth group

1961

1st National Youth Seminar held in Dagupan

1978

A preparatory committee was formed for a national convention of the CYF

1979

Creation of the National CYF in Dumaguete City

May 21-25, 1982

The 1st National Youth Assembly took place in Malolos, Bulacan

Some of the programs that were launched nationally during the 2nd quadrennium are the production of Christian Education materials and manuals on Christmas and Summer activities.

In 1991 the All Leaders Assembly of the CYF from the Southern Tagalog Conference (STC) formulated a concept and mechanism in orienting its members through basic education on our being a UCCP and a CYF. The young people from South East Luzon Conference (SELC) also produced an orientation manual with similar content as STC's. And during a meeting in 1992 the CYF-SLJ agreed that there is a need to learn and relearn the basics of the organization. Combining their efforts with that of SELC the "ABKD ng CYF: Unang Yugto" came out.

During the 4th NYA held in Mampayang, Camp Philipps, Bukidnon the ABKD was considered an integral component of the MCP, this time focusing on membership quality.

Four years passed and the need to have the CBL amended was recognized, leaving two historical activities for the year 1998: the 2nd Constitutional Convention, May 16-19, and the 5th NYA, May 20-24, which both took place at the Union Theological Seminary in Dasmariñas, Cavite. In that same year the Comparative Presentation of the Salient Provisions of the NCYF on and the proposed CYF CBL was disseminated and discussed among the conferences.

A year in a CYF's life won't be complete without a camp activity during the summer or the Christmas season and it is usually done within the conference level. But in 2001 the 1st ever National Youth Camp (NYC) with the theme "The Journey" was held in Visayas State College of Agriculture in Baybay, Leyte, gathering the local, conference and jurisdiction leaders in an activity highlighted by a community exposure.

Then during the 6th NYA held in Condora, Damaris, Rosario, La Union from May 13 to 17, 2002 the amended CBL was ratified.

In May of 2005 the 2nd NYC took place in Malaybalay, Bukidnon with the theme "The Journey Continues". Youth leaders from all over the country studied the UCCP's quadrennial theme of that time: "Gospel, Globalization and the Church" and had an exposure to the environment of Bukidnon and its various indigenous community.

The Surigao City Church of the South East Mindanao Jurisdiction (SEM JUR) was home to the 7th NYA in 2006. A comprehensive plan for the four program areas of the CYF namely Christian Education and Nurture (CEN), Ecumenical Relations Committee (ERC), Christian Witness and Service (CWS) and Christian Stewardship and Resource Development (CSR D) was made and approved during the said assembly.

Also in that same year, during the \_th General Assembly of UCCP, the Visayas Jurisdiction (VJ) was divided into two: the East Visayas Jurisdiction (EVJ) and the West Visayas Jurisdiction (WVJ) bringing the total number of jurisdictions of UCCP to 6, thus adding another hand to the CYF logo.

The CYF has also organized activities together with the United Church Men and the Christian Womens Association such as the National Caravan held in 2002 (from Mindanao to Luzon) and 2006 (from Luzon to Mindanao) both held before the General Assembly of UCCP.

Throughout the years the CYF has consistently produced leaders not just of our church but of our society.

Leaders who are not just the hope of our tomorrow but of today. Nowadays, a number of our local churches and conferences are being led by young people. But sad to say that some of our young people are also victims of injustice.

The CYF will continue to live.

*(picture here)*

*The delegates to the 7th National Youth Assembly in May 2006 at Surigao City. They adopted the theme, "Living Together in the Household of God" which was also the church's theme for the ensuing quadrennium.*

# The UCCP Statement of Faith

## **WE BELIEVE**

In One God: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, who provides order, purpose, meaning and fulfillment to all creation.

That in Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, God became human and is Sovereign Lord of life and history.

That in the Holy Spirit, God is present in the world, empowering and guiding believers to understand and live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

## **WE BELIEVE**

That Persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons and with all creation.

That, by disobedience, they have become sinful, but, by grace through faith, they are redeemed in Jesus Christ.

That being entrusted with God's creation, they are called to participate in the establishment of a just a compassionate social order.

## **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.

## **WE BELIEVE**

That the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history, to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness.

## **WE BELIEVE**

That God is at work, to make each person a new being in Christ, and the whole world, God's Kingdom in which love, justice and peace prevail.

That the Kingdom of God is present where faith in Jesus Christ is shared, where healing is given to the sick, where food is given to the hungry, where light is given to the blind, and where liberty is given to the captive and oppressed.

## **WE BELIEVE**

That the Resurrection of Jesus Christ has overcome the power of death and gives assurance of life after death. And we look forward to his coming again in all fullness and glory to make all creation new and to gather all the faithful in the Kingdom of God. Amen.

# Speaking "SOFTLY"

## Statement of Faith for Today's Leading Youth

Rev. Reuel Norman O. Marigza

## **We Believe**

**RR:** Tol, 'lika nga dito. Tulungan mo nga ako. Tignan mo ito o, UCCP Statement of Faith (SOF). Bakit siya nagsisimula sa "We believe"? Alam ko kasi, ang mga iba tulad ng Apostle's Creed ay sa "I believe" nagsisimula.

**JJ:** Tama ka, tol. Pero conscious na ginawa yan dahil gustong i-emphasize ang ating unity as a Church — na tayo ay united and uniting church. "We believe" ang gamit dahil binuo tayo bilang isang iglesia mula sa iba't-ibang tradisyon: ang Evangelical United Brethren, ang Church of Christ (Disciples), ang mga Presbyterians, ang mga Congregationalists at ng mga Philippine Methodists. Noong May 25, 1948, mula sa dalawang nauna ng church union (ang United Evangelical Church of the Philippines at ang Evangelical Church of the Philippines) at ang Philippine Methodist Church nabuo ang United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

Kaya, "We believe" ang simula ng ating Statement of Faith, pero di nangangahulugan na kung "we" ang ginamit na hindi na rin kailangan ang indibidwal na pag-affirm sa SOF kasi sinasabi sa ating UCCP Constitution at By-Laws na tungkulin ng bawat miyembro ng UCCP na i-uphold at mag-subscribe sa SOF. So, ibig sabihin na kung sinasabi nating "we believe", bawat isa sa atin ay nagsasabi din na "I believe" kasama sa lahat ng kaanib sa UCCP

**RR:** So, anu-ano ang ating mga pinapaniwalaan, tol?

**JJ:** Nahahati sa lima na sections or articles ang ating SOF, bro. Lahat nagsisimula sa "We believe."

## **We Believe in One God**

**JJ:** Ang una ay tungkol sa Dios. "We believe in One God," sabi. Pero hindi tayo Unitarian or sumasang-ayon sa "Oneness" theology. Iisa ang Diyos, pero nakikita sa tatlong persona.

**RR:** Parang "three-in-one," tol?

**JJ:** Parang ganon nga, pero mga analogy ay hindi precise. Medyo mahirap intindihin, tol, kaya minsan tinatawag na 'mystery' ito. Naniniwala tayo na si Jesus ay Diyos, ganon din ang Holy Spirit, pero hindi sila tatlo kundi iisa.

**RR:** Yon ba yang 'God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit'?

**JJ:** Sakto tol, pero, "Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer" ang ginamit natin to be more inclusive at to emphasize their act, rather than gender.

**RR:** Sinasabi din dito na tayo at ang sannilikha'y binigyan ng Diyos ng buhay na may kaayusan, saysay at kaganapan. Na ang buhay ay may purpose.

**JJ:** At nagagawa natin yan sa tulong ng Trinity.

## **Persons**

**RR:** Ano naman ang pinapaniwalaan natin sa tungkol sa tao, tol?

**JJ:** Tawagin natin si Connie, baka matulungan tayo. Connie, Connie, halika dito, chika muna tayo. Natatandaan mo pa ba yon tinuro sa atin tungkol sa Persons sa ating SOF nung nag-Communicant class tayo?

**Connie:** Hmmm siguro iniisip mo noon yong crush mo no, kasi parang di mo natatandaan eh.

**JJ:** He he! Ikaw yata yong iniisip ko noon!

**Connie:** Tse! Baka sa iba mapunta ang usapan na lito ah. Pwes, tatlong bagay ang sinabi. Una, na tayo ay nilikha sa wangs o image ng Diyos at nilikha na makasama ng Diyos, kapwa-tao at sa sangnilikha, ok?

Pangalawa, tayo'y umalis sa kalinga ng Diyos, meaning, nagkasala ka, JJ! Tayong lahat pala kahit tulad kong super-bait. Pero, tayo'y sinagip at iniligtas ng Panginoong Hesus. Di natin ginawa yon — saved by grace through faith tayo. Ibig sabihin, we did not work for it, earn it or pay for it. It is a free gift, undeserved but freely given. Libre, mga tol. By the way, mga tol, pa-libre naman ng snacks.

**RR:** Yan ang undeserved!



**JJ:** Siyang tunay! Ah natandaaan ko na ang pangatlo, na ginawa tayong steward of God's creation at kabahagi tayo sa pagtatatag ng isang just and compassionate social order.

**Connie:** Ay, at last! Nakatama din! Van ang dahilan kung bakit natin itinataguyod ang integrity of God's creation at atin itong ina-alagaan at ipinaglalaban kontra sa mga mapanirang pamamaraan at polisiya na pinapairal.

**RR:** Tunay, palaban, makabayan! Yan lumalabas na naman ang pagka-aktibista mo, Connie.

**Connie:** Hindi noh! Van ang pinapaniwalaan natin bilang UCCP. Na hindi na lang tayo uupo't tatahimik na lang at maghintay na lang na darating ang langit. Kabahagi tayo sa paglilok at paggawa ng isang lipunan na nagsasalamin ng paghahari ng Diyos kung saan may KKB...

**RR:** Kanya-kanyang baon?

**Connie:** Hinde noh! Katarungan, Kapayapaan at Buhay na kasiya-siya! Hindi pwedeng tulad sa sinasabi naming mga Bisaya na "sigi'g lingkod-lingkod na lang," buti sana kung Tagalog na paglingkod.

**RR:** Bakit ano ba sa Bisaya ang 'lingkod-lingkod'?

**Connie:** Pa-upo-upo lang ba! Sitting pretty, ba. Pero alam mo ba na ang langgam sa amin, lumilipad. Dito sa inyo, gumagapang pa.

**RR:** Ha?! Di ko gets.

**JJ:** Hay nakul Lumang joke na yan! Ang 'langgam' kasi sa Bisaya ay 'ibon' sa Tagalog:

**RR:** Pero sa West Central Luzon daw, ang 'ebon' ay itlog pa lang,

## **Church**

**RR:** Baka lumipad tayo dito. Ano na ba ang sunod sa ating SOF?

**Connie:** Ang tungkol sa Church.

**JJ:** "No one is an island," sabi ng isang kanta. Tutuo na indibidwal nating tinatanggap ang free gift ng Diyos sa atin upang tayo'y maligtas pero kailangan nating magsamasama. Dalawang imagery na galing sa Bibliya ang ginamit. Una ay ang 'one Body of Christ.' Ayon kay Apostol Pablo, the body is made of many parts but it is still one body. Ganon din ang iglesya. Marami pero kabahagi sa iisang katawan.

Yong pangalawa ay reconciled community — Ganon din, sa isang pamayanan, maraming mamamayan pero iisa silang pamayanan. Reconciled sa Diyos at sa bawat isa.

**Connie:** At sila'y effective kung sila'y of one heart, one mind and having the same purpose.

**RR:** At sinabi pa dito na "entrusted with God's ministry."

**JJ:** Tama, remember na bago umalis si Jesus sa lupa inihablin niya ang tinatawag ngayon na "Great Commission" na makikita sa Matt. 28:19-20<sup>1</sup> at sa Mark16:15.<sup>2</sup> Ang ministry na ito ay sumasaklaw din sa Luke 4:18-19<sup>3</sup> ang tinatawag na mission statement ni Jesus, So, ang ginagawa ng Iglesya ay hindi sa kanyang sariling ministeryo kundi ang pagpapatuloy sa ministeryo at misyon ng ating Panginoon.

## **Bible**

**RR:** Mga tel, ano naman any pinaniniwalaan natin tungkol sa Bibliya?

**Connie:** Medyo may kontrobersya sa phraseology dyan. Sabi kasi, "We believe that the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history..."

**RR:** So, bakit naging kontrobersyal?

**JJ:** Gusto kasi ng iba na gawin na "the Holy Bible is the faithful witness". Kasi akala ng iba na hindi natin nirerespeto ang Bibliya. Pero maling pananaw yon. Holy Bible nga ang tawag natin eh, kaya hindi ordinaryong libro ito.



**Connie:** Tama si JJ. 'A' ang ginamit at hindi 'the' kasi ang dine-describe ay ang faithful witness. And there are other faithful witnesses naman kasi sa self-revelation ng Diyos sa atin. Nandyan ang nature or creation, nandyan ang testimony ng Church sa kasaysayan, nandyan any mga creeds at any mga pangaral ng mga Church leaders mula sa early Church hanggang ngayon. Pero special pa rin ang papel ng Bibliya dahil ito ay mag-"illumine, guide, correct and edify" sa ating mga nananampalataya.

### **Kingdom of God**

**RR:** Di ba medyo kontrobersyal din yong sumusunod na section?

**JJ:** Yong sanctification process at kingdom of God? Hindi naman sana kung talagang binabasa natin ng buong-buo ang Bibliya eh at hindi lamang sa mga gusto nating basahin.

**Connie:** At kung tinuturo ng mga pastor at mga CE workers ang mga ito.

**JJ:** Yong sanctification process siguro, ok lang. Ito yong pagbabago na nangyayari sa atin patungo sa pagiging mature at ganap na believer. Kinakanta nga natin sa CYF yan, di ba?

**RR:** Yong "Little by little everyday, Jesus is changing me!"

**Connie:** Sakto, tol. Yong ang sinasabing "God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ."

**JJ:** Pero sinasabi din na ang pagbabago ay hindi lamang personal kundi pangmalawakan din: "God is working to make the whole world into God's kingdom" din. Ayon nga sa Hallelujah's Chorus ni Handell, "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."<sup>4</sup>

**Connie:** Kung minsan any mga iba ini-equate ang kingdom of God sa langit. Pero hindi dapat ganon. Sa atin ngang nakitang mission statement ni Jesus sa Luke 4:18-19, concretely niyang ginawa ang mga ito dito sa lupa. In fact, when nagdududa si John the Baptist, pinasabi ni Jesus na ang proof ay "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them" (Matt. 11:4-5). Ibig sabihin nito na kongkreto ang pagbabago na dinala ni Hesus sa mundo, hindi lamang spiritual.

So, ito ay ginagawa na natin sa lupa, pero kasangkapan lang tayo ng Panginoon. Siya pa rin ang makakapagdala sa kaharian ng Diyos sa kanyang buong kaganapan. Ang kaganapang ito ay mangyayari sa katapusan.

**RR:** Ang Diyos ay siyang mismo magkukumpleto sa kanyang kaharian, pero hindi ibig sabihin na 'sitting pretty' na lang tayo, o 'lingkod ng lingkod' sa Bisaya, ayon kay Connie. Kaya pala sa huling paghuhukom ng mga nananampalataya na inilahad sa Mateo 25, ang test sa ating katapatan ay nababatay sa ating ginawa o hindi ginawa sa mga aba.

**JJ:** Sakto, bro. Kasi kung hindi natin ginawa sa mga aba na ating nakikita, paano na lang sa Diyos na hindi natin nakikita. But if we serve the least of Christ's brother and sisters, ginawa na rin natin to para sa ating Panginoon.

### **Afterlife**

**RR:** Tol, napag-uusapan na rin lang natin ang Huling Paghuhukom, ano naman ang pinapaniwalaan natin sa usapin ng kabilang buhay?

**JJ:** Naniniwala tayo na nabuhay na muli ang ating Panginoong Hesus, at dahil nabuhay siya muli, ito ang nagbibigay sa atin ng katiyakan na may buhay pagkatapos sa buhay natin ngayon dito sa lupa.

**Connie:** Naniniwala din tayo sa kanyang pagbabalik, at doon magkakaroon na ng buong kaganapan ang kaharian ng Diyos. Mababago ang sannilikha at tayo'y titipunin niya.

**RR:** Wow, ang gating! Maraming salamat sa tulong. Sige mga tol, kita kits na tang tayo sa Linggo, lab o na sa Linggo ng hapon para sa ating fellowship.

### **Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 28:19-20: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." [NRS']

<sup>2</sup>Mark 16:15: "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." [NRSVI]

<sup>3</sup>Luke 4:18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor: He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." [NRSV]

<sup>4</sup>Handel, based this on Revelation 11:15: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he will reign forever and ever." [ASV]

# The CYF Constitution

## Prayer

Dear God, we, the members of the Christian Youth Fellowship being a vital part of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines humbly come before You believing that You are the Author and Provider, Savior and Friend, Comforter and Guide of our lives.

We understand that the significance of fostering unity among ourselves and all Christians can help fulfill Your ministry. We therefore pray for You to strengthen our unity in Christ and deepen our commitment to become part of Your ministry.

Empower us to lead and take an active role in responding to the church and societal concerns and grant us the courage to become instruments of love, justice and peace.

Finally, we offer to You these Constitution and By-Laws, which we firmly believe are essential tools that can help us become a more effective and efficient organization. Help us therefore to become more faithful in following these instruments for greater service to Your people. We ask this, in the name of Jesus Christ, the greater Leader of our organization. Amen.

## ARTICLE I NAME

**Section 1.** The organization shall be known as the CHRISTIAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP, hereinafter referred to as CYF.

## ARTICLE II DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

**Section 1.** The CYF upholds as its fundamental faith and message Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, our Lord and Saviour. He is the head of the church, present and active in the world through the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures.

**Section 2.** The CYF commits itself to the total development of the youth for more responsive and effective leadership and service in the CYF, Church and society.

**Section 3.** The CYF exists for the service of the youth, in particular, and of the people in general, for the glory of God.

**Section 4.** The CYF lives its life in the mission: bringing good news to the poor, giving light to the blind, freedom for the captive and oppressed, food for the hungry and proclaiming creation's future (Luke 4:18-19, RSV).

**Section 5.** The CYF believes that an organization to be viable must be self-generating and self-sustaining.

**Section 6.** The CYF respects the autonomy of the local, conference and jurisdiction levels in matters pertaining to their respective communities.

**Section 7.** As stewards of God's creation, the CYF shall protect; promote, and enhance the ecological balance and integrity of creation (UCCP Constitution).

**Section 8.** The CYF enjoins itself in the decision-making processes of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

### **ARTICLE III OBJECTIVES**

The CYF commits itself to the following:

**Section 1.** The CYF shall engage in studying the Scriptures and live by it.

**Section 2.** The CYF shall conduct seminars, trainings and workshops that promote Christian leadership and discipline.

**Section 3.** The CYF shall support and participate in evangelistic and mission work.

**Section 4.** The CYF shall carry out relevant programs concerning the integrity of God's creation.

**Section 5.** The CYF shall actively participate in any ecumenical undertaking.

### **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** All youth members of the UCCP who have undergone orientation processes as provided for in the By-Laws are members of the GYF.

**Section 2.** Members are classified into regular, affiliate, honorary and associate as provided for in the By-Laws.

### **ARTICLE V THE LOCAL CHURCH CYF**

**Section 1.** The local CYF is the basic unit of the CYF and shall be composed of at least five (5) regular members.

**Section 2.** The total life and ministry of the local CYF shall be administered by a set of officers elected in accordance with the CYF By-Laws.

**Section 3.** The local CYF shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to undertake and carry out relevant programs which will respond to the total development and needs of the Church and society;
- b. to support its programs and to prepare its budget;
- c. to elect its own officers composed of, at least, the president, the vice president, the secretary, the treasurer and the auditor;
- d. to support policies and programs of the conference, jurisdiction and National Youth Assembly; and
- e. to elect its own representatives to wider judicatories.

### **ARTICLE VI THE CONFERENCE CYF**

**Section 1.** The conference CYF shall be composed of members belonging to local CYFs within the conference as defined in the UCCP Constitution.

**Section 2.** The total life and ministry of the conference CYF shall be administered by a set of officers elected in accordance with the CYF By-Laws.

**Section 3. The Conference in Session.** The conference in session shall be composed of the following:

- a. elected officers;
- b. one representative from each local CYF for every five (5) members or a major fraction thereof provided that each local CYF shall not have more than three (3) delegates; and
- c. other members as may be deemed necessary by the conference.

**Section 4.** The conference in session shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to develop and implement programs responsive to *the* needs of the conference CYF;
- b. to raise funds, prepare, and approve its budget;
- c. to elect its own officers composed of, at least, the president, the vice president, the secretary, the treasurer and the auditor;
- d. to carry out policies and implement programs of the jurisdiction and the National Youth Assembly;
- e. to elect its representatives to higher judicatories.

**Section 5.** The conference may create chapters, circuits, districts, parishes or zones to facilitate *and* coordinate the administration of their programs.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **JURISDICTION CYF**

**Section 1.** The jurisdiction CYF shall be composed on members of the conference CYFs within the jurisdiction as defined in the UCCP Constitution.

**Section 2.** The total life and ministry of the jurisdiction CYF shall be administered by *a* set of officers elected in accordance with the CYF By-Laws.

**Section 3. The Jurisdictional Assembly.** The Jurisdictional Assembly shall be composed of the following:

- a. elected officers;
- b. conference presidents;
- c. one delegate for every two hundred members or a major fraction thereof provided that each conference shall not have more than three (3) delegates; and
- d. other members as may be deemed necessary by the jurisdiction.

**Section 4.** The Jurisdictional Assembly shall meet once every two (2) years unless otherwise provided for in the CYF By-Laws.

**Section 5.** The Jurisdictional Assembly shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to develop its own programs responsive to the needs of the jurisdiction CYF;
- b. to raise funds, prepare, and approve its budget;
- c. to elect its own officers composed of, at least, the president, the vice president, the secretary, the treasurer and the auditor;
- d. to carry out policies and implement programs of the National Youth Assembly.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **THE NATIONAL CYF**

**Section 1.** All members of the local CYFs are members of the national CYF.

**Section 2.** The total life and ministry of the national CYF shall be administered by a set of officers in accordance with the CYF By-Laws.

**Section 3. The National Youth Assembly** shall be the highest governing and policy-making body of the CYF.

**Section 4.** The National Youth Assembly. shall be composed of the incumbent national CYF officers; the program committee chairpersons; conference presidents and two other conference representatives elected at large during the conference annual session provided that there will be equal gender representation.

**Section 5.** The regular session of the National Youth Assembly shall be held every four (4) years at least one week prior to the quadrennial General Assembly of the UCCP.

**Section 6.** The National Youth Assembly shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to formulate, initiate, coordinate and support programs responsive to the needs of the members;

- b. to elect the following national CYF officer as follows: the president, the secretary, the treasurer, the auditor, the program committee chairpersons;
- c. to approve the national CYF budget;
- d. to create special committees as may be deemed necessary to implement its programs and to appoint members thereof;
- e. to propose amendments to the constitution and call a Constitutional Convention for that purpose; and
- f. to review the actions of the Executive Committee.

**Section 7.** A majority of the conferences shall constitute a quorum in the National Youth Assembly.

**Section 8.** The officers of the National Youth Assembly, except the Vice Presidents, shall be elected from among the accredited delegates and must have the following qualifications:

- a. they should be active and regular members of the CYF;
- b. they should at least be eighteen (18) years of age and not more than twenty-six (26) at the age of their election;
- c. they should have actively participated in the conference and/or jurisdiction CYF;
- d. in addition to the above qualifications, the Secretary must be good in oral and written communication;
- e. in addition to the above qualifications, the Treasurer and the Auditor must have 'a working knowledge of accounting.

**Section 9. The Vice Presidents.** The jurisdiction CYF Presidents shall automatically serve as the vice presidents of the CYF.

**Section 10. Term of Office.** The officers of the CYP shall serve for a term of four (4) years without re-election.

## ARTICLE IX

### THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Section 1.** The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers of the national CYP, the chairpersons of the program committees and the chairperson of the Youth and Student Ministry Committee as corresponding member.

**Section 2.** The Executive Committee shall have the following functions:

- a. to act as interim body when the National Youth Assembly is not in session;
- b. to receive and act on reports from the President, the Treasurer, the Auditor and the program committee Chairpersons;
- c. to endorse project proposals as endorsed by the conference or jurisdiction CYFs to concerned bodies; and
- d. to exercise, oversee and provide for the effective and efficient management of its programs.

**Section 3.** The Executive Committee shall hold its regular meeting on the last week of May and hold special sessions when called by the President or upon written requests of at least three (3) voting members, provided however, that the Executive Committee shall not hold more than two (2) special sessions in a year.

**Section 4.** The presence of the majority of the voting members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum. In the event that a quorum is not met, members can convene as a caucus. Actions taken by the caucus become binding only upon ratification by a majority of the Executive Committee members through a correspondence vote not later than one and one-half (1. 1/2) months from the said caucus.

**Section 5.** In the event that any of the elective offices of the Executive Committee becomes vacant, except that of the President, by reason of death, resignation, physical or mental disability, delinquency or dereliction of duty, the Executive Committee shall appoint the person/s to the vacancy/ies concerned who shall serve the unexpired

portion of the term, provided that the replacement should be made in consultation with or upon recommendation of the jurisdiction from where the officer(s) to be replaced come/s from.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **PROGRAM COMMITTEES**

**Section 1.** There shall be four (4) regular committees of the national GYP, namely:

Christian Education and Nurture (CEN)

Christian Witness and Service (CWS)

Christian Stewardship and Resource Development (CSRDR)

Ecumenical Relations (ER)

**Section 2.** The National Youth Assembly shall elect a chairperson for each program committee provided that each jurisdiction shall head only one program committee.

**Section 3.** Each program committee shall be composed of a chairperson selected at large during the National Youth Assembly and the members of the committee shall come from the same jurisdiction of the committee chairperson.

**Section 4.** The term of office of the members of the program committees shall be co-terminus with that of the officers of the CYF.

**Section 5.** The functions and responsibilities of the committee shall be defined in the By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS AND RATIFICATION**

**Section 1.** Amendment to the constitution may be made in any of the following manners:

- a. A conference CYF may propose an amendment to the National Youth Assembly. If the amendment is approved by a 2/3 vote from all accredited delegates, the National Youth Assembly shall endorse it to all conferences for ratification.
- b. An amendment may be proposed during the National Youth Assembly. Such amendment should be coursed through a Constitutional Committee created by the Assembly in session which shall study, evaluate and make recommendations to the Assembly for the disposition of the said amendment. If the amendment is approved by 2/3 vote of all the accredited delegates, the National Youth Assembly shall endorse it to all conferences for ratification.
- c. A Constitutional Convention may be called by the National Youth Assembly for the purpose of proposing and/or revising amendments to the Constitution, The proposed amendments and/or revisions shall be submitted directly to the conferences for ratification in a referendum called for the purpose.

**Section 2.** The affirmative vote of 2/3 of the members of the conferences in session shall be necessary for the ratification of the proposed amendments and/or revision of the Constitution.

**Section 3.** The Amendment and/or revision shall become effective immediately upon 3/4 vote of all conferences and duly proclaimed by the National Youth Assembly or its Executive Committee.

**Section 4.** The Constitution can only be amended and/or revised seven (7) years after its effectivity.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Section 1.** The National Youth Assembly shall prescribe an emblem of the CYF.

**Section 2.** The ecclesiastical year of the CYF shall commence on June 1 of every year and shall end on May 31 of the following year.

**Section 3.** The Constitution shall officially be promulgated in English and shall be translated into major dialects but in case of conflict, the **Section 1.** The provisions of the Constitution, upon its effectivity as provided for in Article XIV, shall immediately bind all local, conference, jurisdiction and national CYF. All other policies, actions and procedures of the CYF inconsistent with the Constitution shall be deemed rescinded, repealed and superseded.

**Section 2.** Should there be any additional jurisdiction created, all provisions applicable to the existing jurisdictions shall be likewise applicable to it. English text shall prevail.

**Section 4.** The CYF shall have its national office at the National Offices of the UCCP at 877 Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

### **ARTICLE XIII TRANSITORY PROVISIONS**

**Section 1.** The provisions of the Constitution, upon its effectivity as provided for in Article XIV, shall immediately bind all local, conference, jurisdiction and national CYF. All other policies, actions and procedures of the CYF inconsistent with the Constitution shall be deemed rescinded, repealed and superseded.

**Section 2.** Should there be any additional jurisdiction created, all provisions applicable to the existing jurisdictions shall be likewise applicable to it.

### **ARTICLE XIV EFFECTIVITY**

**Section 1.** The affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the accredited delegates of the conferences in session shall be necessary for the ratification of the Constitution.

**Section 2.** The Constitution shall take effect upon the ratification by three-fourths (3/4) vote of all the conferences in session and upon the proclamation by the National Youth Assembly or by the Executive Committee.

## **The CYF By-Laws**

### **ARTICLE I NAME AND LOCATION**

**Section 1.** The organization shall be known as the CHRISTIAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP, hereinafter referred to as CYF.

**Section 2.** The principal office of the CYF shall be located at 877 Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

### **ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** Members are classified as follows: regular, affiliate, honorary and associate members.

- a. Regular members are members of the UCCP who have undergone the orientation processes who are between ages 12 to 30, excluding church workers.
- b. Affiliate members are non-UCCP members but are active members of the local CYFs.
- c. Honorary members are UCCP members not otherwise qualified as regular or affiliate members but are active in the local CYFs.
- d. Associate members are members from a UCCP local church who are attending another UCCP local church.

**Section 2.** Prospective members shall go through application, orientation and confirmation processes, which will be according to the CYF By-Laws. This process should at least include studying the UCCP's Statement of Faith, history of the UCCP and nature and principles of the CYF.

**Section 3.** All members are expected to actively participate in the affairs of the CYF and to contribute his time, talent and resources towards the attainment of the objectives and goals of the organization, as well as to obey the rules and policies promulgated by the various CYF judicatories where s/he belongs.

**Section 4.** The Regular members of the CYF shall have the following rights:

- a. to vote and to be voted upon;
- b. to have direct access to all the records and documents of the organization;
- c. to represent and participate in the decision-making processes of the organization.

**Section 5.** Affiliate members shall have the right to participate in all deliberations and activities, except to vote and to be voted upon.

**Section 6.** Honorary members shall have the right to participate in all deliberations and activities, except to vote and to be voted upon.

**Section 7.** Associate members shall have the right to participate in all deliberations and activities, except to vote and to be voted upon.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **LOCAL CYF**

**Section 1.** The local CYF has the following rights:

- a. to have direct access to records and documents to wider judicatories of the CYF; and
- b. to be represented in the wider judicatories of the CYF.

**Section 2. Scope of the Local Autonomy.** The CYF upholds the autonomy of the local CYF to conduct its ministry free from outside control, provided the same is in accordance with the CYF Constitution and By-Laws. The autonomy of the local CYF includes the following rights:

- a. to admit qualified persons into the membership, help ensure their nurture and spiritual development, promote and develop among them the idea of loving, service, stewardship and missionary outreach;
- b. to celebrate creative, orderly worship services yet reflective to the needs of the faith and life of the Church and responsive to the needs of the society;
- c. to do creative and strategic implementation of any program introduced by the CYF in achieving its objectives; and
- d. to do all things, as it may deem wise, necessary and proper without interfering with the wider judicatories ensuring at all times that its actions contribute to the unity and empowerment of the CYF.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **CONFERENCE CYF**

**Section 1.** The conference CYF shall have the following rights:

- a. to have direct access to records and documents to wider judicatories of the CYF;
- b. to be represented in the National Youth Assembly; and
- c. to review the actions of the Executive Committee.

**Section 2.** The conference CYF has the freedom to undertake the following rights:

- a. to celebrate creative, orderly worship services yet reflective to the needs of the faith and life of the Church and especially to the needs of the society;
- b. to do creative and strategic implementation of any program introduced by the CYF in achieving its objectives; and
- c. to do all things, as it may deem wise, necessary and proper without interfering with the wider judicatories ensuring at all times that its actions contribute to the unity and empowerment of the CYF.



## **ARTICLE V**

### **JURISDICTION CYF**

**Section 1.** The jurisdiction CYF shall have the following rights:

- a. to have direct access to records and documents to wider judicatories of the CYF;
- b. to be represented in the National Youth Assembly; and
- c. to review the actions of the Executive Committee.

**Section 2.** The jurisdiction CYP has the freedom to undertake the following rights:

- a. to celebrate creative, orderly worship services yet reflective to the needs of the faith and life of the Church and especially to the needs of the society;
- b. to do creative and strategic implementation of any program introduced by the CYF in achieving its objectives; and
- c. to do all things, as it may deem wise, necessary and proper without interfering with the wider judicatories ensuring at all times that its actions contribute to the unity and empowerment of the CYF.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **NATIONAL CYF**

**Section 1.** The national CYF shall have the following rights:

- a. to be represented in the decision-making bodies of the church; and
- b. to access information and updates from the lower judicatories of the organization.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **THE NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY**

**Section 1. Regular Session.** The regular session of the National Youth Assembly shall be held in four (4) years at least one week prior to the Quadrennial General Assembly of the UCCP at a place chosen by the Executive Committee.

**Section 2. Notice of Assembly.** Notice of the scheduled session of the National Youth Assembly shall be announced at least six (6) months prior to the date of the assembly. Any subsequent changes shall need the approval of the Executive Committee and shall be disseminated to the conferences at least one (1.) month prior to the date of the Assembly. Notices shall be sent through registered mail addressed to the CYP conference president and the Conference Minister.

**Section 3. quorum.** A majority of the conferences shall constitute a quorum in the National Youth Assembly. To pass a binding resolution or actions, the vote of the majority of all accredited delegates shall be required.

**Section 4. Manner of Voting.** Manner of voting shall be determined by secret balloting, viva vote or raising of hands provided however that voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

**Section 5. Election of the National Officers.** The election of national officers shall be conducted as follows:

- a. A Nominating and Election Committee shall be created to screen the candidates to vacant positions in accordance with the criteria and qualifications laid down by the organization and to conduct the election. It shall be composed of representatives from the existing jurisdictions duly elected by the National Youth Assembly.
- b. The Committee formally presents the candidates to the assembly together without prejudice to those who will be nominated from the floor.
- c. The Committee then conducts the election by secret ballot at a scheduled time, canvasses the results and proclaims the winners. Winning candidates are those obtaining a simple majority vote of all accredited delegates.
- d. The Committee shall submit a written report of the results of the elections to the assembly for record purposes.

**Section 6.** The following are the officers of the National Youth Assembly who shall have the following duties:

- a. The President
  1. shall preside over the regular session of the National Youth Assembly.
  2. shall preside over the regular and special meetings of the Executive Committee.
  3. shall represent the CYF in the National Council of the UCCP and other bodies requiring CYF representation.
  4. shall be an ex-officio member of all program committees and such other special committees created by the National Youth Assembly or by the Executive Committee.
- b. The Vice Presidents
  1. shall represent their respective jurisdictions in the Executive Committee.
  2. shall be an ex-officio member of the program committee handled by their respective jurisdictions.
  3. shall supervise, monitor and implement CYF programs and policies in their respective jurisdictions.
  4. if the President's office is vacant, the Vice President coming from the same jurisdiction as the president shall take over.
- c. The Secretary
  1. shall record and keep the minutes of the National Youth assembly and Executive Committee sessions and meetings.
  2. shall keep records of the membership of the CYF.
  3. shall be in-charge of all correspondence, announcements, and notices of actions of the National Youth Assembly.
  4. shall render reports to the Executive Committee when so required.
  5. shall be responsible in disseminating the minutes of the National Youth Assembly and the Executive Committee to the conferences three (3) months thereafter.
- d. The Treasurer
  1. shall receive, keep, disburse and account for the funds of the CYF.
  2. shall have custody of financial records and properties of the CYF.
  3. shall, together with the president, be the authorized representative of the CYF to open a bank account in any banking institution chosen by the Executive Committee for safe-keeping of funds and withdrawal of the same as authorized by the Executive Committee.
  4. shall render duly audited financial reports to the Executive Committee annually and the National Youth Assembly when in session and such other times as required to do so, provided however that the Executive Committee shall furnish the conferences copies of the Treasurer's report as soon as possible.
- e. The Auditor
  1. shall audit the books of the organization at least once a year and may conduct pre-audits and spot audits at anytime during the year.

**Section 7. Rotation of Presidency.** The Office of the President will be rotated among the jurisdictions. The manner of which is rotation by elimination.

**Section 8.** Elected officers shall assume office at the start of the ecclesiastical year.

## ARTICLE VIII EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Section 1. Removal of Committee Members.** For gross negligence of the Executive Committee, or, for violation of the Constitution and By-Laws, such officer or member concerned may be removed by two-thirds (2/ 3) vote of the members present in a meeting called for the purpose or a Regular Execom meeting, provided that the affirmative vote of removal shall not be less that the number required for quorum. The grounds for negligence shall be absenteeism without any valid reason for two (2) consecutive meetings, either special or regular.

**Section 2. Notice of Meetings.** Notice of meetings shall be sent to members of the Executive Committee one (1) month before the scheduled meeting, and two weeks for special meetings.

## **ARTICLE IX YOUTH COORDINATOR'S OFFICE**

**Section 1.** There shall be a youth coordinator's office charged with day-to-day affairs of the Cf F.

**Section 2. Accountability of the Youth Coordinator.** The Youth Coordinator's Office shall be directly responsible and accountable to the Executive Committee and the National Youth Assembly.

**Section 3. Duties.** The Youth Coordinator shall have the following duties:

- a. to oversee the day-to-day affairs of the CYF;
- b. to coordinate and follow-up the programs of the regular and special committees; and
- c. to do all other tasks as may be assigned to him/her from time to time by the CYF Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE X PROGRAM COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Functions.** The Program Committees shall prepare the four-year program of the CYF consistent with the instructions of the National Youth Assembly and the Executive Committee and the same shall be submitted to the latter for approval. Once approved, the committees shall supervise and/or implement and from time to time submit a report to the Executive Committee whenever necessary. A final report shall be prepared for inclusion in the report of the Executive Committee to the National Youth Assembly.

**Section 2. Responsibility.** Each program committee shall have the power and may efficiently utilize the available resources for the implementation and/or supervision of the programs as approved.

**Section 3. Removal of Committee Members.** Committee members may be removed and replaced for gross negligence of duties upon the recommendation of the committee and approval of the National President in consultation with the jurisdiction.

### **Section 4. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND NURTURE**

The CEN shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to develop nurture programs and activities and come up with materials and other resources needed by the various CYF judicatories in their own nurture undertakings;
- b. to have activities on leadership development, including, but not limited to seminars and workshops; and
- c. to promote and disseminate exposure programs of the CYF and other organizations to the conferences.

### **Section 5. CHRISTIAN WITNESS AND SERVICE**

The CWS shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to promulgate programs consistent with the thrust of the Church and the CYF;
- b. to develop programs and strategies which shall manifest the principles which the organization stands for; and
- c. to coordinate its endeavors with those undertaken by the CYF groups and other bodies inside or outside the church.

### **Section 6. CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

The CSRSD shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to initiate programs for effective accumulation and utilization of financial resources of the organization;
- b. to prepare the national budget;
- c. to ensure that the funds of the CYF are managed based on sound financial policies and systems; and
- d. to keep an updated membership profile of the CYF at the least cost.

### **Section 7. ECUMENICAL RELATIONS**

The ERC shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. to affirm the catholicity and ecumenicity of the church;
- b. to support in the efforts of the inter-church cooperation and union in the Philippines and in the world;

- c. to engage in education and cooperation in all levels of organization;
- d. to select and endorse representatives to various ecumenical affairs; and
- e. to require participants to render re-echo.

## ARTICLE XI FINANCES

**Section 1.** The CYF shall have the authority to raise, receive, keep and disburse money and fund of the organization, as well as, to acquire, maintain, administer and dispose real and personal properties of the organization.

**Section 2. Fees.** There shall be levied annually from every member of the CYF the amount of one (1) peso, which shall constitute the investment fund of the organization. Details of the use and purpose of the funds shall be decided by the Executive Committee.

**Section 3. Pledge.** Each working member of the CYF shall be encouraged to pledge a portion of his/her income to form the working capital of the organization annually.

## ARTICLE XII TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

**Section 1.** The present national officers of the CYF shall serve in hold over capacities until the new national officers shall have been elected and qualified under the new Constitution and these By-Laws.

**Section 2.** The first set of national officers elected under the new Constitution and these By-Laws shall serve starting June 1, 2002.

## ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS

**Section 1.** These By-Laws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of all conferences in session.

# The CYF Logo

(logo here)

The **green bamboo cross** signifies a Christianity that is rooted in our culture. The CYF believes in contextualized and indigenized Christianity; a Christianity that is relevant to the Filipino culture and context. The color green points to the freshness and youthful character of the organization - fresh and youthful in its vigor, zeal, idealism and commitment. It is also an expression of the nationalism of the youth.

The **six hands lifting the cross** stand for the six jurisdictions of the CYF united in a common goal and purpose carrying on Christ's ministry.

The **red orange flame** stands for two things. First, it symbolizes the belief in the Triune-God; three yet one. Second, it means commitment that is steadfast and total. This commitment is summed up in the maxim, "**Those who would give light must endure burning.**"

# The Jurisdictions

The CYF is geographically grouped into six (6) jurisdictions.

# North Luzon Jurisdiction

The UCCP North Luzon Jurisdiction (N:LJ) is a thriving community of faith covering the conferences of Apayao, Central Luzon, Highland, Ilocos Sur-Abra, Manila North, North Central Luzon, North Luzon-Amburayan, Northeast Luzon, Northeast Nueva Ecija, North Highland, Northwest Luzon and West Central Luzon. At present, it is the largest jurisdiction of the UCCP with its 12 conferences representing about 73,000 in regular membership. Its members vary from being indigenous, to peasants and workers, professionals and business people; students and out-of-school-youths.

As the NLJ responded to God's call, the jurisdiction conscientiously saw to it that it was guided by the thrusts and programs mandated by the UCCP General Assembly. It is worth mentioning that the North Luzon Jurisdictional Area-through the Office of the Area Bishop-has focused much of its effort to very important concerns, which has been referred to as Emphases, primarily to address the loud call for GROWTH.

Under the guidance of Bishop Marino IB Inong, the Bishop assigned to the Jurisdiction from EY 2006, with Rev. Marcela Alegojoyo who serves as Program Coordinator and the support of the Jurisdictional Area Cabinet, NLJ took its programmatic journey through the many areas of Mission and Evangelism, Stewardship Development and the campaign and strengthening of Community Ministries. It is also a stronghold of colleges and ministerial formation centers, foremost among which is the Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Baguio City; the Union Christian College in San Fernando, La Union; the Northern Christian College in Laoag City; and other church-related academic institutions such as Kalinga Academy (Lubuagan, Kalinga), St. Tonis College (Bulanao, Tabuk, Kalinga), Tabuk Institute (Dagupan, Tabuk, Kalinga), Ifugao Academy (Kiangan, Ifugao), Abra Mountain Development Center (Bocloc, Abra) and the Apayao Community Learning Center. Service institutions such as the CONDORA-Damortis in La Union and the Bethany Hospital in San Fernando La Union, respectively, can also be found in the Jurisdiction.

NLJ is an active partner and supporter of the church's lay organizations including the Christian Youth Fellowship. It was host to the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Youth Camp where it ably showed its capacity to nurture and care for the youth not only through its physical accommodation of the UCCP young people but also in its enabling spiritual guidance of the youth as it journeys with them through the vision of a transformed church and society towards an abundant and meaningful life for all.

(insert here map of North Luzon Jurisdiction)

## A Profile of Change: South Luzon Jurisdictional Area

History is said to be the lengthened shadow of one man. If that be so, then the South Luzon Jurisdiction (SU) is the shadow of one man - Jesus Christ himself.

### Location

South Luzon is bounded on the west by the South China Sea, on the south by the San Bernardino Strait, on east by the Philippine Sea and on north by the Babuyan Channel. It embraces four regions namely:

**National Capital Region (NCR)** is a special administrative region that contains the capital of the country, Manila; the country's most populous city, Quezon City; and an additional 15 more cities and municipalities. The region is

more popularly known as Metro Manila. It is the only region in the country that has no provinces, and is the most densely populated with over 10 million people living in a 636 km<sup>2</sup> area.

**CALABARZON (Region IV-A)**, one of the newest regions of the country, was previously a part of Southern Tagalog (Region IV). It is one of the most populated areas of the country. The name of the region is actually an acronym that stands for its provinces, which are Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, and Rizal. The Tagalogs are the dominant ethnic group in this region, with Tagalog as the main language.

**MIMAROPA (Region IV-B)**, along with CALABARZON is the newest region of the country, and was previously a part of Southern Tagalog (Region IV). It contains most of the islands in the Luzon group. The name of the region is actually an acronym that stands for its provinces, which are Marinduque, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Romblon, and Palawan.

**Bicol Region (Region V)** occupies the Bicol Peninsula at the southeastern end of Luzon island, plus the outlying islands which include the island provinces of Catanduanes and Masbate. The remaining mainland provinces are Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Sorsogon. The region's administrative center is Legazpi City in Albay. The inhabitants are of Bicolano descent with Bikol as the main language.

### **The Beginnings**

Under the UCCP Constitution and By-Laws, the jurisdiction serves as the coordinating council of the various church units in a specific region. This form of government is a cross between the episcopacy as in Methodism, where the bishops are the chief clerics, and the Congregationalism of the Disciples and Baptist traditions in which each member church is self-governing. A Jurisdictional Area Cabinet (JAC) sets the guidelines for implementation by the Office of the Bishop.

### **Jurisdictional Bishops**

Bishop Cipriano L. Navarro	1948-1960
Bishop Marciano C. Evangelista	1960-1968
Bishop Estanislao Q. Abainza	1968-1972
Bishop Eligio B.A. Hernandez	1972-1974
Bishop Eduardo B. Panganiban	1974-1982
Bishop Erme R. Camba	1982-1986
Bishop Gabriel A. Garol	1986-1990
Bishop Eliezer M. Pascua	1990-1998; 2002-2006
Bishop Melinda P. Briones	1998-2002
Bishop Jessie S. Suarez	2006-present

The nine conferences constituting the SLJ are strategically and geographically located. These are:

**Kumperensya ng Timog Kaniurang Katagalugan** - some parts of Cavite and Batangas

**Lowland Cavite-South Manila Conference** - South Manila and some part of Cavite

**Mindoro Conference** — entire province of Mindoro

**North Bicol Conference** - provinces of Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur and Burias Island of Masbate

**Northeast Southern Tagalog Conference** - some parts of Laguna, Batangas and Quezon

**Palawan Associate Conference** - islands of Palawan

**South Bicol Conference** - provinces of Albay, Catanduanes, Sorsogon and Ticao Island of Masbate

**Southern Tagalog Conference** - some parts of Laguna, Batangas, Quezon and Marinduque

**United Metropolis Conference** - the heart of Metro Manila

### **Ministries**

The Jurisdiction expresses its commitment to the Great Commission through several programs such as:

Clergy Formation Program

Continuing Theological Education Lay Ministries

Church Related Organizations

Family Ministry

### Challenges in the Next Century

Through this transition, the South Luzon Jurisdiction, as a major component of God's people in the UCCP faith communities, must remain firm in her loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord of the Church, and to His saving power to redeem and heal. While history will judge the motivations of the heart, ultimately it is the God of History who must wield the refiner's fire that will burn away the cross during judgment.

### SLJC-CYF through the years...

Under the Constitution, the jurisdictional CYF shall have the following responsibilities:

- To develop their own program responsive to their needs;
- To raise funds, prepare and approve their budget;
- To elect their own set of officers;
- To promulgate their by-laws and policies to govern their affairs in accordance with this Constitution;
- To carry-out policies and implement programs of the National Assembly; and
- To elect their representatives to the higher judicatories.

Most do not know, however, that the essence of the above-mentioned responsibilities had already been shouldered by the first SLJC-CYF president, Patricia Lynn P. Salvador. She was elected on August 4, 1974 at the UCCP Headquarters, in Quezon City in the presence of Bishops Abainza and Hernandez. She was re-elected in 1976. During her tenure as an active SLJC-CYF president, she passed the bar examinations, proof that her faithfulness in serving God did not hinder her from doing well academically.

It was then under the leadership of lawyer Patricia Lynn P. Salvador and other UCCP CYFers that the National CYF Constitution and By-Laws were drafted.

The SLJC-CYF presidents who followed Pat Salvador consistently implemented the spirit of the NCYF Constitution and By-Laws. They are:

Mr. Ben C. Organo	-	1978-1982
Mr. Dan Eadvert Dames, Sr.	-	1982-1983
Mr. Carlito Signo	-	1983-1984
Engr. Eddie Cacha	-	1984-1986
Mr. Gabriel Romero	-	1986-1988
Mr. Mike Quiros	-	1988-1990
Mr. Luisito Saliendra	-	1990-1992
Mr. Rommel Linatoc	-	1992-1998
Mr. Ian Joseph Saliendra	-	1998-2002
Mr. Czar Quinto	-	2002-2006
Mr. Jayjay Graciano R. Dames	-	2006-2008
Ms. Elsa Q. Lopez	-	2008 - present

The SLJC-CYF has likewise published ABM Manual to clarify misconceptions about the young people of our church. This manual states the purpose, the vision, mission and goals of the SLJC-UCCP.

SLJC-CYF leaders also participated in the discussion/consultation/forum/workshops of the proposed UCCP Constitution and By Laws before it was approved and ratified. The SUC-CYF caravan put the leadership in touch with youth in different conferences.

(insert here map of the SLJ AREA MAP)

Because of their concern for the financial conditions of the jurisdiction, the youth have embarked on a Finance Resource Mobilization Program to inform the CYFs on Christian Stewardship.

It is inspiring to note that the most of the early Protestants in the country were young people, who, with their youthful zeal and dynamic evangelistic efforts paved the way for the vigorous growth of Protestantism in Philippines.

Today, our young people are involved in campus ministries. Many of our SUC-CYFers wish to enter the ministry in response to the challenges of the time. They need our prayers.

#### **Sources:**

SLJC Resource Book 1974-1994  
Oikos Mission Update Vol. 8 No. 1  
SLJC Resource Book 1974-1994  
UCCP Youth Resource Guide 1991  
CYF Hand Book 2003

## **East Visayas Jurisdiction**

(insert here map of EVJ)

The EVJ was created in 2006 with the approval of the General Assembly of the division of the former Visayas Jurisdiction. It covers the three islands of Leyte, Samar, and Masbate. It is composed of five (5) conferences with more than 250 local churches, worshipping congregations and mission Leyte, Samar, and Masbate. It is composed of five (5) conferences with more than 250 local churches, worshipping congregations and mission outreaches. These conferences are: **North Eastern Leyte Conference, Southern-Western Leyte Conference, Inc., Masbate Conference, Samar Island District Conference, and Northern-Western Samar Conference.**

Like the other jurisdictions, the EVJ coordinates, promotes and implements programs and other undertakings of the Conferences, consistent with the program thrusts of the General Assembly. It also assess and evaluates the results of the programs and thereafter submits its recommendations to the General Assembly.

Among the programs of the jurisdiction is the design of a comprehensive human resource development program for the conferences within its jurisdictional area.

One of the projects that the jurisdiction is spearheading is the Guinsaugon Project, where relief goods were distributed to the victims of the mudslide. A housing project and livelihood assistance is also part of this endeavor.

## **West Visayas Jurisdiction**

#### **Jurisdiction Background**

WVJ is one of the newest jurisdictions of the UCCP. It was one of the two jurisdictions that was the result of the division of the former Visayas Jurisdiction (V.1), which was officially approved by the General Assembly last May 2006. Thereafter, the VJ-CYF Execom took the necessary steps for the organization of the two new jurisdictions, WVJ and EVJ.



The WVJ-CYF is comprised of CYF members from the various local churches that belong to the islands that are geographically located west of the Visayas, namely: Cebu, Bohol, Negros, Siquijor, Panay and Guimaras. There are more than 270 local churches and worshipping congregations that constitute the six (6) conferences of WVJ. The island-conferences are separated by four bodies of water, which are: Iloilo straight, Panay Gulf, Tañon Straight, and the Bohol Straight.

Favored with a balmy climate and sheltered from typhoons and heavy monsoon rains, the islands of WVJ are major producers of fruit, maize, vegetables, coconuts and sugar cane. The principal industries of the WVJ provinces include coal mining, fishing, agriculture, sugar cane planting, and the manufacture of wine, cloth, pottery, and refined sugar.

The islands covered by WVJ also offer beautiful travel destinations. The most notable of these are: Boracay Island, the historical landmarks of Iloilo City, the Chocolate Hills and blood compact site of Bohol, the mountains and caves of Oriental Negros, Metro Cebu, and the beautiful beaches of Siquijor Island.

The primary dialects of the region are Cebuano and Hiligaynon.

(insert here WVJ map)

#### The Conferences

1. **Bohol Conference, Inc. (BO)** — is comprised of the local churches that are scattered around the beautiful island of Bohol, which is home to the famous Chocolate Hills, Panglao Island, Hinagdanan Cave, and the world's smallest primate, the Tarsier. BCI-CYF holds the distinction of having the most number of delegates/participants during their Christmas conference/fellowships, welling up to an estimate of 400-700 CYF members. The BCI-CYF are very active in holding summer fellowships, camps during school breaks, visitations, sports fests, literary and musical competitions among the youth.
2. **Cebu Conference, Inc. (CCI)** — is home of the CYF members belonging to the three circuits of Cebu, with around 70 local churches and worshipping congregations. CCI is famous for Cebu City, which is considered an international seaport that ranks as the second most significant urban center in the Philippines, after Manila. Cebu also includes several adjacent small islands, including Mactan Island. UCCP-Bradford, one of the main churches of the Visayas is also located in Cebu. CYF Members of CBI are known for being good musicians and their literary works. In fact, they publish a magazine bi-annually, which delves on topics about the youth, church ministries, literary pieces and original musical compositions. CCI office is near the WVJ office at Osmeña Boulevard, Cebu City.
3. **Central Negros Associate Conference (CNAC)** - is the newest member of WVJ, being originally part of NSDC. Its creation as a conference was approved last April 2006, during the Annual Conference of NSDC. CNAC is composed of about 60-70 local churches and worshipping congregations in the municipalities of Mabinay and Bayawan, in Oriental Negros. The terrain surrounding CNAC is mostly mountainous and rocky, and is home to beautiful waterfalls and majestic caves. As a new conference, CNAC CYFs actively engage in acquaintances and visitations to their member churches, especially those that are far from the town proper.
4. **Negros-Siquijor District Conference (NSDC)** - is one of the most active conferences in WVJ and was one of the original members of the former Visayas Jurisdiction. Due to the increasing number of UCCP members in the NSDC and its large area of responsibility, NSDC was divided into two in the late 1990s, giving birth to North Negros Conference (NNC). In 2006, NSDC was further divided into two when CNAC was created. The CYFs of NSDC are known for regularly holding an annual Summer Caravan, which covers the whole Negros and Siquijor Islands. NSDC is also famous for Silliman University, the oldest Protestant university in the country. NSDC CYF is regularly holding bible studies, monthly visitations to local churches and annual Christmas Conferences.
5. **North Negros Conference (NNC)** - is the second youngest member of the jurisdiction, being originally part of NSDC. NNC is composed of around 80 local churches and worshipping congregations spread across Negros

Occidental and parts of Oriental Negros. The CYFs of NNC are known for holding sports fests, musical competitions, and many other gatherings.

- 6. Western Visayas Conference (WVC)** - is the conference composed of Hiligaynon-speaking provinces of WVJ. The WVC includes churches in Antique, Iloilo, and some parts of Capiz. These areas are known for their majestic beaches and various historical landmarks, as well as the La Paz Batchoy of Iloilo. CYF members of WVC are good musicians and active facilitators of the annual Vacation Church School of their conference. Their conference office is at UCCP-Dungon, Jaro, Iloilo City.

The WVJ-CYF is vigorous in strengthening ties with the conferences through visitations, trainings, and assemblies, as well as in being a channel of the National CYF in Program implementation.

(insert here Silliman University picture)

## Northwest Mindanao Jurisdiction

(insert here NWMJ map)

The NWMJ adheres to the vision, mission and goals of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. It also works within the program thrusts for the quadrennium 2006-2010 approved during the General Assembly at Digos City last May 2006, to wit:

1. Shared understanding of the faith of the Church.
2. Strengthened internal human resources, particularly the church workers and the enablers that would ensure responsible and effective church leadership for generations to come.
3. Deepening of the Church's understanding of the state, needs and sentiments of members and of local churches through an information-based analysis of needs and planning process.
4. Vibrant and contextualized worship life of congregations, stronger fellowship and warm caring system in our faith communities.
5. Steadfast prophetic witness of the Church in the communities amidst the wounds afflicting the society.
6. Stronger inter-faith, ecumenical and international relationship and meaningful expression of partnership.

In responding to the call of the time, the NWMJ works with God's people by engaging in seven (7) program ministries of the church, each described as follows:

### **1. Evangelism and Church Development (ECD)**

ECD is an affirmation that the church exists for mission. Generally, it serves to help nurture and equip local churches to respond to the call for discipleship, witness and service. The various initiatives undertaken by the local churches and the conferences will increase in the number of congregations as the commitment of the church to the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.

### **2. Christian Education and Nurture (CEN)**

CEN is the educating and nurturing arm of the Church. From conceptualization towards publication, this, ministry provides materials for the local churches and supports technically the ECE centers with training and equipping of ECE teachers in teaching skills and handling children properly.

### **3. Community Ministries**

Meaningful community ministries will be developed at the local church and conference levels. The local church is the primary focus of our mission, and it will trail-blaze new ministries for Human Rights Advocacy, protecting the integrity of creation, justice and peace advocacy, and other people's issues - ministries that are grounded in and appropriate to the specific contexts of each congregation. Local bodies will also be proactive in organizing relief services, and mercy missions to victims of disasters. A clear program on Justice, Peace and Human Rights shall be initiated at all levels of our church life. A legal group to provide legal services from the conference to the national level, and a group to engage in policy lobbying, networking and advocacy, and other ways of helping ushering in the Kingdom of God in our society.

#### **4. Partnership and Ecumenical Relations**

Partnerships and ecumenical relationships will continue to be sought out and nurtured as we live out our identity as a untied and uniting church and our vision of the household of God, we will actively participate with others outside our UCCP family as we seek the restoration of the individual to full humanhood and the transformation of society to usher in the Kingdom of God.

#### **5. Stewardship and Resource Development**

- a. Our theology of stewardship shall be integral to all of our ministries, both new *and* existing programs, members will be educated in the local churches specifically on stewardship, and we will apply our theology to the way in which we manage our programs and ministries. We will develop our programs intentionally, so that we may witness to God's ownership, not only of our finances, but off all things in all areas of our lives.
- b. Conferences and local churches will take on a larger role in developing and managing church projects. Real property-based projects will be developed. Mutual support to church community programs will be implemented at the local church level. Church-related institutions will be made more accessible to local churches to support new projects and ministries. A community project of national or international scope may be implemented as we work together, the larger Church to demonstrate God's love to the world.
- c. The policies and systems of property development and management will be disseminated to better enable our local bodies to employ these principles. These will empower our local churches and conferences to utilize their property more fully to accomplish the mission of the church.

#### **6. Institutional Ministries**

Our UCCP-owned and related hospitals will continue to be an expression of our commitment to carrying on the healing ministry of Christ and working towards abundant life for all people. We will employ strategies to better support our hospitals and more fully utilize their vital services. Amidst the increasing challenges of privatization of health care, we must also continue to find ways to minister holistically to all people, especially those who cannot afford medical care.

We will strengthen our relationships with church-owned and church-related institutions (schools and service centers) so that they may become more concrete and effective expressions as mission arms of the Church.

#### **7. The Office of the Ministry and Lay Empowerment**

The Magna Carta will be a companion of church workers in their life and ministry. Its current version will be continually and systematically studied by faith communities and by all judicatories of the church. We expect that in the course of these studies, issues in relation to church workers will find enlightenment that would lead to resolution of these issues. The need for a human resource development program has been enshrined in our 1993 CBL. This program will serve the church as we purposely cultivate and nurture our church workers and lay leaders for Christ's ministry.

With these program thrusts and ministries, the NWMJ engages in:

1. ECD orientation and training, with all conferences committing to increasing the number of local churches, worshipping congregations, and outreaches in their respective localities.

2. Delivery of early childhood education (ECE) books and other pertinent materials to all conferences, and trainings for lay ministry and teachers.
3. Distribution of relief goods, medical services and financial assistance to victims of calamities and those in conflict areas.
4. Hosting and organizing peace fora and human rights orientation, and consultation/orientation on community ministries.
5. Pursuit of partnership endeavors, specifically with North Carolina Nevada Conference.
6. Continued wider mission support, orientation and implementation of management systems, and property development efforts.
7. Strengthening of relationships with the five (5) CRIs.
8. Conduct of continuing theological education, pastoral clinics, assemblies and conferences with for church workers' development.

## Southeast Mindanao Jurisdiction

(insert here SEMJ map)

SEMJ consists of six (6) conferences,

Cotabato Annual Conference (CAC);  
 South Cotabato-Sarangani District (SCSDC);  
 Agusan District Conference (ADC);  
 Northeastern Davao District Conference  
 Southern Mindanao District Conference (SMDC); and  
 Surigao District Conference (S DC)

Several church-related institutions (also be found in their area of responsibility. They are:

Brokenshire College in Madapo and Davao, City and in Lagao, General Santos City;  
 Brokenshire Integrated Health Ministries, Inc;  
 Southern Christian College in Midsayap, Cotabato City;  
 UCCP Social Concerns Foundation, Inc.;  
 Mindanao Institute in Cabadbaran, Agusan del Sur; and  
 Mindanao Christian Service Foundation in Lagao, General Santos City

These CRIs partner with the church in enhancing various ministries and its impact in the communities where they are located.

Church membership in the jurisdiction grew from more than 56, 770 in EY 2006-07 to more than 64,700 in 2008-09, with signs of further growth in the future. In the same period, the number of local churches increased from 377 to 422. This rise in membership is complimented with ongoing education and empowerment program for both lay and church workers.

Like other jurisdictions, SENU also pursues various programs in Christian Education and Nurture, Community Ministries, Partnerships and Ecumenical Relations, and Christian Stewardship and Resource Development. Their trusts are translated into the following activities:

Early Childhood Education Summer Class Programs

Early Childhood Education Skills Trainings

Various activities for children like Vacation Church School, Sunday School, Children's Congress and Art Workshops, and Children's Festivals

Distribution of various liturgical and learning materials

While much fervor is observable in carrying out various ministries in the jurisdiction, there is an alarming increase of human rights violations of church workers and members. Amidst such threats and intimidations, workers in the jurisdiction still stand firm in its ministry to protect life and in pursuing peace based on justice. They continually do advocacies, various forms of assistance to victims and communities - legal, medical, relief and rehabilitation, educational, psycho-social - even peace sanctuaries for those who receive threats. All of these are part of SEMJ's Community Ministries.

*(insert here picture of young people)*

*Young people in SEMJ are quite active in the various activities and programs for young people. Below are CYF members and officers of SMDC during their annual conference.*

# Our Knowing

## Jesus Christ: Our Fundamental Faith and Message

Rev. Lowell Tac-an

The CYF upholds as its fundamental faith and message JESUS CHRIST, the Son of the Living God, our Lord and Savior. He is the Head of the Church, present and active in the world through the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Holy Scriptures.

The ministry of the CYF, as well as of the whole Church, is derived from the very ministry of Jesus Christ. This principle affirms the centrality of Jesus Christ in our Christian faith. It declares that Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, is both God and human in which through Him — the Eternal, Infinite, and Omnipotent — became flesh and lived among us. It is our affirmation that God acts in history in which we look at everything from the perspective of our faith in Christ. And God in Christ acts in history in order to be in solidarity with God's people and to lead them to a place of love, justice and peace.

Proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord is to acknowledge that He is supreme and that He occupies a place no one else can occupy. To Him and to Him alone is full allegiance given. "There can be no other Lord if he is truly Lord," says Robert McAfee Brown. We continue to work in every possible way of reaching and nurturing people inside and outside the church, to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in full and active participation in the local church and into responsible discipleship in all aspects of our lives in the world.

The Church is in the world and the Church is the gathered people of God who have responded to Christ's call in which Jesus Christ is the Head, who established the ministry of spreading the Gospel and of the sacraments under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit gives courage, power, and confidence in proclaiming the Good News in the temple, to the market places, to the mountains, to the streets and to the ends of the earth. Proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord is to acknowledge that He is supreme and that He occupies a place no one else can occupy. To Him and to Him alone is full allegiance given. "There can be no other Lord if he is truly Lord," says Robert McAfee Brown. We continue to work in every possible way of . reaching and nurturing people inside and outside the church, to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in full and active participation in the local church and into

The empowering of the Holy Spirit is a manifestation of God's presence and empowerment to the person who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit makes faith real and vital in the lives of every believer in order to continue to stand on God's Word as the foundation for all participation in God's mission. It is from the Holy Spirit that we receive the passion to witness. "God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord." (2 Timothy 1:7-8a).

And we must understand that faith is both personal and social, not private and individualistic. The ministry of the CVF and of the whole church is a corporate enterprise in which the whole community of faith can and should be involved. We are called for the ministry of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation. We are called to be bearers of the Good News who can bring the Gospel into every condition of humankind in which the Word is free to engage and empower all people. And we are called to always renew our commitment in order to proclaim that God's reign has come and calling all to live in that reign now.

## A Letter to the CYF

Sophie Lizares-Bodegon

My child, hold on to your wisdom and insight.<sup>1</sup>

**Dear CYF,**

There is something about Proverbs 3:21 that is unusual —dangerous and subversive even. Taken on its face, it is dangerous. Yet it affirms so much, that it could well be subversive!

You have invited me to reflect with you on leadership and development through the Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF). I wonder if this is a sign of the times. Those of us who grew up in the 1960s and 1970s trusted no one above 30. And now you have asked me to write about why you are doing what you are doing. Although still puzzled. I find myself writing you anyway. As I do, the words of a young thoughtful woman ring in my ears: "Most, if not all of us, are at a loss. It's not clear why we're living our lives the way we do...There's always a sense of uncertainty, not about the future, but about the present: What exactly are we doing? Why is this what we do?"<sup>2</sup>

Much has been written about the folly of youth, their recklessness and aimlessness, their lack of experience, and yes, their deficit in wisdom and insight. Yet the Bible has such statements as the one above, which contradicts common knowledge and the experience of many youth themselves. The Bible is after all about reversal and about God's invitation for people to participate in transformation. We see this clearly in the Magnificat, the song of exaltation of Mary, who as a 14-year-old girl, clearly saw God's vision for the world. Today 21 centuries later, God continues to invite all young people to proclaim the Good News in words and actions so that God's Shalom may come in full.

Let me draw from Proverbs and the Letters to Timothy, books which are frequently cited in texts addressed to the youth, and put them in the light of 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges.<sup>3</sup> Using these codes of conduct, I invite you and your friends to consider some biblico-theological foundations for the principles that guide the CYF as it seeks to develop youth for leadership and service. Allow me to focus on four themes: setting a vision, claiming personal authority, building community, and empowering others.

### **Set a vision: Be wise**

*Get wisdom and insight! Do not forget what I say. Do not abandon wisdom, and she will protect you: love her, and she will keep you safe. Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do. Whatever else you get, get insight. (Prov. 4:5-7)*

Traditionally children *and* youth are better seen but not heard. They are expected to follow in the footsteps and thought patterns of their parents and leaders including those in church. In traditional societies, young people are not trained to think critically and instead are expected to abide by the rules of the clan, the tribe, and the firm. The consequence is being disowned, cast out, or fired. Modern cultures swing the other way, goading young to be successful and scientific. There is little space for legends and spirituality, for idealism and altruism, for weakness and failure.

In the Philippines, traditional and modern cultures co-exist with a third type, which sociologists call the post-modern. The emphasis is on deconstruction, or the critique of traditional and modern explanations and goals in life. In the face of a globalized world where flexibility and speed are confronting traditional religion and cultures, youth today can hardly discern about what they stand for. Katrina Stuart Santiago, a young woman, writes: "We

are faced with nothing but the dregs of these institutions, now all unstable, often unintelligible, usually in the process of compromise. It's practically a non-space of resistance and liberation, with uncertain enemies and even less certain ideologies to back us up."<sup>4</sup> No wonder the post-modern emphasis is on what is experiential, authentic and holistic. With all the dismantling, the challenge is to present something that is whole.

The church, however, still has to fully recognize that a new culture is emerging and that a new worldview is taking shape. Many congregations are changing mechanically. As a way of, attracting back the members whom they had lost to the "competition," many congregations simply adopt elements from the charismatic movement. They introduce praise songs, get a passionate preacher (preferably with a gift for healing) and hold more bible studies — the less intellectual, the more emotional, the better. It is a spiritualized Jesus who is praised as Lord. Critical of the dualistic approach stressing the disembodied Jesus, other congregations swing towards a political Gospel, expecting sermons abundantly sprinkled with the latest statistics on human rights abuses and calls to action against the latest law that further opens up the country to local elite and foreign domination. It is the incarnated Jesus who is uphelel. Unfortunately, both approaches caricature God and are easily picked up by the youths' "crap detectors."

Like all young Filipinos today, Timothy was advised to be critical of false teaching, statements that are passed on as truth simply because they are spoken from a position of authority. 'They want to be teachers of God's law, but they do not understand their own words or the matters about which they speak with so much confidence.'<sup>5</sup> Many youth challenge the contradictions in what adults say and do, the meaninglessness of traditional rituals, and, the emptiness of exhortations to faith, hope and love without the backing of authentic action. You yourself would be outraged by some of the advice to Timothy including the one that women are to be silent in church,

Although youth are experts at deconstruction, however, it is important to know the difference between critical thinking and cynicism. As Christians we are also responsible for constructing a whole from the pieces. While recognizing the wisdom of the youth, Proverbs advises that it is not enough to be intelligent or to follow a program for personal development and social transformation. Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do. Do not abandon wisdom, and she will protect you: love her, and she will keep you safe. Wisdom here is defined as trusting in the Lord with all your heart and never relying on what you know.<sup>6</sup> Christians are to live in the tension of



human knowledge and at the same time revering and serving God. In a broken world, we are called to proclaim God's vision that another world is indeed possible.

### **Claim Personal Authority: Follow Jesus**

*Whenever you possibly can, do good to those who need it. Never tell your neighbors to wait for tomorrow if you can help them now. Don't plan anything that will hurt your neighbors; they live beside you, trusting you. Don't argue with others for no reason when they have never done you harm. Don't be jealous of violent people or decide to act as they do, because the Lord hates people who do evil, but he takes righteous people into his confidence. (Pray 3:27-32)*

"Whenever you possibly can" -these words highlight the ever-present and numerous opportunities to respond to Wisdom who is calling out in the streets and marketplaces.<sup>7</sup> How different that voice is from the sounds of today, enticing people to the worship of new idols -consumer goods, fun and excitement. Backed by millions spent on marketing studies, advertisers tempt younger and younger populations to buy the latest cell phone—or at least the latest ring tone, smoke the cigarette that would make them cool, or use the cream that would turn them into a movie star. As standards break down, there are no more heroes, neither are their villains. No wonder, many youth are "easily satisfied with ourselves, and that's where the problem lies. We can do volunteer work for an NGO by day and party with abandon at night without feeling conflicted."<sup>8</sup> Yet 53 percent of married Filipinos are under 30 years old with the responsibilities of marriage and family.

The exhortations from Proverbs are echoed in many of the household codes in the epistles including the letters to Timothy. Even during Timothy's time in the century, most people in the Roman Empire assumed that the head of the household (*pater familias*) had absolute control over his family, his slaves, and other property. Although many directives in the letters to Timothy may not longer be acceptable today, they go against the code of that time by enjoining men to act responsibly. Throughout the text are directives to strive for righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.<sup>9</sup> Written with passion and conviction, the instructions stem from the writer's commitment to proclaim Jesus Christ as Savior and the desire "to arouse" in the new disciple, 'the love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and a genuine faith."<sup>10</sup>

As a way of encouraging youth, I Timothy 4:12 is most often quoted, To not let anyone look - down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith and purity." Clearly, being "an example" necessitates claiming personal responsibility and leadership roles not only among the youth but also in wider society. Although humility, generosity, patience and faith are prerequisite virtues, the writer also uses strong action words such as convince, command, insist, and reproach.<sup>11</sup> As in:

- Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, but to place their hope, not in such an uncertain thing as riches, but in God.
- Command them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share with others.
- Preach the message and insist upon proclaiming it (whether the time is right or not), to convince, to reproach and encourage, as you teach in all patience.

UCCP youth worker Rowil Munasque took these injunctions seriously when *he* participated in an education campaign against human rights violations in Zamboanga del Sur. In October 2007, he himself was abducted and subjected to psychological torture. It was like being buried, he writes, looking back on his experience in captivity. Yet his conviction did not leave him. Instead he says: "that night I felt like a mustard seed that can move mountains. For me it is not just a streak of fashion printed in our shirts but it is a pledge of undying, unconditional love to our toiling people. The people who are in bondage under this demonic social order."<sup>12</sup>

Due to pressure from his family and human rights advocates including the UCCP, Rowil has been released. As he walked back into freedom, he recalls how a bible verse "echoed in my mind, captured my heart and **led** me bursting into tears...Luke 4:18...The Spirit of-the Lord is upon me, He hath anointed me to bring the gospel to the



poor. He hath sent me to heal the hopeless and the broken-hearted, to preach freedom for the captive and oppressed, to bring light for those who were blind and to set liberty to them that are bruised.' Amen..."

I was 19 when I first heard: "justice is a constitutive part of preaching the Gospel." I was 22 when I discovered Luke 4:18-19. These converted me from being an incidental Christian bored with the idea of heaven to being a Christian committed to God's Kingdom, a new heaven and a new earth. Since then, I knew that Gospel has a very political message. But now I know it is also deeply personal. This capacity to be both prophetic and pastoral is the spirituality that Jesus modeled.

As more and more young people assert their right to choose their beliefs and act in ways that they *see* fit, the CYF could further encourage youth to make responsible decisions for themselves and to discern what is meaningful. Instead of passively adopting what is handed down by their elders, the latest fad, or an intimidating force, the CYF is called to build capacity among the youth to construct personal identity priorities and spirituality. The challenge is not to meet the standard, but to set new ones as one follows Jesus. Christian leadership is discipleship.

### **Be a Child: Build Community**

*I was beside him like an architect. I was his daily source of joy, always happy in his presence —happy with the world and pleased with the human race (Prov. 8:30-31),*

Proverbs makes for heavy reading. With directives repeated over and over, it is akin to a parent nagging a young person setting off to live on his own. Chapter 8 therefore provides is a delightful celebratory break where Wisdom speaks in the first person. She retells the story of creation, saying that she was made at the very beginning.

In this chapter, the translation of the word "architect" is disputed. In his version of the Bible, Luther calls Wisdom as *Liebling*, which means darling, oftentimes used to refer to children.<sup>13</sup> Either way, architect or child. Wisdom has a way of creating joyful relationships in specific places.

In Timothy, good leaders are described as persons who welcome the stranger into their home." This stress on hospitality is part of Paul's desert culture. Until now in Africa, visitors are offered something to drink, regardless of whether they are expected or not, whether they are friends or strangers. We do the same in the Philippines when we greet each other: "Have you eaten?"

Instead of creating joyful spaces, however, many of our churches are inhospitable. Some years ago, I went to talk to some street dwellers about how they lived. The young woman, who was cooking chicken skin for lunch, invited me to have some. She told me that they bathed and got drinking water from a park, earned a livelihood from scavenging in trash bins, and attended a prayer service in a plaza. Oh. I said, I go to that church, pointing to the one across the road. Her glad response caught me by surprise. She said: "Ah, Christian din kayo (So you are a Christian too)!" That was one instance that I was so ashamed of being Christian. All of us had come to church on Sundays, had seen them for months across the street, but had not bothered to talk to them. It was she who welcomed me into their community, offering me the little they had even before she knew that we shared something very important.<sup>14</sup>

Youth are among those who are displaced. About 52 percent of out-of-school youth are in cities, many of them having come from the rural areas in search of jobs. They are excluded from high school or college education for lack of funds. They feel excluded from our sanctuaries because they do not have good clothes or shoes. Once a well-meaning couple offered two young people better attire to wear to church. The young men turned this down, however, saying: You mean you will not receive us if we came as we are?

Many of those already in our congregations do not feel welcome. Youth groups easily become cliques, giving a cold shoulder to new members even if they belong to the same social class. Young people who demand that adults listen to them, themselves cannot listen to other youth. Many youth groups are led by those whose parents dominate the church council. While the UCCP prides itself in being a family church, nepotism can become a

problem. By not providing space to others, we turn them away. No wonder it is the same families who run the show and the churches hardly grow.

With the increased rates of unemployment, migration and family breakups in the Philippines, many youth hurt inside and have no one to simply hear them out. Twelve (12) percent of youth are reported to have thought of suicide, with girls and non-working youth more prone to these thoughts.

Being a Christian means more than attending Sunday worship and the CYF meeting in a comfortable family church. For it to be truly a church on mission, the church must go out and be involved in the mess of the world. The CYF is thus called to reach the 25 million Filipino youth, providing Christian hospitality by offering food that nurtures the body and the spirit, the Bread of Life. It entails being with young people where they are —regardless of where they are! Be it in a cafe in Alabang, over a glass of tuba in Bo. San Isidro, or hiding behind a Screwdriver in the red light district in Cubao; at work in a banana plantation in Tagum, an IC factory in Laguna, up a glass tower of Ayala Ave., or in a construction site in the Arabian Desert; at home in a hovel under a bridge on the South Superhighway, in a mansion in Forbes Park, or in a hut in the Sierra Madre. It also means protecting the Earth as a home, including the air, water, soil that nurture life as God's gift to the next generations.

In a global network society, where it is easier to be in touch via computer with people 12 time zones away, however, many find it difficult to reach the neighbor just two minutes away. For the CYF, the challenge is to create a touching place, a community where young people are safe to define themselves, find their own voices and discern their vocations. The church as an international ecumenical community has and can further extend the bonds of solidarity with youth from other countries. As the world becomes one household, the increasingly mobile youth population will assume more roles in building community at a time when the other name for hospitality is justice.

### **Be Worth More Than Jewels: Empower Others**

*How hard it is to find a capable wife! She is worth far more than jewels! (Proverbs 31:10)*

The last chapter of Proverbs extends the code of conduct to married couples, stipulating good personal behavior, self-reliance *and* service-orientation. After warning the young King Lemuel against promiscuity and alcoholism, the queen mother instructs him to speak up for people who cannot speak for themselves, to protect the rights of all who are helpless, to speak for them and to judge righteously, and to protect the rights of the poor and the needy." In the next breath, she advises him on how to choose a wife. She describes a woman who is entrepreneurial, forward looking, disciplined, and confident in her leadership of the household.<sup>17</sup> Further on, *one* reads that Proverbs compares the idealized woman not with those with loose morals, but with those who are simply "good." To qualify as "the best of all," the woman must honor God.<sup>18</sup>

Taken together, the couple in Proverbs approximates the organizational life to which the CYF commits. It is characterized by:

- Effective and empowering leadership and service to youth, Church and society;
- Viability, growth and self-sustainability; and
- Discipline including the respect of the processes of decision-making and lines of authority in the UCCP.

How can the CYF and the UCCP itself promote an organizational ethos that honors God today? Some theologians have used the Trinity, where instead of the controlling image related to the concept of "Lord," the model of leadership is one of community.<sup>19</sup>

There is much to learn from churches that have adopted paradigm shifts in their organization and leadership styles. Instead of being leader-centered, these experimental anti non-hierarchical communities facilitate and build consensus, while demanding high accountability but having zero control.<sup>20</sup> This way creativity, imagination and energy are released towards the achievement of a shared vision and goal. As it is said, the idea is not to have power over, but to have power with! The challenge is to evolve a theology of governance that reflects God's reign of freedom and accountability, shared power and service, and adequate recognition. For those who want to keep

things under their sole control and shrouded in secrecy, this is dangerous! For those who want to keep the status quo, this is subversive!

Dear CYF, I don't want to make this letter longer than Proverbs and the letters to Timothy! I hope that it has identified the challenges and the directions to be experiential, authentic and holistic today. Surely, the challenges will be different in the future. But for now, try not to be grim and determined as a sign of authenticity, but pray to be filled with enthusiasm! Partly because enthusiasm is what attracts young people, but mostly because this is what Christians are about, *en-theos*, literally, "in God."

To close, I'd like to extend some wishes that I shared with my daughter. Kara, when I realized that she was no longer "a little girl." In a birthday greeting, I put in some words from Bob Dylan, a culture icon (and iconoclast!):

*May you grow up to righteous  
May you grow up to be true  
May you always know the truth and see the lights surrounding you.  
May you always be courageous Stand upright and be strong  
And may you stay forever young.*

May you and the coming generations of CYFers stay forever young! Hold on to your wisdom and insight!

Ingat,

**Ate Sophie**

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Biblical references are from the Today's English Version. Statistics on Filipino youth are from "To be young in the Philippines; by Roy Calfoloro, presented at the Philippine Ecumenical Conference, October 13-14, 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Katrina Stuart Santiago. „Finding Spaces," I-Report. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, Sept. 2006

<sup>3</sup>Although Biblical scholars debate whether Paul wrote the letters to Timothy and whether only one Timothy being addressed, this piece will refer to the writer or writers as Paul and the addressee as Timothy. And yes, it is unusual for a letter to have footnotes! But thought you and your friends might wish to have them for reference.

<sup>4</sup>Stuart Santiago, 2005.

<sup>5</sup>I Tim 1:7

<sup>6</sup>Prov. 3:5

<sup>7</sup>Prov. 8:1

<sup>8</sup>Stuart Santiago, 2005.

<sup>9</sup>I Tim. 6:11

<sup>10</sup>I Tim. 1:5

<sup>11</sup>I Tim 6:17-18:2 Tim 4:2.

<sup>12</sup>"Serve the People; A Mustard Seed" by Rowil Munasque, typescript circulated by email December 2007.

<sup>13</sup>Other versions use "confidant"

<sup>14</sup>I Tim. 3:2

<sup>15</sup>Eventually, the congregation instituted a street dwellers program.

<sup>16</sup>Prov. 31:8-9

<sup>17</sup>Proverbs describes a traditional division of work and authority where men dominate the public space, while the women rule the household leaving both of them however powerless in the other's spheres. These days the UCCP promotes gender balance in its ministries and the practice of mutuality and partnership in personal and church relationships.

<sup>18</sup>Prov. 31:29-30

<sup>19</sup> The Bible calls *God* not only as Lord, but uses other names such as "the One who lives, "the One who is here, "Shekhinah" (dwelling), "ha-Schem," (the God who is merciful and gracious) even as a hen that protects her chicks.

<sup>20</sup> Eddie Gibbs and Ryan K. Bolget 2006. *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Post-modern Cultures*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge

# The Youth as Liturgists of the New Life in the New World

## *An Agenda for the Christian Youth Fellowship*

Rev. Dr. Ferdinand Ammann Anno

***The CYF exists for the service of the youth, in particular, and of the people in general, for the glory of God.***

Doing ministry in the service of the youth is what primarily defines the life and work of the Christian Youth Fellowship. The task is immense as this ministry works within and around the base structure not only of a faith community but also that of the larger community of God's people. It helps to remind the Christian Youth Fellowship how challenging, exciting and creative this ministry among the youth is. Creative *and* exciting in the sense that the ministry is dealing with a young population on a re-creative rite of passage - in a world needing re-creation towards a new order of life. The transformation of young people into becoming workers or liturgists (i.e., doing the work of God's people) for the new life in the new world is an agenda that lies at the heart of the CYF's diaconal (the CYF exists for the service of the youth and people) self-understanding.

### **Journeying with the Youth.**

A particular stage in the growth of young people has its corresponding level of spiritual and vocational formation. Mid into their adolescence, or even earlier young people are already beginning to be integrative and more creative in their thinking and valuing, intentionally seeking for more authenticity and consistency in the way they view and construct their meaning of life. Our youth are beginning to build and broaden their perspectives beyond the orientations of their immediate communities and 'tribes'. They no longer rely solely on authorities but assume responsibility for their own faith, evaluation and commitment. As social beings, their awareness is expanding to transcend conventional social boundaries, where the horizons of their concepts of relationships and ideas of justice, for example, are taking radically expansive social proportions; and that they are starting on their own ways to construct symbol systems that communicate their deepening understanding of and participation in the world.

The 'age' of youth-hood is a radically transitioning period, a stretched-out *amen*, meaning, a 'forty days and forty nights' - like threshold point where young people go through a process of 'separation' from and in a process of initiation toward eventual re-incorporation into society. Youth-hood in other words is living through a *liminal* phase, where young women and men are being ushered into a new identity and catalytic role in a world in dire need of re-ordering. It would be interesting, for example, to reflect on the forty days and forty nights sojourn of Jesus in the wilderness as a possible location of the church's/ CYF's journeying with the youth. Upon entering the stage of youth-hood, young people launch into a journey that put to test their spirits, their intellect and their bodies. Whence, the spiritual formation of our young people needs to focus on this threshold point in their lives. The Christian Youth Fellowship need to walk with the youth at this critical stage in their journey presenting before them a vision of a just world and a life and vocation that draw inspiration from the Christ who emerged from his temptations, discoveries and triumphs in the desert - full of wisdom, truth and compassion. An ancient Oriental story may further speak of what this stage of youth-hood requires, especially in the effort of our youth ministry to bring the young into confrontation with themselves and their world, and emerge transformed and transforming in the process.

*Once upon a time three young persons who had been friends for a long time sought wisdom, power, and righteousness. They studied and prayed together, looked for teachers, traveled far, and listened as they journeyed. Always they sought the tiger, the symbol and the doorway to wisdom and truth. One day they were on a road, going their way and discussing all that they had experienced so far and how far they still had to go. Suddenly they saw a tiger. The tiger's eyes opened wide. One of the three spoke:*

*'Tiger, we would like to enter and learn the ways of wisdom.' The tiger looked at each in turn and said: 'Just how far in would you like to go?' The first smiled and said: 'Thank you, this is close enough for me.' The second answered, 'Not too far, but far enough so I can say that I've been there.' The third said nothing, but s/he approached the tiger, who opened its mouth wide. The young person put her/his head inside, and at that moment the tiger roared. The other two turned and ran back to town and safety. The third young person was never seen again, though soon after there appeared one who was wise, truthful, compassionate, and just. Some say the young person looked vaguely familiar, but no one knew where s/he came from.*

### **Promoting the Vision of a Full Life.**

Wisdom, truth, and compassion are also virtues or values central to Christian life. Christ's very personal nature, his life and ministry lived these virtues in their fullness, and gained deeper meaning in the life and the risks that Christ took. Firstly, in the Christian tradition, wisdom, truth and compassion are qualities of living that emerge out of one's realization of radical connectedness to others. Such connectedness was central to the sermons and teachings, life and ministry of Jesus. In his conversation with Jesus, for example, a rich young man was asked to grow and be freed from the wisdom, truth, and maybe compassion that he held as a religious follower of the law within the limited confines of his quest for self-perfection. As deducible in the response Jesus made, wisdom, truth and compassion need to be grounded in relationship. The formation of the youth needs to re-read this Jesus' proposal for a socially-grounded spirituality. 'The Gospel of Christ' says John Wesley, 'knows no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness.'

Secondly, these qualities of Christ-like living are ultimately grounded on the vision of the full life (John 10:10) which, 'downloaded' from scriptural files, contrasts with the current life as ordered and dominated by the *ethos* and *logos* of today's globalization and ascendant empire states. The full life according to the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures is the cessation all evils, of the pain, sorrow, disease, oppression, death, and sin that afflict humanity and creation; it is the reign of justice, of joy, hope and love, and the feasting of children of God; when all things are transformed, and humanity and creation blossom to their fullest. Sadly, however, the current order of life or way of living does in no way reflect this Biblical vision of the full life. What we see 'around us is the exact opposite of the full life, the loss of compassion and justice, the mockery of truth and wisdom, gross inequality in the distribution and misuse of wealth and world resources, the increasing gap between the rich and powerful few and the poor and powerless mass. What we daily live with are the poverty, hunger, suffering and deprivation of millions, the annihilation of entire populations by wars and acts of terror, the glorification of weapons of mass destruction, the subordination of human life and the eco-system to the generation of profit and, under globalization—the increasing corn modification of labor, of culture, of governance and political processes, and life in general. What we see are the many faces of moral bankruptcy and spiritual decline. What we see is a world devoid of any image of the divine. Either the visions of the young conform to this present order or not, or their passions and creative energies unleashed to further buttress the reigning culture of greed, domination, and death or not.

The Christian vision and vocation as embodied in the life and ministry of Jesus is to preach and live the Good News of God's reign. His was not a passive acceptance of the ascendancy of mammon over the interests of the full life. In the tradition of the Hebrew prophets, Jesus Christ took a confrontative prophetic stance vis-a-vis the order of life that kept people repressed, deprived and marginalized. It is this Christian vocation that we need to seek for our young people. The Church and the Christian, as the UCCP Statement of Faith so states, is entrusted with Christ's own ministry — that of preaching the good news to the poor, giving sight to the blind, making the lame walk, setting people *free*, proclaiming God's reign. As exemplified by Jesus, the Christian is she/he who gives love, light and life to the world; just as Jesus did who distributed God's love, brought light and promised life to those who are in need, the poor, the afflicted and marginalized. Baptism into the Christian community in general and membership in the Christian Youth Fellowship in particular is not simply about acquiring a popular religious

personality, or a status in a predominantly religious/Christian society. The appellation 'Christian' is what establishes the identity and being of the Christian and the CYF as an organization. It is this identity and being that actually impels us to do something to inspire, empower, and mobilize the youth to seek *for* that new order and pursue it with passion and vigor.

### **The Youth as Cultural Guerillas.**

To seek and pursue the full life is to go against the socio-cultural current that is reducing the youth into mere pawns and cultural partisans of the establishment. A Christian response to this current, in the tradition of those early Christians who 'followed the way,' is the formation of cultural guerillas embodying grounded wisdom, truth and compassion, a 'guerilla' band aimed at turning the world upside down.

During the Martial Law years, when the then President Marcos was trying to reinforce the foundations of his dictatorial rule, he found it necessary to organize and mobilize the country's youth. The *Kobataang Barangay* was born. The said organization became one of the primary apologists and propagandists of the establishment; it served to conceal the reality of unrest among the youth; and was employed as a political device to repress the critical and prophetic voices of an increasing number of young people. Through the *Kabataang Barangay*, the creative energies of the young were used to prop up and promote an oppressive and repressive regime.

In 2008, when the legitimacy of another presidency was being challenged and charges of corruption and abuse of power were rife, the president organized a unity walk in Malacanang --with young people, particularly with students from state-run schools and several private schools. Succinctly Put, the young population is being savaged by establishment interest, and effectively silenced. Now, on top of these, the youth have become the icon of a culture of unbridled consumption, the religious acolytes in the liturgies of the empire and the all-mighty global market.

The Christian youth, existing for the service of the youth, need to bring release to the young who remain captive to this ideological and idolatrous condition, forming and transforming them into realizing their historic role and task as 'cultural guerillas' for a just world. The cultural guerillas are they who enter into a creative confrontation with the dominant-establishment culture. 'Creative' does include equipment in terms of spiritual resources, biblical knowledge, imagination, vision,

narrative construction, myth-making, artistic skills, political *savoir-faire* ('meek as dove, wise as serpent'). To be creative in a cultural guerilla mode is to deconstruct the symbol system of the status quo and construct new ones.

With this equipment, the cultural guerilla speaks strange tongues: the language of the new order, the language of prophecy and subversion, The 'strange tongue' of the cultural guerilla may not be described as approximating the Pentecostal tongues of fire, or the divine breath and the primal wind of creation. But it sure is creative and conscientizing; amplifying the song of the voiceless and the marginalized, the laments of the poor, the sigh of the oppressed; giving wisdom; energizing; refreshing and giving power. The Biblical *glossolalia* is not about senseless utterances, or cryptic, mystical speech and action, but about 'strange tongues' that shake establishments and the dominant consciousness.

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about worlds beyond the 'heavens' and 'end times' of millenarian Christianity, beyond what two-conservative prophets and ideologues are trying to conceive and envision for humanity as the 'end of history'. To speak in tongue is to speak before the Caesars of the age the language of wisdom, of truth and compassion.

The CYF needs to harness the pastoral and prophetic speech of the youth — against those that are trying to reduce their world to the confines of shopping malls and 'praise and worship' halls, and other temples of consumption and reactionary piety.

### **The Youth as Subversive Pilgrims: Conclusion**

The young people that our youth ministry seeks to produce are, in other words, subversive

pilgrims. Youth and pilgrimage may not conventionally go together, but the journey that is inherent to youth-hood is best put in perspective by the praxis of pilgrimage. There is no more hallowed, sacred space and time than that of the full life in the new and just world. That is the object of any pilgrims' journey. But the youth need to be non-conformist and subversive at the same time as the quest for that full life in the new world requires a subversive engagement with the priests and sacristans of the reigning order.

In our youth ministry, one life and reality stands tall: Jesus Christ, the high priest and liturgist for the new heaven and the new earth. May we not tire in walking and working with Jesus among the Filipino youth in the celebration of the liturgies of the new life in the new world!

## **On Evangelism and Mission**

Jay-jay Graciano R. Dames

The CYF lives its life in the mission: bringing good news to the poor, giving light to the blind, freedom for the captive and oppressed, food for the hungry and proclaiming creation's future (Luke 4:18-19, RSV)

The Christian Youth Fellowship serves as the youth arm of the church. As one of the recognized organizations, the CYF helps the church in realizing its purpose of existence, doing God's mission or to realize God's divine purpose, and that is establishing shalom. *The vocation of the church must be to do God's mission in the entire world, God's concern is the whole world (oikoumene). Hence, God's commandment to God's servants and Jesus' commission to his disciples are focused on the whole world.*<sup>1</sup>

Historically, the CYF started as a movement with one purpose - for young people to be recognized as among those who can contribute much in the church's mission and work. Primarily the CYF serves as a vessel so that the voices of the youth sector could be heard. The CYF also makes programs that will meet the various needs of youth both in the church and in the community. It is an affirmation that the organization's response is wholistic in the sense that it provides learning and advocacy in spiritual, political, social, and economic aspects.

To understand further the aforementioned statement of principle, let us trace back the history of the protestant movement in the Philippines. When the missionaries began their mission works in the country they started looking at the condition of the people. Carrying their respective traditions of faith, which the UCCP inherited in its principle of mission work;

*The Presbyterian Church believed that spiritual freedom in Christ must be embodied in political freedom in the community. The Methodist church struggled to uplift the condition of the poor and oppressed during the early years of industrial revolution. For them spiritual life should lead to sanctification, and that the life and ministry of the church gave attention to the poor and powerless— that they may improve their total outlook and condition of life. The Congregational Church aspiration is that its members should always strive for a high degree of knowledge of the scripture. The Disciples of Christ Church are—the return to the original purity of the New Testament faith, the spirited opposition to the sin of disunity.*<sup>2</sup>



Hence, the pioneers of the UCCP had committed to the following: *spiritual freedom* must be politically embodied in the structures that pursue justice and equality in all spheres of life; *intentional unity* among people; and *solidarity with the poor* in their struggle for social upliftment.

The work and mission of UCCP today is just an extension to the work of Jesus. Through the empowering of the Holy Spirit the church with all its recognized organizations, which includes the CYF, must carry on one mission: to carry on the ministry of Jesus.

What did Jesus do? Today's churches have different interpretations as to what the ministry of Jesus is. In Luke chapter 4:18-19, Jesus ministry was clearly define by his opening statement in the synagogue at Nazareth:

*The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and oppressed and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*<sup>3</sup>

Today our mission and work must also be the continuation of Jesus' ministry. We cannot just create our own mission as what we desire and set aside what we do not like. Furthermore, Luke 4:18- 19 tells of the Messianic ministry of Jesus - healing, preaching, and teaching. As a *Christian* youth organization, the CYF is expected to do the same. Though we may vary in our perspective and in interpreting the ministry of Jesus, we must ensure that the good news is preached, that such message will teach people how to relate with our neighbors and with other creation and that it will be our beacon to bring healing to broken relationships among and between Gods creation.

The preaching or announcing of the good news ("evangel") is the core of the mission of the church and therefore the mission of every CYF member. But we must understand that the primary purpose of evangelism is not to increase our membership. According to Kwok Nai Wang, evangelism is not proselytism or proselytization: to win non-believers or people who follow other living faiths over to the Christian fold. Sadly, today, this is what the some churches are trying to do. In order to do this, they have tailor-made the "gospel" to fit the needs and desires of the populace. This market-oriented approach on evangelism has given rise to 'cheap grace'. In the broadest sense, evangelism is a way to enable people to realize their life as given by God: precious and worth living. The Christian gospel can be understood as the story of God. God is the God of all humanity and creation. God is in charge of all human history. God cares for every human being. Therefore God does not only create, but also redeems and sustains humankind and creation — proclaiming creation's future.

So when we preach the gospel, we tell God's story and at the same time we have to help others to live life to the fullest wherever the social, natural or human environment prevents them from doing so. Let us remember that when God says a word, it happens! *Let there be light, and there was light (Gen. 1:3)*. And during Jesus ministry we can also notice that when he healed a paralytic, he then said, *"Rise and pick up your bed and go home," the paralytic rose and went home and when the crowd saw it they glorified God (Mt.9:5- 8)*. Jesus made it happen! It is not enough to say to the people who live in abject poverty that Jesus loves them without helping them at the same time to improve their living conditions. That is the true essence of mission work: after preaching we must act on it!

Perhaps this is what the German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, meant when he said, "the church did not really preach the gospel unless it dared to confront the problems of its time." So evangelism is not easy. It is not merely telling about Jesus or a Christian story. Evangelism is the holistic Christian responsibility (mission) towards all creation. Thus, if the CYF is going to live its life in Christ's mission, you must listen carefully, be well aware of and try to respond to the cries, the needs, the pains and the miseries of the people and creation. This is the church's mission and the CYF's as well; that the will of God be done today and through us.

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Kwok Nai Wang. The local Church. CCA.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Dr Mariano C. Apilado. The 1.1CCP: A Historical and Theological Essay in *Commitment and Struggle: The life and Ministry of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines*.



# How to be a Self-Generating and Self-Sustaining Christian Youth Organization

Rev. Luna L. Dingayan Rev. Dr. Perla P. Dingayan

*The CYF believes that an organization to be viable must be self-generating and self-sustaining.*

## I — CHRISTIAN GIVING

We cannot be self-generating and self-sustaining as a Christian youth organization without Christian giving. Giving is our natural response as creatures made in the image of God, as we are being transformed into the fullness of that image through faith in Jesus Christ. Christian giving is our normal expression of grateful faith, the recognition of the costly nature of grace, *and* the radical demands of Christian discipleship.

Generous giving is not a substitute for our adequate total stewardship of life. But we cannot be a good steward of our total resources without developing and practicing the art of generous giving.

Giving is oftentimes focused solely upon money. It is important to give generously of our financial wealth. But the stewardship of giving also encompasses the giving of our selves, time, and abilities in the service of God and of people.

Nevertheless, financial giving is a particularly good barometer for indicating how generous and loving we are as stewards, because in a sense money represents an extension of our selves.

The wealth for which we are accountable in giving includes all income and accumulated wealth. We are not given the luxury of selective accountability.

As with our total stewardship, we shall determine our giving in responsible freedom. That is the freedom of grace. Christ has set us free from the freedom of the law, including laws of tithes and offerings.

Christian freedom, however, is not lawlessness. Responsible is the necessary qualifier. We live in responsible freedom. We are bound by our service to Christ and by the demands of love.

## II — PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN GIVING

### A. To glorify God

Christian giving is an expressing of praise and thanksgiving to God. It acknowledges that God is sovereign in the universe and is the source of all life's blessings. The Hebrew tithes and offerings, for instance, were designed in part to teach people to honor God: *"Do this so that you may learn to honor the Lord your God always"* (Dt. 14:34). Apostle Paul describes the Jerusalem offering as overflowing in thanksgiving to God: *"For this service you perform not only meets the needs of God's people, but also produces an outpouring of gratitude to God."* (II Cor.9:12).

### B. To serve the needs of people

Our love for God is inseparably tied up to our love of people. A major way of expressing our love for God is to love people. In the Hebrew tithing system, the Hebrews gave part of their tithes and charity gifts to serve directly the needs of people (cf. Dt.14:28-29). The New Testament also indicates that one major purpose of giving is to alleviate different forms of human needs and problems. This dimension is so important that Jesus teaches that when we give to people in need we give directly to the Lord himself (cf. Mt. 25:31-46).

### **C. To discipline the self and to grow toward Christian maturity**

The great commandment requires not only that we love God but that we also love our neighbor as our selves (cf. Lk. 10:27). The goal of Christian life is to break out of the bonds of self-interest. Christian giving is a revealing test of how far we have traveled toward that goal. Christian giving is love in action. It is an exercise in opening up our grasping hands and extending love to others. It is a clue to whether we are laying up treasures in heaven or are in the business of building bigger barns (cf. Luke 12:13- 21).

### **D. To support the life, mission and ministry of the church**

When we are baptized into the church, we are incorporated into the full range of the church's existence. As a Christian youth organization, we are part of the church mission and ministry. Financial support is basic to the church mission and ministry. Financial support is part of what Apostle Paul refers to as partnership in the Gospel (cf. Phil. 4:15). Giving allows us indirectly to go, serve, and love where physically we may never be able to go. And through the church's work, especially the Christian youth organization, the Gospel is preached and people are served for the glory of God.

## **III — MOTIVATIONS IN CHRISTIAN GIVING**

### **A. Some Biblical Examples of Unacceptable Motivations for Giving:**

1. We should not give in order to gain acclaim and recognition. Jesus specifically warns against giving as to be seen by people (cf. Mt.6:1).
2. We should not give in order to receive a reward or to prosper. Jesus says the giver should expect nothing in return for his gift (cf. Lk.6:32-36).
3. We should not give in order to manipulate God or try to gain God's favor. Giving is simply the duty of the servants of God (cf. Lk.17:7-10).

### **B. Some Contemporary Examples of Unacceptable Motivation for Giving:**

1. Some people give in order to gain power over a group.
2. Some give in order to satisfy the demands of conscience, but do so reluctantly and complainingly.
3. Many people give out of a sense of pressure from manipulative stewardship campaigns by their churches. In those cases, the church may get their money, but God has not really gotten their heart and deepest allegiance.
4. There are people who give in calculated public display of generosity, in ways designed to enhance their business or political possibilities or esteem in the community's eye.
5. There are people who give primarily for the purpose of getting maximum mileage out of their tax deductions and write offs.

The value of Christian giving depends heavily upon our motives. We should educate our members about proper motivations in giving and should utilize only distinctive Christian motivations in the church's financial programs. In the long run, we shall not only receive more gifts for important ministries, but facilitate the spiritual growth of church members if the church will adopt the Biblical principles of motivation.

### **C. Some Biblical Principles of Motivation for Giving:**

#### **1. Give in response to God's grace**

Apostle Paul calls Christian giving as a "gracious work" (cf. II Cor.8:7). We have nothing that we have not first received from God (cf. I Cor. 4:7). Both the act of giving and the material gifts we give are gifts we ourselves have received as beneficiaries of God's goodness. We can rise to the Christian standard only as God's saving grace frees us to give as God has given to us (cf. II Cor9:8). Christian giving depends upon God's grace and upon grace at work within us.

## **2. Give in response to the example of Christ who gave himself for us**

God's gift of Christ is the prototype of all Christian giving. Apostle Paul says, *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor so that by his poverty you might become rich"* (cf. II Cor. 8: 9).

## **3. Give in response to human need**

This principle is as old as the early chapters of Hebrew history, The Good Samaritan most memorably embodies this principle (cf. Lk. 10:29-37). Apostle Paul suggests that the believer out of his own abundance should supply the needy person's needs (d. TICor. 8:14).

## **4. Give as an expression of thanksgiving to God**

Giving is an integral part of worship. Although its origin is lost in antiquity, giving was formalized in various ways in Hebrew religion, the thank offering being a prime example (cf. Lev. 7;12-13). Apostle Paul even speaks of the Jerusalem offering for the famine-stricken saints as overflowing in many thanksgiving to God (Cf. II Cor. 9:12),.

## **5. Give as a form of sacrifice to God**

From the earliest stages of Hebrew religion, gifts have been basic to the sacrificial system. Evert in the New Testament, gifts given directly to other human beings in need can be described as sacrifices to God. In daring language, Apostle Paul calls the Philippians' gift to him *fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God*" (Phil. 4:18).

## **6. Give as a way of symbolizing our commitment of our resources for the service of God and of people**

This principle is found to one degree or another in all Biblical giving practices. God is consistently viewed as owner of everything, even in practices that view the tithes, first fruits, and first born as belonging peculiarly to God (cf. Ex. 22:28-29; 23:19). In the New Testament, it is central that *"you are not your own; you were bought with a price"* (I Con 6:20). God has an absolute claim upon all we are and have. Therefore, our acts of giving should become a symbolic commitment of all our financial resources for God's purpose,

## **7. Give as a concrete proof of love**

Love is not good intention or warm emotion. Rather, it is acting, reaching out, and translating words into actions. According to Apostle Paul, the gift of the Gentile churches for the needy Jerusalem church was proof of genuine love (cf. II Cor.8:8,24).

# **IV — PROCEDURES IN CHRISTIAN GIVING**

## **Some Biblical Principles on How to Give:**

### **1. Put first things first**

Our basic commitment in life is more important than any particular gift. When we obey Jesus' command to seek first the Kingdom of God (cf. Mt.6:33), everything else will fall into its proper place, including responsible Christian giving.

### **2. Give the self before any material gift**

It is always tempting to substitute a material gift for the giving of our selves to God or to a person in need. The Old Testament prophets repeatedly condemned this practice. Apostle Paul noted that before the Macedonian Christians contributed to the Jerusalem offering *"first they gave themselves to the Lord and to us"* (II Cor.8:5).

### **3. Give God the first and the best that we possess**

The Old Testament system of giving required that the first fruits of the harvest and the best offspring of the animals be for God (cf. Ex. 22:29 ff.; Dt. 17:1; Mal. 1:6 ff.). In giving God first claim in our income and possessions, we symbolically dedicate the remainder of our resources to God.

#### **4. Give voluntarily**

The only gift that honors God is one that comes freely from a willing and loving heart. Jesus insisted that the response to God must transcend the legal obligation of Hebrew religion, involving the intention as well as the outward act. Paul applied that principle in his effort to collect funds for the Jerusalem Church. He insisted that giving must not be an exaction from a reluctant spirit, but only an expression of one's free will (cf. II Cor. 8:3; 9:5). One of Paul's inviolable principles of giving is this: *"Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver"* (II Cor. 9:7).

#### **5. Give proportionately as God prospers**

Proportionate giving is the basis of the Old Testament tithing system and the key principle for the New Testament approach to Christian giving. In removing giving from a legal basis, the New Testament retains the idea of the individual's giving as God has prospered him. But here, proportionate giving is more dynamic and flexible than in the Old Testament. Other dimensions must help determine what proportion of our income represents a loving commitment for the Kingdom of God, particularly at the lower and upper ends of the financial wealth spectrum (cf. I Cor. 16:2). Paul observes, *"It is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he has not"* (II Cor. 8:12).

#### **6. Give generously**

In the New Testament, the generosity of love supersedes Old Testament legalism. Generosity becomes the guiding principle, not percentage rules. Paul notes that the generous Corinthians' gift for the Jerusalem Church overflows in a wealth of generosity (cf. II Cor. 8:2; 9:11).

#### **7. Give sacrificially**

Jesus made hard demands upon his followers. Many of Jesus' parables are directed to the perils of riches and the need for radical sacrifices. Jesus' estimate of the generosity of any material gift is measured not by the size of the gift, but by how much is left over after the gift is made. He lavishly commended the widow for the amount of sacrificial love represented by her small but total gift. In comparison with the rich, Jesus said, *'This widow has put in more than all of them: for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all the living that she had'* (Lk. 21:3-4).

#### **8. Give spontaneously**

Giving cannot be restricted to the channel of the institutional church. Many immediate face-to-face human needs demand a spontaneous personal response. Jesus strongly affirmed the importance of giving alms to the needy, a practice long hollowed by Jewish tradition (cf. Mt. 6:2-4). We must serve the needs of the poor, hungry, homeless, and sick whenever and wherever they are encountered (cf. Mt. 25:31-46). The contemporary church may have the tendency to minimize the importance of one-to-one caring in its stress upon giving to the church or to the youth organization. But no amount of church giving can offset the failure to give personal help as worthy needs arise.

#### **9. Give systematically**

Responsible giving requires planned and regular patterns that avoid spasmodic giving. The Old Testament tithing system was built in regular procedures. In connection with the Jerusalem offering, Apostle Paul advised setting aside part of one's income on the first day of each week (cf. Cor. 16:2). At a minimum, we should ideally follow the practice of weekly giving, although other methods might be additionally necessary.

#### **10. Give humbly**

Jesus warned about performing acts of piety for public display. In particular, he taught that almsgiving should be done in secret (cf. Mt. 6:1-4). Although giving in the contemporary church cannot be done in strictest privacy because of the need for records, among other things, we should never make a show of our giving.

#### **11. Give with love**

Giving misses its purpose if it is done without love. No form of giving can ever be substituted for love. Authentic giving is one expression of our growth into the kind of person God wants us to be. Paul warns, *"If I give away all I have ... but have no love, I gain nothing"* (1 Cor 13:3).

### **VI —WHY GIVE TO THE CHURCH**

The church is a covenant community. We are *"members of the household of God"* (Eph. 2:19). Christian stewardship, therefore, is a family affair. We are redeemed into the church, the family of God (cf. Eph.2:16).

When we join the church we become members of a new spiritual family that places a claim upon our lives and resources. Within the church we abandon our autonomy and use our

freedom and responsibility in relation to the common commitments of the church in general and the youth organization in particular. While the church must respect our freedom and responsibility as individuals, we shall freely support the church's life and works.

Much of God's work in the world is accomplished through the church's life and works. We assume mutual responsibility and share our lives, time, and efforts in the proclamation of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

As responsible Christian steward, we shall not leave our gifts at the altar and then ignore what it is used for. We should also participate in the decision-making processes of the congregation or organization to ensure that our gifts are used efficiently, targeted toward purposes that are central to the Kingdom of God, and equitably distributed so that they support the many dimensions of the church worldwide ministry.

Through our participation in responsible Christian giving we can help not only in making our youth organization self-generating and self-sustaining, but more importantly we can help the church to be the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

## **On Local Autonomy**

Rev. Dr. Noriel Capulong

***The CYF respects the autonomy of the local, conference and jurisdiction levels in matters pertaining to their respective communities.***

The UCCP Constitution, in its declaration of principles (Article 2, section 12), states that, "Consistent with the heritage and commitment of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, the autonomy of the Local Church shall be respected!" This autonomy is further defined in its scope in the By-Laws (Art. III, section 28), particularly in the right and power of the local church to conduct its ministry free from outside control, provided the same is in line with the Constitution, By Laws and statutes of the Church, thereby enabling the Local Church to become an effective instrument in the ministry and mission of the Church and ensuring its positive contribution to the unity and strengthening of the whole Church,"

In short, the principle of autonomy is mainly pertaining to the recognition of the basic right and freedom of the Local Church to conduct its ministry and mission in its own area of area of operation without the unnecessary

impositions and control of other bodies, even of the wider bodies or judicatories of the Church. This is as long as the conduct of the whole program and ministry of the Local Church remains in line with the basic laws and regulations and statutes that bind together the whole national organization of the UCCP.

One of the freedoms the Local Church enjoys is the right to organize its own youth as a local CYF organization within the local church. The local CYF thus becomes the concrete expression of the ministry of the Local Church for the youth in the area covered by its mission and ministry. This local CYF then can conduct its own program consistent with the stated goals and mission of the local church. In short, the local CYF program becomes the youth counterpart of the autonomy being enjoyed by the Local church.

The local CYF can thus make plans and programs of action relatively free from the impositions and interference of outside and even higher bodies as long as such programs become expressions too of the Local Church's mission and ministry for the youth in their own locality.

The local CYF, however, just like the Local Church, remains part of a wider and larger body and fellowship of church youth. Various local CYF organizations within the conference traditionally gather regularly on various occasions, for fellowship and also to organize and make plans for the wider concerns of the CYF in the conference level. This wider and larger body of the conference CYF however is meant primarily (1) to provide a supportive role in the local CYF's program and activities in the local areas. It is intended (2) to help strengthen and build up the capacity of the local CYFs in the carrying out of their own programs and activities in the local areas.

Conference CYF programs, in respecting the local autonomy of the local CYFs, are therefore not supposed to develop their own programs that would compete with the ongoing programs of the local CYFs. But, as a matter of providing assistance and support to the local CYFs, conference CYFs may be able to create and produce and make available to *the* local CYFs materials and resources that will help facilitate the successful implementation of the local youth programs.

Conference CYF organizations may however continue with their traditional programs and activities in which local CYF members have already actively involved themselves and which have also helped improved the local CYF members' own sense of attachment and belonging to a wider fellowship of church youth as well as their own capacity and commitment to the cause of Christian service and witness in their respective localities. In short, the Conference CYF, even if it respects the autonomy of the Local CYFs can still become an effective instrument in the continuing nurture of the faith and commitment of the youth of the local church through such traditional activities as the Christmas Conference, Summer Youth Camps, Caravanning and other conference level forms of fellowship gatherings for educational, faith nurturing and skills learning purposes.

In cases where the local CYF in a Local Church is not active, or not organized, this could perhaps be the occasion and the opportunity for the conference CYF to offer assistance to the Local Church in the matter of organizing or revival of the youth organization in their church.

The jurisdictional level of CYF organization could at best function as a consultative body of conference CYF organizations within the jurisdiction. A National CYF Organization is also encouraged so as to enable the organized youth of the church to have a national representation and voice in the wider church gatherings such as the General Assembly. But this should serve mainly as a means by which the voice and concerns of the local church youth may be officially articulated on the national level and also as a means by which the local CYFs, through their respective conference CYFs may be able to experience the wider and more nationally organized fellowship of the youth of the Church. By no means should the National CYF organization, in any of its programs and activities, infringe on the rights and prerogatives of the local CYF as an autonomous youth organization of the Local Church whose autonomy also needs to be respected and upheld always.

# On Stewardship of Creation

Pastor Myrna Mary Ann G. Kadile

***As stewards of God's creation, the CYF shall protect, promote, and enhance the ecological balance and integrity of creation.***

Firstly, as Christians, we should be aware and conscious of our God the Creator, who is our Maker, Provider, Sustainer and Redeemer. We should be mindful of God's existence for this is the very essence of our faith and the reason of our existence in this world by which God is the sole owner (Ps. 24:1).

In Genesis 1:28, human beings are portrayed as being created in the image of God and, therefore, responsible for the whole environment. As special creatures and being part of the whole creation of God, we are commanded then to be stewards of Creation.

Jesus Christ, at a very tender age, had been responsible already in helping his parents as farmer and carpenter at the same time doing his studies with elders in the temple (Luke 2:41-52). The challenge then is being posed to us and especially to the young people of today on their importance, as said by Jose Rizal, the young generation is the hope of the motherland.' It is imperative then that young people should contribute in the restoration and integrity of God's creation.

What is happening then to our environment? Pollution is everywhere! Air, water, soil... Even the food we eat is not spared from the toxins mixed into it. Modern life has become inseparable with pollution. What happened to the paradise that God has given to us? We, human beings, who are expected to be God's stewards are the ones abusing it, especially those who divest natural resources to earn more profit. We have forgotten that these were merely given to us by God as gifts, to enable us to provide for our needs. But along the way, greediness prevailed. Worse, those who till the land have less than those who just receive out of the sweat, tears, and lives of the farmers and workers.

Jesus said we are in charge of the things that are not really belong to us; when we die, we cannot take these things with us. All our possessions are a trust from God. According to Paul, "What is expected of stewards that each one should be found worthy of the trust," (1. Cor. 4:2). For the *Lumads*, they would say, "you cannot own or buy the land for the land is sacred and we belong to the land." If we, Christians, are not faithful in our stewardship of earthly possessions, how can we be entrusted with the true riches that come from God (Luke 16:11)? Our stewardship of the things of the earth will determine what we will receive as our very own eternally (Luke 16:12). Thus, our livelihood and the way we live, earn, and spend resources should be carried out in sacred trust as good and faithful stewards.

To our knowledge, the earth is the only planet that we and future generations will live in. In order for human life to continue, each generation must take good care of the earth, whose many parts are interrelated and interdependent with one another. Through exploitation, mismanagement, negligence and ignorance our earth is becoming unfit to sustain life. If we, Christians, are to be good stewards, we must show concern on what is happening to our environment.

A wise teacher once said, "No Christian has a right to do with her/his own what s/he pleases, unless what s/he pleases is also pleasing in the sight of God." Everything must be subordinated to that single-minded devotion to God, which marks true discipleship. Real giving and stewardship of possession must be sacrificial. It must cost the giver something. The widow gives all that she had and this is true stewardship. This is how we are expected to share when we give ourselves as true offerings, especially in caring for our environment.



# On CYF

## Statement of Principle No. 8

Rev. Reuel Norman O. Marigza

***The CYF enjoins itself in the decision-making processes of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.***

It is sometimes said that the youth are the future leaders of the Church. In many ways that is true. One just needs to take a look at many who occupied responsible position within the Church and in the ecumenical movement to see the truth of the statement.

Just to name a few: Dr. Feliciano V. Carina, was an active leader of the youth and student movement and became the General Secretary of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF). He later became the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP). Dr. Eliezer Mapanao was a youth leader who influenced many young people. One of them became a bishop in the person of my father, Bishop Emeritus Juan A. Marigza. Dr. Mapanao became a well-esteemed church statesman and educator, president of a church-related college (Southern Christian College); and was the driving force in the formation of UCCP-CREATE, the aggrupation of UCCP Schools. Many of our Bishops came from the youth movement including Bishop Enrique Sobrepeña, one of the pioneering leaders of church union and unity both in the Philippines and abroad, whose leadership helped usher in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and what is now the Christian Conference of Asia.

In the ecumenical front UCCP member Neptali Gonzales became the first President of the Philippine Christian Youth Federation (PCYV) under a forerunner federation of what is now the National Council of Churches in the Philippines. Later on, Neptali Gonzales, Sr. became a Senator, then Senate President of the Philippines. Another well-respected senator was Camilo Osias, who was an active youth under the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) missionaries.

In the world ecumenical movement, most of the General Secretaries of the World Council of Churches came from the ranks of the youth and student movements.

We can go on and on. So, it is quite true that the youth are future leaders of the Church.

But on the other hand, that statement is not quite true. The CYF asserts that the CYF are leaders of the Church now. There was a time when the statement, "the youth are future leaders of the Church," was used as a dampener in actually involving the youth in the decision-making processes within the church. It was like the adults saying: "Hey, wait for your turn. Wait until you are a little older. Your time will come. In the meantime, attend to the beautification of the church and singing in the Choir. Just enjoy your fellowship but leave the decision-making processes to us."

Youth leaders resisted this often unspoken but pervasive outlook. Active resistance took the form of getting actually involved in the life, ministry and work in the various church judicatories, from the local churches, to the Conferences, to the Jurisdictions (when it was still a judicatory), and even in the General Assembly. Through their involvement and lobbying, the youth were able to work out a greater degree of youth representation in the decision-making bodies of the Church as well as in the youth's participation in UCCP delegations to church and ecumenical endeavors.

Now fully inscribed in our UCCP Constitution and By-Laws are pro-youth provisions such as:



"At all levels of its life and government, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines shall ensure, as far as practicable, the equitable representation of its general membership in terms of gender, age, sector, and geography." (*Declaration of Principles, Art. II Sec 6 UCCP Constitution, emphasis supplied*)

In accordance with the biblical understanding that all persons are created in the image of God, the Church affirms and upholds the inviolability of the rights of persons as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other agreements on human rights, the international covenants on economic, social and cultural rights and on civil and political rights, the 1984 Convention against Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and those that relate specifically to refugees, women, youth, children, minority groups and other persons who cannot safeguard their rights." (*Declaration of Principles, Art. II Sec 11 UCCP Constitution, emphasis supplied*)

The word "youth," in our UCCP Constitution and By-Laws, however, does not automatically mean CYF. It simply means members between 12 to 30 years old. The Church has recognized that while ideally all the youth in the UCCP should be active in the CYF, the truth of the matter is that not all are. And that it is possible for non-CYF youth to be elected as youth representatives.

It is for this reason that CYF Principle No. 8 asserts that "the CYF enjoins itself in the decision-making processes of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines." The CYF must show that it should properly be representing the youth of the Church. And it does so by earning the respect and appreciation of the greater membership of the Church. "By their fruits, you shall know them," is how the Bible puts it.

The CYF of today should not view these hard-won victories as entitlements or rights handed on a silver platter. It is a right that our youth forebears struggled to win for themselves and the youth of their times, and for us and the future generations of youth in the church. It is a right which was proven in praxis to be a right choice made by the Church to involve the youth in the present and current life and works of the Church.

But it is a right that must be proven by every generation of youth in the Church. And it can only be done if the CYF proves itself by getting involved and active not only in its own organizational life but in the total life, ministry, and work in and of the Church.

# Our Doing

## How to Prepare a Sermon

Rev. Luna L. Dingayan

Rev. Dr. Pearl P. Dingayan

### I - GENERAL PREPARATION

Whether we like it or not preachers are always preparing for preaching. Everything we do and whatever happens in our lives are relevant for preaching. We have to continuously read good books, especially in the areas of theology, history, and ethics. We should develop upon ourselves an attitude to strive always for excellence in preaching. Every sermon we deliver should represent our best efforts and hard work.

As preachers, we must have that earnest desire to know more about the subject matter on which we would speak. We should seek to be creative and not merely imitating others.

Filing and classifying sermon materials for Future use is a good practice. This would be very helpful in times when we have very little time to prepare a sermon due to our busy schedules.

Planning the sermons for the whole year ahead of time insures variety and balanced sermon presentations. It would also give directions on what books to read and have more chances to meet various needs of the congregation. And if we would plan to have a series of sermons on the books of the Bible, we would have more time to read and study the books of the Bible ahead of time.

## **II - STEPS IN SPECIFIC SERMON PREPARATION**

*Everything we do and whatever happens in our lives are relevant for preaching.*

### **A. Start by praying**

We should start preparing our sermon with a word of prayer. We should get in touch with God since we are supposed to preach God's Word.

### **B. Choose a subject and a Biblical text Where to get a Sermon Subject:**

1. By praying — a sermon idea may come out while praying
2. By reading devotional guide
3. By doing pastoral work or while responding to pastoral calls
4. By following the seasons of the Christian calendar
5. By following denominational emphasis and programs

### **C. Study the Biblical Text**

#### **Steps in Studying the Biblical Text:**

#### **1. Read the text carefully**

Read the Biblical text carefully, in different versions or in original Greek or Hebrew if possible, to find out what is really said in its original meaning.

#### **2. Observe the Text**

Some guide questions:

- What kind of literary material am I reading?
- Is this text history, parable, prophecy, poetry, apocalyptic?
- Is the language literal or symbolic?
- Does the text contain metaphors, similes, hyperbole, paradox or other figures of speech?
- Who are the characters if the Biblical text were a narrative? What is the central action?
- When and where does the action take place?
- What are the important ideas, words and doctrines reflected in the text?
- What is the historical setting of the passage? What does the surrounding context contribute to its meaning?

#### **3. Interpret the Text**

Observe the text to find out what it says. Now, interpret the text to find out what it means. If the Biblical text were a narrative, ask why the people act the way they do. Discover the key words and find their meanings. Determine the theme of the Biblical text and use it as theme of the sermon.

#### **4. Apply the Text**

Some guide questions:

- What does this Biblical text mean to me? Is there any sin to forsake?
- Is there any error to avoid?
- Is there any command to obey?
- Is there any promise to claim? Are there conditions?
- Is there any example to follow?

Are there principles for relating to fellow Christians and non-Christians?

To what possible situations does this text apply?

In what situation is there need for this truth —personal, family, church, office, school, community, national life, international life?

What next step does this text suggest? What implications for a style of life are suggested by the text? If the text were applied, what changes in my life would have to be made?

What new problems would have to be faced? What new creative possibilities would be open to me?

#### **D. Determine the purpose of the sermon**

##### **Basic Purposes of Sermon:**

1. **Kerygmatic (Evangelistic Sermon)** - to win people to Christ
2. **Didactic (Doctrinal Sermon)** — to emphasize learning and understanding Christian doctrines leading to maturity in Christian life.
3. **Therapeutic (Devotional and Psychological Sermon)** — to exhort, counsel, comfort, encourage and inspire people or deal with problems in Christian living
4. **Prophetic (Social-prophetic Sermon)** — to deal with social issues, problems and evils from a Christian perspective, not just to denounce social evils, but to expose it, to show the causes, to seek solutions, and to motivate Christians to work to remove the evil
5. **Apologetic** — to defend the Christian faith and the Christian position at points where it is attacked by its opponents

#### **E. Gather sermon materials**

Jot down materials that may come to mind while studying the Bible. Find materials that help carry out the purpose of the sermon. Discover sermon developers (like explanations, arguments, statistics, quotations, visual aids, illustrations) that will help expand, explain, illustrate and apply the central ideas in the sermon. Make use of Biblical materials, like Bible dictionaries, word studies, topical Bible concordance, critical commentaries, etc. Explore other sources of ideas, like magazine articles, journal articles, conference notes, devotional books and sermons of other people on the theme.

Now, make a tentative outline and fit in the materials needed as they are found. Tentative outline helps organize the materials in a systematic way. Sometimes, just sit down and write and get the mind going and organize what comes out.

#### **F. Make an outline Parts of an Outline:**

1. **Biblical Text** — Biblical basis of the sermon
2. **Subject** — broad area to be treated
3. **Theme or Topic** — specific aspect of the subject
4. **Proposition** — summary of the central idea or truth to be expounded
5. **Introduction** — to establish contact, motivate attention, and provide background of the theme to be discussed
6. **Purpose**- not necessarily mentioned in the sermon but the preacher must be aware of it
7. **Main points** - expansions of the central idea
8. **Conclusion** — bring the message to a climax

#### **G. Write the Sermon**

It is better to write the sermon word by word for the following reasons:

1. To develop skill of expression, logic, and balance
2. To make preachers more exact in their thinking and speaking
3. To help in the timing of the sermon

#### **H. Rehearse the Sermon**

Read the manuscript several times. Preach out aloud to get a feel of the movement of the sermon. Re-absorb the message before actually preaching it.

### **I. Preach the Sermon**

In preaching the sermon, approach the pulpit with expectation and dependence on the Holy Spirit. Concentration is very much needed. All is to be forgotten except the task of preaching at hand. Think of the people and their needs and strive to get across to them the message. You can deliver your sermon either with manuscript, with an outline, or extemporaneously. But in all of these approaches, mastery of the sermon is very much needed to have better delivery.

## **How to Prepare a Liturgical Celebration**

Rev. Luna L. Dingayan

Rev. Dr. Pearl P. Dingayan

**Worship demands that we offer our best. True worship requires our response that is thoughtful, costly, and worthy.**

### **I - WHAT IS WORSHIP**

Worship is our grateful response to what God has done, is doing, and will do for us. The purpose of worship is to quicken our conscience by the holiness of God, to fill our mind with the truth of God, to purge our imagination with the beauty of God, and to devote our will to the purpose of God (Archbishop William Temple).

We worship not simply to satisfy our needs, to make our selves feel better, or to minister to our aesthetic taste and social well-being. Rather, we worship to express and articulate the greatness and majesty of God (Ps.96:8). This could be done individually or collectively.

Worship demands that we offer our best. True worship requires our response that is thoughtful, costly, and worthy. Worship is not something we attend to in a detached way as spectators on the sidelines. It is an exercise that should involve our whole selves, engaging our complete interest and participation. Attention is called for in genuine worship, not merely attendance.

### **II - WHAT IS LITURGY**

Liturgy is the offering of our works to God out of a sense of gratitude. The term *liturgy* comes from the Greek word *leitourgia*, which is a combination of two Greek words: *leitos* (public) and *ergon* (work). Originally, the word *leitourgia* refers to a public service done by a citizen at his/her own expense. The person doing such public service is called a *leitourgos* (servant/ minister).

In its present usage, liturgy basically refers to our order and conduct of public worship. Liturgy then puts in an orderly and meaningful form our grateful and joyful celebration in response to God's love in Christ Jesus for us and for the whole creation.

Thus, liturgy in our Protestant tradition refers to the *Order of Worship*. For this sums up in an orderly manner our public worship, our celebration of God's love and presence with us and with the rest of God's creation.

The Liturgy is not a symbol of rigidity, narrow solemnity, inflexibility, and performance, Rather it is a symbol of harmony, meaning and purpose, beauty, response to needs, and responsible celebration.

Liturgical celebration has a threefold function: to renew our faith in God and in our fellow believers, to fellowship with God, with each other, and with the rest of God's creation, and to be empowered for unhindered witness and service.

### **III - BASIC CONSIDERATIONS IN DOING LITURGY**

#### **A. The Human Person (individual worshipper)**

Liturgical celebration should address the total human being - heart, soul, strength, and mind. The aim is total participation of the human person in worship.

#### **B. The Worshipping Community (church)**

Liturgical celebration should consider the needs and problems of the church as well as its potentials for mission and ministry. It should provide guidance, inspiration and empowering, vision and perspective for the church.

#### **C. The Larger Community (society)**

Liturgical celebration should consider the larger community - the church's locus of mission - in order to be relevant. Consider the *signs of the times* (contemporary events), the areas of the church's witness and service, and the imperatives of God's Kingdom or areas of needed change or transformation.

#### **D. The Church and Cultural Traditions**

Liturgical celebration should consider the Christian symbols needed, the church calendar and lectionary to be followed as well as the cultural practices, music and arts that could be integrated in the whole celebration.

### **IV- BASIC ELEMENTS OF A LITURGY**

#### **A. Hymns/Songs/Music**

One of the best ways of expressing our faith in God is through music, songs or hymns. No wonder Christianity is considered a singing religion. Music is the language of the soul. It could touch the very depths of our being. Without music, liturgical celebrations tend to be very dry.

The responsible use of native music and dances should also be explored so that liturgical celebrations become more relevant and truly Filipino. We have to use the hymns, songs and music of the past to appreciate the richness of our Christian traditions, but we should also endeavor to create new music, new songs, and new hymns, showing that the Spirit is indeed alive and is leading us to new experiences of faith and witness.

#### **B. Prayers**

We could not imagine a worship celebration without prayers. The whole liturgical celebration is actually a prayer to God. Prayer is communication with God. It is a two-way process. We may offer unto God the petitions of our heads, but we must also listen to God - to the "still small voice"- as the Scripture is read, as the Sermon is preached, or as the hymns are sang.

There are various kinds of prayers distributed throughout the whole liturgy. These would include the following:

1. Invocation — to acknowledge God's presence
2. Pastoral — to intercede for various needs of the believing community
3. Confession — to acknowledge our sins and ask God's forgiveness
4. Thanksgiving — to express gratitude for what God has done, is doing and will do
5. Dedication — to commit ourselves in God's service
6. Blessing — to express hope for God's abiding presence

#### **C. Offertory**

We cannot truly love and thank God without giving. It is in the offertory that we express our gratitude and love to God by giving what we have and what we are to the God who first loved us and gave us life in all its fullness.

#### **D. The Word**

The Word of God can be expressed through the reading of the Scriptures and the preaching of the message or sermon. This is an articulation of what God is saying to us today, in the here and now.

#### **E. Fellowship**

This is a time in the liturgical celebration when we affirm our being one community of faith, one household of God, either by shaking each other's hands, hugging each other, or simply greeting one another or saying hello to each other. Some churches have fellowship coffee or meal towards the end of the celebration.

#### **F. Concerns**

Bearing one another's burden is one of the marks of a genuine Christian community. It is in the sharing of concerns, whether individual or communal, that we can show that we do care for each other, that we really care for people even those outside the Christian community. The sharing of concerns or testimonies is usually followed by a community prayer or pastoral prayer or intercessory prayer.

#### **G. Rituals/Sacraments**

The rituals or sacraments of the church, like Baptism and Holy Communion, should be done

in the context of a liturgical celebration. The sacraments of the church are actually, sermons in symbolic form. They talk about the love of God that overcomes and transforms the sinfulness of the world. Rituals and sacraments are forms of worship to God.

#### **H. Symbols/Colors/Vestments**

It is good to make use of the liturgical symbols like the cross or candles, to follow the liturgical colors like purple, white, green, and red, and to wear the vestments. But in order to be meaningful for the worshippers, their use should be preceded by an intentional and purposeful Christian education program. The worshippers should know why we are using these symbols, colors or vestments. They should know the significance of these practices.

#### **I. Liturgical Movement**

The liturgical movement refers to the flow of the whole liturgical celebration, not only physically but also emotionally. It refers specifically to the time in the liturgy when we have to sit or stand or kneel; the time when we have to be joyful or solemn, the time when we have to laugh or to cry.

A good liturgical movement should lead the worshippers to a particular decision **in** their relationship with God, with their fellow human beings, with the rest of God's creation, and also with themselves. It should point to what the worshippers should do after the liturgical celebration is over and as they live their daily life.

How to lead the people to that particular decision is one of the primary concerns of a liturgical celebration.

### **V — SOME LITURGICAL FORMATS**

#### **A. Isaiah Pattern (Is. 6:1-8)**

This is the most popular format of a liturgical celebration used in various churches, Protestant, Orthodox or Roman Catholic. It is patterned after the religious experiences of Prophet Isaiah when he went to Temple to worship God, wherein God called him to be a prophet. The liturgical sequence would be as follows:

1. Adoration
2. Confession
3. Pardon
4. Proclamation
5. Dedication

#### **B. Salvation History**

This is shown in the various stories of calling in both Old and New Testament. The liturgical sequence would be as follows:

1. The Call

2. The Covenant
3. The Promise
4. The Command

### C. Structure of Human Existence

We could also make use of our experience in our human existence as a pattern of worship. The sequence would be as follows:

1. Human Finiteness
2. The Quest for Meaning
3. Some Answers
4. The Commitment

## VI— THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

### A. Why Follow the Liturgical Calendar:

1. To insure that the major events of the Biblical story of redemption are remembered annually: the birth and second coming of Christ (Advent), the death of Christ (Lent and Holy Week), the resurrection (Easter), and the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church (Pentecost).
2. To remind us that Christians live by our own time: that God is in charge of time and redeems the world in God's own time.

### B. Seasons of the Liturgical Calendar:

#### 1. Advent

Advent is the Latin word for *coming*. This season marks the start of the liturgical year. Beginning on the Sunday nearest to November 30 and running through four subsequent Sundays until December 25 or Christmas Day, this season is one of preparation, readying the mind and soul for the celebration of Christmas and Epiphany. It is one of penitence for the renewing of the understanding of God's action and for entering into the spirit of being God's children through Christ. It is one of expectancy for the hopeful anticipation of Christ's coming not only as a Babe but more so as the Lord of our lives.

Thus, coupled with penitence and expectancy is the profound sense of Jesus judging over us. The first coming has to be seen in relation to his second coming when Jesus shall judge all creation, not in the way of condemning it, but of redeeming it.

The element of seriousness and subdued-ness suggesting penitence is aptly depicted by **purple**, a color associated with royalty as suggested in the preparation for and expectancy of Christ's coming to reign.

#### 2. Christmas

The Christmastide begins on Christmas Eve and lasts until Epiphany Eve or January 5. To commemorate the birth of the Divine Son and his full participation in human nature, rejoicing and good cheer mark this season. To celebrate the incarnation is to participate in the mystery of Jesus involvement in the divine and the human. Viewed in the whole Gospel, this needs to be seen in the light of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, which closely follow the season.

Since the mood of the season is joy for the coming of the light of the world, **white** has been deemed most appropriate to symbolize light amidst darkness. Moreover, white symbolizes purity of the One to come, the sinlessness and perfection of Jesus.

#### 3. Epiphany

Epiphany means "*to shine forth*". Starting on January 6, this season continues until Ash Wednesday or the third Sunday before Lent. It is marked with the need and desire to share the Christian faith with others outside the fold.

It is for celebrating the universal revelation of Jesus, his being shown forth as the Savior of all through his manifestation to the Gentiles through the Wise Men from the East.

The color to enhance observance of this season is **white**, still for the joy of God's appearing to all people, and hence, for the purity of his love for all. Until the last four days when the color is changed to **green** to symbolize new life and growth of the church throughout the world.

#### **4. Lent**

Lenten season begins on the 40<sup>th</sup> day (excluding Sundays) before Easter, normally on a Wednesday called Ash Wednesday, and ends on Easter Eve or Saturday noon before Easter. It is a season of preparation for the celebration of Eastertide through self-examination, and even penitential self-discipline for us to be aware, receptive and eager to participate in the celebration of Easter. It is a time to ponder Jesus' forty days in the wilderness.

The mood of this season is penitence, which is symbolized by **purple**. On Good Friday, **black** is used to depict gloom, death and mourning.

#### **5. Easter**

Eastertide begins in Easter Sunday and ends on Pentecost which is 50 days after Easter. This is the season commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is at the heart of the Christian Gospel. While Easter is known as the "Queen of Christian Festivals", celebration of the Eastertide centers around the resurrection and ascension (40<sup>th</sup> day after Easter) to emphasize that Jesus was not simply raised up "from death to life but even raised up to sit 'at the right hand of the Father'."

And so to depict the purity of him who rose to reign, white has been designated to characterize the celebration of this season. White also symbolizes the thankful joy of believers for what it means for them "to be raised up" with Jesus Christ.

#### **6. Pentecost**

Pentecost comes 50 days after Easter. The season begins on that day and ends on the last Sunday of August. The season is for celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised upon his disciples. Since this marks the empowering of the church by the Holy Spirit as its life-giver, counselor and comforter, this is also a season for the church's anniversary.

**Red** symbolizes the tongues of fire, which descended upon the apostles during the Pentecost. It also depicts the zeal of the Early Christians, and even the blood of those who died for the Christian faith,

#### **7. Trinity or Kingdom-tide**

This season follows the end of Pentecost and continues through until the beginning of the Advent Season. It is the period so indicated for the growth of the church in the Kingdom. Thus, it looks upward with the ascension in awareness of Christ's eternal kingship and looks ahead to his coming again as the ultimate Judge and the redeeming Savior.

There are no great historic religious festivals during this season, yet it stands solidly in the midst of our daily responsibilities. Implicit thus is the emphasis on the Lordship of Christ in all of life and at all times, an affirmation of the whole-gospel Lordship as indicated in the celebration throughout the Christian year.

**Green** is the color for this season to stand for the growth and aliveness of those who live their life wholly under the Lordship of God through Jesus Christ. It also symbolizes new life and new beginnings for those who acknowledge his Lordship and draw upon his teachings for the conduct of their lives.

### **VI — SYMBOLS IN WORSHIP**

#### **A. Nature and Characteristics of Symbols**



Symbols and images transcend the limitations of language, and are, therefore, powerful. They represent meanings that are more profound than what is normally perceived. As summarized representations of reality, symbols serve as a means of communicating truths larger than life. As such, symbols are statements in themselves.

Great symbols are not just random symbols. When Jesus chose bread and wine to represent his body and blood, he allowed us to think of food, work, God's grace, sacrifice, eating and drinking, as interconnected. Symbols keep worship rooted in reality.

Symbols are essentials in worship, as worship deals with realities which cannot be expressed or talked about in the usual ways but which can be alluded to. For example, we cannot see God, but God's presence can be expressed through actions, objects or people to which we attach meanings as Christians.

However, symbols have the danger of replacing that which is being symbolized. That's why creating graven images representing God is prohibited among Israelites in the Old Testament (cE Ex. 20; Dt. 5).

Symbols grow in meaning and complexity over time. Most symbols are culturally constructed and are transmitted from generation to generation. These are usually derived from elements in nature, like the sun, moon, trees, etc, and instilled through myths and legends. Many symbols, although based on particular contexts, are considered universal. They carry stories behind them. In Christianity, the candle, the Bible, and the cross, are of major significance.

## **B. Symbols in Worship**

### **1. The Candle**

Candle points to Christ as the light of the world, in him there is no darkness at all. It also carries with it a challenge for all of us to shine "that other people may see our good works and worship our God in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

The teaching of the church is classically expressed through candles. Examples are: the Eucharistic Candle symbolizing the coming of Christ in Communion; the Paschal Candle symbolical of the Risen Christ during the Easter Season; a group of three candles symbolize the Holy Trinity.

### **2. The Bible**

Theologically, the Bible is the Word of God and is a faithful witness to and an affirmation of faith in God. It is a document that records the deep theological reflections of the people of God, their confessions of faith in God.

Historically, the Bible records the history of Israel as a nation and as a people of God. It is a witness to a divine-human encounter between God and the people of Israel (Dt. 26:5-10). It is a faithful witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in the life of the Early Church.

The Bible is never an end in itself. It is not to be equated with nor substituted for God. It is not to function as an opiate in the life of a believer, but a guide for a life of obedience, discipleship and committed service to God.

### **3. The Cross**

The cross is the perfect symbol of Christ because of his sacrificial death on the cross. In a broader sense, the cross has become the mark or sign of the Christian religion. The cross has also become an emblem of atonement and symbol of salvation and redemption. It also serves as a reminder to Christian believers to carry their own cross and Follow Christ.

## **VIII — PLANNING A LITURGICAL CELEBRATION**

### **A. Things to Consider**

1. Find a theme and design the liturgical celebration basing on the theme. The theme could be supplied by the season of the liturgical year or the topic of the sermon.
2. List down available worship resources on the theme, like songs, hymns, music, prayers, responsive readings, statements of faith, call to worship, meditations, benedictions, Scripture readings, etc.
3. Explore all creative possibilities of approaching the theme, like the prayers can be sung, the Scripture Readings can be done by a speech choir, etc.

4. Give attention to the logical content (why a certain hymn is chosen) and the emotional flow (joyful or solemn). The liturgical movement should be natural.
5. Worshippers should be participants, not spectators. They could participate in singing, praying, reading, etc.
6. Keep the worship authentic and personal
7. Seek variety, because we worship and serve a God of infinite variety.

#### **B. Preparing and Training Worship Leaders**

1. Teach them your church theology of worship
2. Plan the liturgical celebration in advance
3. Implement a regular rehearsal time
4. Spend time together in prayer before the liturgical celebration
5. Consider using a number of worship teams; they could take turns in leading the worship celebrations

#### **C. Developing Competent Ushers Tasks:**

1. To welcome people and make them feel at home
2. To make the sanctuary a pleasant environment for worship
3. To seat people evenly throughout the sanctuary
4. To meet the needs of people in terms of their seating arrangements
5. To seat latecomers
6. To remain alert to special needs, like medical emergencies

## **Reaching Out and Forging Ties Through the Newsletter**

Imma Rae Dagapiosio-Gatuslao

**A newsletter can keep CYF members updated about the fellowship, and serve as a lamp post in their journey in life.**

Technologies along with communication may have made available data and information to the widest number of audience possible, nothing beats a newsletter in reaching out to a target group and forging ties With the intended readership. This holds true with members of the Christian Youth Fellowship who are highly exposed to various forms of communication - the short messaging system (SMS), or more popularly known as text messaging, the long distance or local calls through the landline or the cellphone, the internet and mass media - who still need a newsletter to keep them abreast about their fellowship, and serve as lamp post in their journey in life.

Whether printed or uploaded via the Internet as an e-newsletter, or posted as a wall newspaper, the newsletter is a valuable communication tool for CYF members.

For one, a newsletter is meant for a specific group. This is the appeal of any newsletter. The readers of the CYF newsletter know that the publication is meant specially for them. For while newspapers and the regular news broadcasts aim to reach the widest audience the mass media could reach, including our CYF members, the newsletter is meant just for that special group, and is produced by those who belong to the fellowship who share a common faith, goal and interests.

#### **Content and Aim**

In case of the CYF Newsletter, its focus is mainly about the group - news stories about its activities, its membership and its partners, essays or sermonettes of the roots of our faith, beliefs, and traditions, and biblico-theological

reflections. The CYF Newsletter contains all these because it is aimed to reach out to the members of the fellowship to keep them motivated to participate in its activities, strengthen and deepen the relationship among the members, bring the fellowship to the bosom of our church as a faith community, and lead all members closer to God.

Of the total number of pages a newsletter has, devote 70% of it to newbits, and the rest of the 30% to educational pieces and theological essays. For special issues that are aimed to address a certain theme, issue or event, the ratio may be turned the other way around.

### **Style**

The CYF Newsletter need not be formal. Considering that the target audience is the youth, it must use the language familiar to the young. Even as it contains all the basic elements and attributes of news, its writing style must be upbeat and chatty, its visuals attractive but not too over-powering.

### **Frequency and Length**

Four pages is about the appropriate length of a newsletter. The common frequencies is monthly, bi-monthly (every other month) and quarterly. The fellowship is encouraged to come out with special issues for Christmas, Youth Week, Youth Camp and other milestones of the CYF *and* the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and issues addressing themes that affect the youth or which the youth should know about - global warming and stewardship, election and the traits of our faith forebears.

A newsy and educational newsletter, no matter how often it comes out, is awaited with anticipation by its readers. A newsletter that is so thick because it does not come out quite often and lumps a lot of information (mostly past events) in it, is met with lukewarm feelings by its audience. The staff and editors must, therefore, strive to strike a balance of content, frequency, length and audience needs.

More importantly, the newsletter must come out regularly, meaning, as frequently as it claims it comes out, and should be circulated on time. Nothing is most disappointing to a CYF reader than to receive a copy of the newsletter's special Christmas issue in February. Take note, therefore, to ensure that the timeframe of the production work does not cover only the period from conceptualization to printing but also circulation.

### **Ownership and Participation**

Allow for contributions from the CYF members other than those who are part of the publication's staff. This will affirm their belief that the newsletter is not just produced for them, but also by them. Encourage feedback through the printing of letters to the editor and allotment of space for readers thoughts and questions about faith, theology, doctrine and other related issues. Make sure that these are answered by credible authorities on the topic.

### **Sustain the Effort**

No matter the challenges that come your way, keep on writing and producing the newsletter. You owe it to your loyal readers to sustain the effort you have started. Mainstream this endeavor *by* incorporating it in your communication program so that no matter the changes in the leadership of the CYF and in your editorial board, budget and staffing for the newsletter are assured. Let the newsletter continue in its role to reach out to the youth, forge strong ties among them, and bring them closer to the church and to God.

## **A Guide to Church Camping**

Camping is an actual twenty-four-hours-a-day experience of Christian group living in the outdoors.

Generally speaking, the church camping movement as we know it today has developed within the past forty-five years or less. It is an outgrowth of the summer program for youth but is characterized by the basic elements common to the larger camping movement. It 'seems to have come about this way: although the summer conference program was started largely for youth of middle and later teens it

often included adults as well and intermediates were gradually included. The result was the development, by various denominations, of a program specifically for early adolescents.

Although a relative newcomer in the field of camping, there is one phase in which the church-sponsored camp has pioneered: that of **co-ed camping**. Such a camping group makes necessary more preparations, more planning, a broader program and above all, a more efficient and able leadership. However, the added responsibilities are more than compensated for by tremendously increased opportunity of service to an age group that gets all too little guidance today.

The movement spread like wildfire - at last the church had found something which "clicked with the early adolescent boy and girl. The result was not only a rapidly expanding camping program but a stimulation of interest in the junior-high program of the church as a whole. Perhaps more than any other one factor, camping has dramatically spotlighted the junior high or intermediate age youth - those "younger youth" who are so often forgotten or lost in the shadow of other older group. Camping has helped reveal to the church, home, and society some of the amazing potentialities wrapped up in these awkward "tween teens."

Although camping has a peculiar appeal for the adventuresome early adolescent, the church camping program is not confined to any specific age group.

### **Definition of a Camp**

A camp sponsored by the church has been described as:

*An actual twenty-four hours a day experience of Christian group living in the outdoors, shared by campers and counselors alike. In this unique comp community the tools of living become people with nature everywhere about you, the common experiences of the day, the heritage of your camp, your Bible, the skills you find in your hands - all these and many more! Camping is an opportunity for living at its best.*

The characteristic elements that, blended together in the right proportion, constitute a n

organized camp include (1) persons, (2) outdoor life, (3) living in groups, (4) a camp community, (5) leadership and conditions designed to satisfy personal needs and interests and to stimulate wholesome, social or group life and spiritual development. The program of the organized camp consists of experiences that are **indigenous to group living in the out-of-door setting**. This distinguishes an organized camp from a conference, institute, or rally or vacation church school or other type of program that may be constructed in an outdoor or "camp Setting." The process of living together in groups out of doors is the major content of the camp "curriculum."

Camps rather than summer conferences *are* suitable for boys and girls of intermediate age and younger. Training in conference should be for adult leaders rather than for boys and girls themselves. The importance of carry-over values from camp into the local church is recognized. Such results are an outgrowth of informal experiences of doing and living in camp rather than of the type of training which is appropriate to older groups.

### **Some Unique Values in Camping**

Camp leaders often express surprise at the ease and rapidity with which changes come in the lives of campers. The camp affords continuity of experience in a controlled environment. Countless opportunities for learning by doing are written into the very nature of camping. Likewise, in camp, learning through experience is speeded up because of the camper's readiness to learn. This camper is assured.

The following are *factors* in camping *which present unique opportunities for learning*:

1. Camping affords a laboratory for Christian living. The meaning of the teachings of Jesus may be made real in hour-by-hour life situations. Ability to live as Christians is tested and interpreted in the lives of both leaders and campers in the variety of everyday experiences and relationships.

A camp in which there is conscious effort to establish a Christian environment with provision for effective individual and small-group guidance offers unique opportunities for Christian growth and for each camper to take the next step in his personal religious growth.

2. Camping is living out of doors. Camping means more than for Juan and Maria to come home with a list of twenty-three trees which they have identified at camp. It is an opportunity to awaken within the camper a sense of wonder, a chance to make real to her/him the meaning of God's laws at work in the natural world and to love creation.

Aware of God's creative power in the physical universe, the camper not only is awakened to her/his responsibility for conserving natural resources for humankind, but may be inspired to work with God in the ever unfolding divine purposes for human beings. Camping opens new doors to wholesome interests and lifelong hobbies, a welcome antidote today to artificial and deadening varieties of commercialized recreation.

3. Camp affords experiences away from home. Many young campers make rapid strides in the achievement of self-reliance and dependability through such simple experiences as looking after their own things, doing their part in cabin or tent duties, and getting to places at the right time.
4. Camp provides a means for deepening and expanding Christian fellowship. Camping is natural for fostering Christian fellowship within a group as responsibilities are shared and as they work, play, and worship together. When members of a local church group go camping together, this fellowship, once established, undergirds the ongoing program in their church.
5. Camp makes possible an experience in democratic living. Implicit in camping are many experiences in small groups. In cabin or tent groups, quest and discovery groups, and committees, campers and leaders together undertake and carry through activities which they recognize as significant to the life of the camp community. Thus, camping affords the best laboratory we know for democracy.

Likewise, camping may provide a climate which encourages mutual understanding and appreciation between campers, not only of different geographical and national groups, but of varying social and economic backgrounds. Camp leaders today hold in their hands a mighty potential for the development of world community as concepts of democracy come alive in day-by-day group experiences in the camp community. Leaders concerned with Christian values may take in a camp experience in group living on a Christian level — a Christian community in action.

### **Camping and Christian Education**

**Outdoor Christian Education.** Camping is an organized program for the achievement of religious educational objectives. In the view of some prominent Christian educators, historians in the future will rank this as a milestone in the life of the church comparable to the beginning of the Sunday school movement in the eighteenth century.

**The Out-of-Doors as a Resource for Christian Teaching.** Outdoor Christian education is not merely traditional Christian education carried on in the out-of-doors. It is distinguished by the fact that maximum use is made of the resources in the out-of-doors for teaching-learning experiences. This does not mean "nature study." It does not mean making use of God's world of nature to help persons understand God and God's creative activity, and to help in bringing them into close relationship. Rather is it in meaningful experiences in the out-of-doors that persons come truly to understand what the psalmists are saying to us about God as Creator and Sustainer of the universe as they themselves experience God's presence in nature. It is here that the wonder and awe so integrally a part of worship and the at-home-ness in God's world so necessary to faith may be found.

In the out-of-doors, campers, who are ordinarily surrounded by a world of human-made things, can discover the world God made. They can be awakened not only to their responsibility of stewardship in God's creation but learn how to work with God in the ever-unfolding purposes for the world of nature and people.

Organized camping programs, in addition, make possible continuity of experience in a controlled environment — a laboratory of Christian living — where the campers may not only discover the wonder of God's creative work in the natural world but also the meaning of the teachings of Jesus in the elemental experiences of learning to live together in an intentional Christian community. In a variety of experiences and relationships the ability to live together as Christians is tested and interpreted in the light of the gospel.

### **Basic Themes of Christian Camps**

In Christian camps, direction is usually guided by a basic theme or purpose. A theme unifies a program and states a single emphasis. However, it could also be a mixture of various themes, depending on the specific needs and wants of the youth group. This may include:

- Integrity of Creation
- Building and Affirming Christian Community
- The Web of Life
- Understanding the Challenges of Life Together
- The Church for the Life of the World
- Called to be Stewards of God's Creation
- Caring for God's Earth Together
- Vision of Life in all its Fullness
- Living Together in Community
- Discipleship and the Great Out-of-Doors
- Our Faith and Our Life in Action
- Growing with Creation
- Renewal and Commitment of Persons for Stature
- Consciousness Raising and the World Around Us.
- Counseling About Concerns for the World
- UCCP as Pro-Earth
- Despair and Hope in a Dying World
- Organizational/Leadership Skills
- and many others

### **Objectives of Church Camping**

1. To help persons of all ages experience life together in relation to the out-of-doors and gain a fresh appreciation of each other and of creation.
2. To provide an experience of Christian living and fellowship through which campers come to a better understanding of Christian principles and teachings.
3. To provide an opportunity to live in the out-of-doors, gain new knowledge of its resources, and develop skills in using them.
4. To help campers gain broader perspectives through the experience of being away from home
5. To help campers in their understanding of God, God's natural world and God's purposes as they make discoveries about God's work in nature.
6. To provide time for contemplation not always possible in other parts of the program of the church.
7. To help campers learn to worship God in new ways in the out-of-doors and with God's creation.
8. To help campers through small group experiences within the total camp group, to develop self-reliance and a sense of responsibility as cooperative members of a Christian and a democratic community.
9. To relate Christian growth in camp to life at home and in the church, as well as in the wider community.
10. To help campers have a wholesome and happy time in planning, deciding, evaluating, refining their life and work together.

11. To help campers value work and working with others.
12. To enrich campers' experiences in group living, learning to listen and to understand other more deeply.
13. To experience healthful living with nature through the camp menu planning, food preparation and growing together.
14. To help bridge gaps between persons as they discover the demands of giving and taking in living together.
15. To better appreciate the world of nature, learn from it, love it, and care for it.
16. To gain better appreciation of living with the land, feel their relatedness to it and accept the energy that it gives them.

### **Values of a Church Camp**

The difference between a church camp and one under non-church auspices is not in program or setting but in the *spirit of the camp* and the *quality of the leaders*.

In church camps, all leaders should be persons of Christian conviction and of attractive Christian character. "Leaders who carry with them a sense of the presence of God," who have an awareness and concern for the campers are more important than all equipment.

Church camps provide more healthy living through nature's gifts and presence of other persons.

Church camp helps campers:

**To become self-reliant:** Every camper must learn independence from her/his home, painful though the process may often be to the parents. Camp is often the child's first real venture away from home — the first time he/she is responsible for himself/herself. These first steps in independence are taken under wise and helpful guidance.

**Promote physical development** In a good camp, as child has every opportunity to grow in physical health and strength. Campers usually go home bursting with health and more willing to keep themselves well through proper exercise, eating, resting and personal cleanliness.

**Give them new skills and interest** In camp, youngsters get acquainted with the natural life of the outdoors. They learn to work, cook, live and take part in programs of simple dramatics, games, and singing around a campfire. They gain a life-long love of the natural world and feeling of being able to live in the outdoors.

**The development of new friendship:** The campers will have a social experience which helps her/him to get along with people of her/his own age.

**Growth in the ability to make decisions and solve problems in a Christian community:** Living brings crises and problems, and campers can discover how the Christian faces and handles difficulties.

**To adjust to others:** In camp the youngster must learn how to get along with those of her/his own age. Under the guidance of the camp staff and helpful friends, s/he lives with her/his equals. S/He has no special privileges, is in part responsible for the success of group living, and learns how to give up her/his own interests for those of the group **Development of Leadership/Facilitation.**

**Skills:** Campers, in the midst of an atmosphere of acceptance and freer experimentation can develop skills which normally cannot be given expression especially in leading or facilitating activities. There is more time and opportunity for them to carry out their capabilities in an unknown situation.

**Mutual understanding:** As campers live, study, work, play and explore together they begin to understand each other more deeply and learn to take each other as s/he is, thus promote mutual understanding and sincere acceptance.

**Practice in democracy:** The campers themselves have a part in planning their program and in making decisions affecting the whole group. Problems are brought to a common council for discussion and decision and each



one is heard and given a chance to speak. Thus, the campers learn about democracy through actual participation, learning through living.

**Offers a chance to give service:** A valuable part of the camp program is that of service—service to the camp, the other campers, and to outside groups. For instance, in helping to improve the camp grounds, the camper may carry out conservation projects. This will give her/him an understanding of the great need for the care of our land and a respect for the natural life around us. Concern for the others' welfare is a general rule in camp.

**Stimulates the campers to spiritual growth:** The primary concern of the church camp is the spiritual life of the youngster. No part of the program of the good camp is planned without reference to its effect spiritually. The spiritual values are by no means confined to these periods specially set aside for worship. They envelope the whole camp; everything everything that happens is weighted in the light of these spiritual values.

In the camp youth lives close to her/his camp staff and to her/his campmates, getting to know persons outside the family as never before. S/He lives close to the fundamentals of life. S/He sees at first hand the operation of the laws of being in the natural world about her/him. Around the campfire, on the trail, or at angelus, the bigness and the beauty of our world and the kinship with other beings loom as the important facts of life. Around these experiences s/he build a lasting set of spiritual values.

**Enhances quietness, solitude, silence:** Moments of contemplation, prayer and meditations are a vital part of camping and helps campers know how to "Be still and know God."

A camper who has inclinations toward quietude will find a camp atmosphere conducive to it, especially when camp rules respect this.

A camper who has inclinations toward quietude will find a camp atmosphere conducive to it, especially when camp rules respect this.

### **Camp Staff and Responsibilities**

1. **Camp Director:** S/He is principally responsible for directing and supervising the camp, i.e., logistics, program supervision of counselors and other staff.
2. **Camp Counselors:** These are the camp personnel directly in touch with your camps. The ideal counselor-to-camper ratio is 1:3 or 4, at least 6. Counselors usually go through an orientation and pre-camp training. They are responsible to implementing the camp program. Oftentimes, counselors are also assigned other responsibilities, i.e. camp safety/ lifeguard, physical facilities, nature lore, star gazing, handicraft making, worship, campfire games and program, Bible study, song leading.
3. **Doctor/Nurses/Paramedic:**
  - sets up first aid center
  - prescribes health and safety measures
4. **Camp Dietician/Cook/Marketer or kitchen help:** Depending on your camp design, you may engage a full time kitchen staff or a cook to supervise your campers on kitchen detail and to plan the menu.

Although the campers will be doing the cooking, preparation needs to be done in terms of menu planning, marketing, and general food coordination.
5. **Chaplain:** A camp chaplain looks after the spiritual and religious needs of each camper and of the camp as a whole. S/He plans with the worship or spirituality committee on the worship, devotional, biblical aspects of the camp life and leads them.
6. **Crafts Person:** A person trained or gifted in arts and crafts and knows how to create useful or decorative objects out of shells, barks, branches, leaves, roots, paper or cloth.
7. **Resource Persons:** For specialized concerns or special topic or theme for the camp, you may *need* to invite someone to handle it.



**8. Local handy workers:** These are usually the staff of your campsite, if you have chosen an established or commercial one, or the residents within the neighboring area of your camp. As in the case of the kitchen, you should not expect all the manual work to be done by the campers for the following reasons.

- a. Your campers skills may not be adequate for the work required.
- b. Your campers may end up spending all their time on the handy jobs, and lose the opportunity to experience the rest of the program.

**9. Various Preparatory Committees**

- Program
- Budget
- Registration
- Physical Site: putting up of tents, dining hall, toilet and bath, camp fire
- Worship and spiritual deepening activities
- Marketing/Cooks/Gathering of kitchen equipment
- Communications-in charge of writing participants, inviting facilitators, speakers, etc.

**Organizing the Camp**

**1. Forming the Camp Committee**

The first step in organizing the camp is to form a Camp Committee. The camp committee must be small enough to make frequent planning sessions possible. Involve the prospective campers and selected church members who are interested in camping, who understand youth and are willing to give time to help in the camp activity.

Duties of the camp committee include:

- to select the campsite
- to determine the length of camp and set the date
- to determine the size of the camp and procedure for selection of campers/staff
- to plan the camp program
- to prepare the budget
- to plan for registration and transportation
- to receive report at close of camp
- to evaluate the camp

**2. Choosing the Site**

**A. Facilities**

Are there buildings/equipment/facilities for use or should they be put up? The following are the necessities:

- sleeping quarters
- mess (dining) hall
- kitchen
- toilet and bathing area

**B. Camping area**

Is the area ideal for camping? Is it a wooded or forested area or is it a beach site? It should be rich in hiking places, nature study spots, etc.

**C. Conveniences**

Is the site accessible enough to transport facilities? In case of emergency, is there a hospital nearby, a doctor in close call, and transportation to take you there?

Is the market close enough for daily marketing? It is good to serve fresh food all the time. Daily transportation cost to a distant market may drain your finances.

D. Security Is the community a peaceful and safe place?

### 3. Setting the Date

Check your dates against other camp periods or activities of the church and/or school. See that the dates do not conflict with any big church or community event. Consider the forecast weather for the month. Check the moon calendar so the camp could be naturally lighted on dark nights, stargazing will be enjoyable.

### 4. Determining the Size of the Camp

It must be decided what age group the camp is designed for and how many campers would participate.

### 5. Planning the Parts of the Camp Program

A flexible schedule does not mean purposeless activity. Rather, it widens purposes to include such things as development of imagination and individual initiative.

#### A. Moments of Worship

As the total resources of the camp are used in day-by-day living, the significance of God's plan and of God's laws will be continually observed. Although religious values will still need to be pointed out by the leaders, s/he can do this more effectively by her/his reaction than by her/ his words.

There will be many times of worship in camp. These will be both informal and formal. There should be some times for individual worship and times when the whole group worships together

Contemplation: A brief period of worship in the morning helps to get the day under way with a consciousness of God's presence.

Contemplation is a period of no more than fifteen minutes. It is generally recognized that a brief period of motivation is needed to help campers make the best use of the time and materials provided. In many camps, this motivation is given to her/his living group to give help concerning special problems such as how to pray, and how best to use the time allowed.

On the first day, the motivation will take longer than on the other days since the plan will need to be sufficient. This time is included in the fifteen minutes period. After the motivation, all will find a spot nearby, each by herself/himself, where s/ he will go each day for this period, using "contemplation." It may be well to emphasize the point that since these devotions are personal it is helpful to select the place at least ten feet away from anyone else, and a place conducive to worship. It is important that all campers participate in this individual worship.

Angelus: A lovely custom in many camps is that of observing Angelus time. Early in the camp the story is told of the bells which call the people of the countryside to cease work and to pause for worship/ contemplation. After that, when campers and leaders hear the ringing of the Angelus, they quietly pause wherever they happen to be, with heads bowed until the Angelus ceases. If there is no bell, a carabao horn or sea shell may be used. Then they go in silence to the part of the camp set aside for their worship service.

The place may be on a hill, or any place where there is seclusion and a beautiful view. Perhaps at the beach at sunset, or the center of the campsite. Or it may be around a campfire. A variety of campfire ceremonies may be used and perhaps become a impressive part of tradition. This is one time during each camp day when all will unite in a service of worship. The theme and the general camp objectives should be kept in mind, and it is suggested that the messages be related to the daily camp life, using as illustrations incidents that happened during the day.

Tent Group Worship: At the start of the day, the tent group may have a brief prayer or song prayer to acknowledge God's care over the night and to help them begin the day.

At the close of the day, the camp staff may guide the campers in thinking over the experiences of the day. This may lead to a hymn of thankfulness, a prayer for guidance and help, or a psalm of praise.

*Sunday Morning Worship:* The worship committee composed of the campers should plan the details of the service. Plans also include arrangements for the place of worship, the seating, offering baskets, ushers, and decorating with flowers or leaves.

*Campfire Worship:* Evening worship may be around a campfire where singing, reading, creative movements are often significant and have lasting impressions. The meaning of fire or light may provide themes for this worship. Awareness and inclusion of the heavenly galaxies can enrich the worship experience.

*Closing Worship:* This closing service should be simple yet impressive — one that will be a happy reminder of the new insights and purposes that have come for each camper. When planning the closing service, build into it the experiences shared during the camp week. If it comes at night, campfire ceremonials are recommended.

- B. Building and Affirming Community This is good time to get acquainted, making new friends and getting-to-know-you-thing. But it should go deeper than that and the process could be different from the usual "My name is..." kind of introduction. Examples of which could include:

*Self-Discovery and Self-Disclosure*

1. Name origin and sentence completion

- Share where your name came from, who gave it to you, why and what it means
- Complete the following sentences: When I was a child, I wanted to be...
  - One thing that makes me very angry is...
  - One thing that makes me very happy is...
- Relate the first thing that comes to your mind on:
  - What inspires me as a youth of the church...
  - What frustrates me as a youth of the church...

2. As a group, come up with a creative presentation answering all the questions above. It should, at the same time introduce everyone in your group.

Suggestions: Role play, poetry, art, etc.

C. Discovery Time

This is meant to be nature study. Mobile groups/quest groups can move around to discover and appreciate nature and nature's forces around them. Groups may be brought together in order to relate their experiences to each other — telling of the new things they learned. Some phase of Christianity may be explored which will lead the campers to discover new truths and to decide on its application to their lives.

A camper should know more about nature when s/he leaves camp but more than that, s/he should have a love and appreciation which is more important than knowledge of facts. The camp staff's own enthusiasm and awe in the presence of God's handiwork reveals more volumes on nature study, though these have their place and should be among the nature leader's equipment.

*Hikes:* A hike may be to explore, to visit a beautiful spot, to pick leaves, to get to a place designated for a cook-out, to enjoy the trail by moonlight. Those responsible for the hike should be well acquainted with the trail. It should be so organized that there will be no danger of small groups or individuals losing their way.

*Cookouts:* Cooking out away from the usual dining place can be an enjoyable experience of real fellowship when thorough plans are made beforehand. Menus must be worked out and supplies must be planned in

advance. Everyone must experience the preparing and building of the fire, the handling of food, the clean-up, etc. so that the experience may be a happy one for all.

#### D. Interest Activities

At creative times, campers enter into an activity which encourages self-expression. Building the campers to develop their talents or guiding them to develop a hobby for themselves is one thing that can effectively be accomplished in camp.

Activities may be:

- Handicrafts
- Collecting butterflies, flowers, leaves, seeds, rocks, etc.
- Dancing or interpretative movement
- Music — singing, composing songs, learning to play musical instruments
- Reading and creative writing — keeping a diary, writing poem and/or stories
- Painting and sketching — pencil, crayon, or charcoal drawing reveal creative ability on the part of young people.
- Nature lore — river exploration, weather predicting, bird watching, stone/soil study, star and constellation gazing, plant study, animal and insect study.

#### E. Craftivities

Making things is lots of fun. What a thrilling experience it is to be able to make something beautiful and useful out of common things. But more important than the sense of accomplishment are the habits and attitudes that are created in the process of working together. There will be opportunities for sharing tools and equipment, taking turns for supplies and instruction, cleaning up and putting things away. There will be opportunities for friendly discussion - chatting while working on the crafts. This informal setting could be relaxing time for getting to know more of each other and thereby build communities.

Some pointers in planning your crafts program:

1. Plan your craft program carefully and in harmony with the overall objective of your camp. It is not just an added attraction or an entertainment feature. It is a vital part of the camp program designed to help accomplish the purpose of the whole camp.
2. Include a variety of crafts activities to serve the different interests of the campers.
3. Utilize to the best advantage the raw materials available at camp. Make use of outdoor crafts, construction projects and nature crafts.
4. Encourage crafts which could be finished within the allotted time at camp. Otherwise, it could be quite frustrating to end up with an unfinished project.
5. Select crafts which will lead to a new sense of appreciation, a new skill learned and a craft which will result in an item of use at camp or at home. Such activities will give the youth some ideas for her/his leisure time.
6. Introduce projects that will encourage group work and maximum creative expression.

#### F. Playtime

Though spontaneous and free play is fun, supervised, planned recreation can be much more fun. Activities corresponding to the number of campers can be organized such as swimming, parlor games, hikes, outdoor games (volleyball, basketball, relays, contests, etc.). Then during playtime, each group experiences one activity and through the week there is a daily change until all the activities have been rotated among all campers.

Games should come at a time within they are needed for relaxation or learning. Such need will frequently arise in the entire duration of the camp.

#### G. Evening Programs

Evenings in camp can be delightful experiences of *fun* and fellowship interspersed with moments of rich spiritual significance. However, such experiences do not just happen but come as a result of democratic living and planning. Campers should participate in the planning of these evening programs. Suggestions made by individual campers should be entertained as plans are made and incorporated by the planning group.

Opening Night Programs: The Opening Night should be a light one. It should be an evening of songs and acquaintance games, and a simple evening praise could close the night with reflections on their journey to the camp and activities for the day. Another suggestion would be a reflection on the theme.

The Last Evening of Camp: This may be a sharing of groups-each telling what they have learned in camp and take home with them. This can be a natural preparation for dosing worship.

The Camp Fire: The last campfire will have to leave lasting, meaningful memories. Around the fire sharing of most touching events of camps will do wonders. Exchanging words of commitment or dedication will be long remembered. Quiet songs, poetry reading, saying strengths of one another add to the warm atmosphere.

#### H. Mealtimes

Mealtime should be as pleasant as possible. Groups may take turns keeping the table attractive with flowers, interesting rocks, or seed pods. /n keeping with our purposes of helping youth/campers to achieve happy group living the mealtime responsibilities offer a means to that end. A rotation chart for chores may be made for these responsibilities. This could include assisting the cook setting the table, washing the dishes. Everyone should be encouraged to report clean and on time for meals. Good manners will be the rule always.

#### I. Daily chores

Daily chores, too, is part of the day's program. This develops discipline, helpfulness and cooperation; provides excitement and incentive to the young people Chores for the entire camp may include cleaning the grounds, gathering firewood, helping cook, setting the table and washing dishes.

Tent work may include: cleaning inside the tent and the area immediately surrounding it. Fixing clothes lines.

It is good to practice ecological consciousness in chores, presentation of water/soil; use of non-toxic detergents, care against forest fires, care for every morsel of rice, etc.

#### J. Quiet Time

The vigorous activities in camp make rest a necessity for all including the camp staff. Youngsters seem to have an abundance of energy, but it is easy for them to overdo or become over stimulated. Bedtime activities should be quiet and relaxing.

Quiet time will afford time for sleep and rest - even study and prayer. No matter whether it be thirty minutes or two hours, if it is absolute silence, it can be very productive.

#### K. Periods of Sharing

There should be frequent opportunities for brief periods of sharing discoveries on the part of the campers, possibly at mealtime or at an all-camp evening. In the service at the close of the camp, a final period of sharing will serve to knit together the total camp community. As campers and leaders hear about each other's discoveries, as they remember the happy times they have had together in camp, they can be challenged to continue such Christian living on their return to their home communities. In fact, planning "what we'll do at home" can be an important part of the contribution of the camp to the life of each camper. This is especially true if leaders from the camper's own churches are part of the camp community.

#### L. Social Issues Awareness Building

To discuss socio-economic-political needs and problems of the campers and larger community. This may include health, consumerism, environment issues, school, family break-ups, human rights advocacy and many more.

M. Workshops/Inputs

This would be a good venue to have workshops and inputs responding to the various objectives laid out for the camp, such as interpersonal relations or group dynamics or creative dramatics, etc.

### **Pre-Camp Training**

The pre-camp training must take into account your actual camp program. The most convenient way of conducting the training is through the dry-run system. Under this system, the counselors go through the program beforehand. The dry run should ideally be held at the campsite. However, if resources and opportunity do not allow it, you may have the dry run right in the church yard. The alternative training method is the exposure camp, where the pre-camp schedule is not bound by the program but is designed simply to familiarize the counselors with the peculiar characteristics or features of the campsite. Unlike the dry run, however, exposure camps must be held at the camp. It is more suited when you have a short training period for a camp of longer duration.

### **Dry Run**

Normally, camp planners and **officers** plan for a dry run a day or two before the scheduled camp. This includes a trial of some aspects of a camp which need extra planning like putting up of tents, preparing a camp fire, cookout or stargazing. A dry run is to help camp planners and leaders to anticipate time, effort, materials, etc., needed in accomplishing certain parts of the camping experience. This helps them in the actual camp and can better lead the camp when it happens.

### **Necessary Personal Ingredients in Running the Camp**

You have worked hard for your preparations. You have accomplished three-fourths of running the camp. But the camp time has come and how you run it will mean the "doing" or "undoing" of all your hard work in preparation.

*Be flexible* Your well-planned program may not work with your youth or set of campers. Blend your program to the person and not the persons to the program.

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You have worked hard for your preparations. You have accomplished three-fourths of running the camp. But the camp time has come and how you run it will mean the "doing" or "undoing" of all your hard work in preparation.

<i>Be flexible</i>	Your well-planned program may not work with your youth or set of campers. Blend your program to the person and not the persons to the program.
<i>Be resourceful</i>	You may be faced with saving a situation for the sake of good, effective programming. Don't lose hope. Be resourceful. Find substitutes.
<i>Be loving</i>	Sure you worked hard planning the program. But don't be a slave to it. The important thing is the life of that camper. Love her/him and understand her/him and you'll do okay.
<i>Be prayerful</i>	Who is really doing all these wonders? You or Christ in you? When faced by problems, just think what Christ would have done in your stead and do it. We are but instruments of God's will.
<i>Be alert</i>	There are events which happen unexpectedly even after thorough planning, dry run, etc. Be alert to situations that may arise due to weather conditions, variety of campers than come, accidents, unforeseen needs of campers or counselors.
<i>Be calm</i>	Calmness is a virtue that goes a long way to help especially in unforeseen events, emergencies or accidents. At times, you may be extremely distressed within you, but calm countenance helps a situation better.
<i>Be sensitive</i>	Different peculiarities need different ways of relating. Feel your way carefully in dealing with different persons. Concerns for individuals will help you.

### Getting Started in Camp

1. **First Impressions.** When campers arrive it is important to make them feel at home at once. The first impressions made during the first few hours mean much in getting off to a good start.

Details connected with registering, assignment of quarters or tents should be worked out carefully before camp opens in order to make it a positive experience, avoid confusion, and making campers wait.

Counselors should be on hand to welcome the campers. Their initial impact on the campers will mean a great deal to the success of the camp.

## 2. General Orientation

- introduction of youth leaders and functions: physical layout, sleeping quarters, kitchen, dining, crafts area
- explanation of camp schedule
- camp objectives and camp rules should be discussed early. The first evening around a campfire is a good time.
- discussion on guidelines and procedures
- do's and don'ts

### The Assignment Chart

The success of the camp program depends heavily on every individual having the opportunity to share in the carrying out of the program as well as in the planning. The assignment chart is a device for dividing the work so that each one have as equal share in carrying out the responsibilities.

Points to remember

- assignments are well-defined and thoroughly discussed
- charts should be made by campers
- put in a place where it can be read by everyone

Possible assignments:

1. Grounds clean up - around camping area
2. Sanitation - toilets, water drainage
3. Water fetcher - filling water containers
4. Cooks - prepare meals and snacks
5. Dishwashers - wash utensils
6. Wood gatherers - keep woodpile up
7. Servers - prepare table and serve food
8. Facilitators - each group discussion
9. Officers of the day - time keepers
10. Singspiration/prayers
11. Liturgy

Example for Assignment Chart:

- Names of campers and group assignments

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Cora	Sancho	Gemma	Edwin
Luis	Joy	Edward	Marites
Emma	Jiji	Rey	Miriam

Camp equipment

- tents
- flashlights
- digging tools
- lamps
- carpentry tools
- string/rope

Personal belongings

- Bible
- pencils/pens
- flashlight, malong or small blanket, toiletries, eating utensils, swimming gear
- notebook



Note: Be sure to make an exhaustive list of all possible needs according to your plans, program and type of camp.

### **Breaking Camp and Evaluation**

#### **1. At Camp**

Camp evaluation is continuous. The camp staff and the steering group from the campers will need to have a brief session sometime during each day.

Another possibility would be an on-going verbal assessment where the campers could freely express when the need arises.

#### **2. At the Closing of the Camp**

An evaluation is held by all campers just before the closing worship. Aside from logistics, the camp content should be given emphasis with regard to its strengths and weaknesses. In addition, written statements from the campers may prove to be very revealing. Even a statement of three or four lines on "what I liked about camp" can say a great deal. An evaluation form is always helpful.

#### **3. After the Camp**

An after camp evaluation is made by the camp staff immediately after the close of camp. Members of the committee under which the camp operates may be invited to attend this period of evaluation, for they will find it very helpful for the future planning of the group they represent.

This meeting shall serve to bring together the counselors' estimates of the commendable features of the camp, and their suggestions for improvements as well as their criticisms. Likewise, this session provides an opportunity for beginning plans for the following year.

#### **4. Individual Camper Assessment**

Efforts should be made for the individual assessment of each camper gleaned from their counselors, their living groups. Assessment should be based on growth in responsibility, creativity, love for nature and out-of-doors, and in personality in general. These finds should be shared with the families and the church as a whole. A form is ideal for this.

In like manner, those who need improvement in certain aspects of growth should also be advised and suggestions be made to parents and other caregivers.

## **A Brief Narrative and Exposition on the UCCP Community Witness through the Silliman Mission**

Dr. Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro

### **Mission Possible: The Silliman Story**

The Presbyterian missionaries established Silliman Institute in 1901, which later became Silliman University. Its story however, began two years earlier, when a philanthropist and a supporter of several schools and colleges in the United States stepped into the office of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in New York. This man, Dr. Horace B. Silliman offered Ten Thousand Dollars, a huge amount at that time, to put up a "trade and agricultural school for Filipino boys."<sup>1</sup> This was the man's idea of taking participation in the colonial venture of the United States in the Philippines. Soon after that, the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions approved to establish the

mission station in Dumaguete and sent Rev. James Rodgers who acquired a waterfront lot for Three Hundred Pesos in 1900. The first building was then built on this lot and a fresh graduate from Princeton Theological Seminary came as a missionary tasked to start an English class in 1901.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the mission of Silliman in the Philippines began to grow.

### **Silliman: Built to be a Witness**

The witness of Silliman University as a Christian academic institution had an impact on the community early on. Even then President Emilio Aguinaldo sent his sons, Esteban and Miguel to study at Silliman Institute some years later.<sup>3</sup> The pages of history has shown us that the years that followed the establishment of the Institute by David and Laura Hibbard was full of stories of mission work through Christian education and the program of healing through the hospital established by the Henry William Langheim and Ruth Eleanor Armstrong.<sup>4</sup> After a couple of years, the mission that was envisioned by Horace Silliman, that of developing a trade and agricultural school, seemed to be neglected. Silliman insisted that this vision should be pursued. Thus, the missionaries invited Charles A. Glunz, a "self-educated engineer, and began an industrial arts program.

Calisthenics were held early morning, and daily chapel services were held before classes. Students who missed these basic activities or a class were sentenced to take the sickle or hoe on Saturday mornings to clear the undergrowth or cut weeds. The Silliman missionaries believed that Filipino culture needed to be changed as they deemed the Filipino way of life as bereft of discipline and morality.<sup>5</sup> Thus, Silliman mission was to instill in the minds of the students discipline and a "new work ethics" consistent with Calvin's teachings of living out the Christian faith by demonstrating the discipline of "hard work, thrift, frugality and observance of Sabbath."<sup>6</sup>

Christ and converting people to become Protestant. Silliman's second pastor, Presbyterian Rev. Douglas Vernon began in 1938 the tradition of the "Galilean Fellowship," a yearly religious gathering of students, faculty, and staff that ran for two weeks. The participants of these meetings talked about crucial issues of life, the Christian faith and the meaning of discipleship. Then, on "Decision Sunday" students were invited to come forward to publicly signify their acceptance of Christ by becoming a Protestant.<sup>7</sup> This old way of evangelism became what ecumenical groups now call proselytism, of convincing Christians who already belong to a certain Christian church to join one's denomination.

Even sports became a vehicle for evangelism. Missionaries taught young people in the community how to play sport games. Certainly, the pioneering evangelists like Angel C. Sotto made use of sports to forge an opening for evangelism in Tanjay in 1910 by "bringing over on weekends a baseball team composed of Protestant youth from Amlan."<sup>8</sup> Games like baseball, an increasingly popular game introduced by the Americans, became instrumental in the establishment of rapport between the community young people and the missionaries. This tradition of playing games would later be followed by the young people now called Christian Youth Fellowship.

### **Carrying Out the UCCP Witness through Silliman: The Divinity School and the Church**

It must also be reckoned that the establishment of Silliman Bible School in June 1921 was a joint project of the Congregationalist and the Presbyterians with seven students.<sup>9</sup> Inspired by Or. Frank Laubach of the American Board Mission (Congregationalist) in Mindanao, its main purpose was to train Visayan-speaking ministers. This was later re-named into College of Theology in 1931, and it has contributed to the spread of the gospel. Its students were said to have made up more than one-third of the Silliman Volunteer Band. The members of this Volunteers' Band were active in Silliman Student Church and were greatly involved in serving as "supply preachers" in Presbyterian churches in the area.<sup>10</sup> As a result of the efforts of these volunteers and other pioneering people, churches around Dumaguete began to sprout and grow. The College of Theology went through a process of development that was almost parallel to the development of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in 1948, and was re-named The Divinity School. Hundreds of Divinity School students and graduates passed through the portals of Silliman and became ministers of the people of God wherever they are.

In 1938, a couple of years before the World War II broke out, Silliman became a university. During the war, the American missionaries along with students of the College of Theology continued their ministry to the guerillas and families in the mountain communities where they hid from the Japanese forces. They produced mimeographed copies of pocket hymnals that were used in worship services. After the war, spirituality and Christian faith were crucial in "the restoration of campus life."<sup>11</sup> Reconstruction of buildings at Silliman University after the war was possible with the Restoration Fund sent by the Presbyterian Board. In 1946, the supervision of American mission work was turned over to the United Evangelical Church that became United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Silliman as a whole became an arm in carrying out the ecumenical outreach program of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

Silliman Church contributed to the witness of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines through Silliman University community. Its structure that was first used by the Silliman community for warship service on New Year's Day in 1950 became a venue for nurturing the faith of young students, faculty, and staff. Sillimanians - nurses, teachers and especially graduates of the Divinity School were sent on mission to various mission fields in the Philippines. They were sent to Philippine tribal communities, to Africa, Hawaii, Japan, Indonesia and Thailand - among others.

### **Silliman Education: Fashioning Scholars as bearers of the Good News**

A survey was done in early 1950s to evaluate and upgrade the educational program of Silliman University. It was known as the Fenn Survey, named after the director of the evaluation, Dr. William P. Fenn United Board executive secretary. The survey is noteworthy in the sense that it points to Christian education as the crucial to Silliman education. The heart of Christian higher education is located in the communities of scholars and students that seek to make a connection between the Christian faith and academic discipline; and that such faith must be demonstrated in their life both in campus and in the world.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, Silliman Church played a crucial role in the nurturing of young people to become bearers of the good news. A young student in the early 1950s. Nena Severino recalled that in 1953, Silliman Church had two services — 8:00 and 10:00 in the morning. The services were well attended, to the extent that the church could not accommodate both the high school and college population. That was the reason why the two services were held, with exactly the same liturgy and sermon.

### **Silliman Mission and CYF Witness**

The Christian Endeavor was the forerunner of Christian Youth Fellowship. This youth fellowship had organized small groups that met in the homes of Silliman University faculty and church members. The students of the College of Theology (now Divinity School) provided leadership in these meetings. The faculty of the College of Theology also helped in the CYF discussions.<sup>13</sup>

The college CYF was engaged in fun activities and outreach programs. The members initiated Square Dance at the Gym n that was newly built at that time. They also had games such as "Jewel Box," pingpong, skating. They served as core group for these activities and residents of all dormitories were invited to join. While not all dormitory residents were Protestants, they were all encouraged and attended these CYF activities "The gym was always full of young people attending the CYF activities," said Nene Severino Guasa. The CYF members were also active in the church choir.

The outreach programs of the CYF include visits to neighboring churches to encourage the young people there to organize local CYF groups. The young people also brought sports to the communities for fellowship with young people and as an entry point for evangelism. The presence of DYSR, the radio station of NCCP, in the campus of Silliman University also gave opportunity for the CYF to get involved with radio programs.

In 1958, one memorable sermon of Rev. Paul Lauby was deemed by a first year college CYFer, Nena Severino Guasa, to be crucial in encouraging young people take up social issues in relation to their faith practice. The sermon was a critique of the "Sunshine Christians," the ones who come to church only when the sun shines, and

do not come to church when it rains. In other words, the sermon points to "Christians." who are concerned only with lighter things, but do not do anything to respond to the challenges posed before them. In retrospect, Severino-Guasa thought the sermon provided an impetus for some young professionals to get involved in politics.

In the 1960s, Silliman Church's CYF was active in organizing the conference CYF, and a good number of Negros District Conference CYF presidents *and* officers came from Silliman University Church. The prominent CYF readers in those days were Trufemo Laurino, Ephraim Bejar, Zozelun Zerrudo, Edwin Decenteceo, and Henry Germodo from Manjuyod but were active in Silliman Church CYF.<sup>14</sup>

The CYF in Negros Oriental held post-Christmas Conferences. Among the prominent speakers were Miss Luz Ausejo, Miss Lydia Niguidula, and Miss Sylvia Arnaldo who was a Silliman High School graduate, but was later based in the National Council of Churches in the Philippines and was working for Student Christian Movement.<sup>15</sup> Silliman University SCM was the largest chapter of SCM in 1961, with a membership close to 1,200. That was because the Silliman Church CYF "doubled also as the local chapter of the SCM of the Philippines" IS During the First Quarter Storm, students from other towns and provinces who were also Silliman Church CYF members actively engaged in discussions and wrestled with the challenge of making the Christian faith relevant to the social challenges of the times. Then, Martial Law was declared in 1972. For sometime, after the declaration of Martial Law, there was a lull in CYF activities.

However, the pause did not last long. The CYF was revived and became very much alive with the active support of Silliman Church's Team Ministry led by Rev. Harry Pak and Rev. Lydia NI. Niguidula. A student team assisted in the Youth Ministry program. Several interest groups were formed within the CYF. There was a group that focused on environment, creative liturgy, theater, singing groups, interpersonal relationship (IPR) encounters or GDs (group dynamics). The Catacombs became a space for sharing of talents in folk singing and for small theater productions of CYFers. A student center was set up at the first floor of the Christian Education building. There, students play chess, table tennis, and domino, read newspapers, or simply can hang out for good conversations and coffee. The CYFers were involved as teachers of Vacation Church School classes on campus and in outreach areas. The CYFers were active in facilitating group encounters as part of the University Religious Life Emphasis Week.

This one-week celebration once held on to a name that points to Silliman Church's openness to ecumenical and interfaith endeavors consistent to the idea of university and of academic freedom.

At least once a year all CYF groups from High School to College levels would gather for a sports festival called *Palarong Si Way Ep* and play traditional Filipino games. CYF nurture camps and retreats were held. These activities and more were well attended both by dormitory residents and the *externas (os)* or off-campus residents. Dormitory residents both on campus and in Silliman Farm in Bantayan would come to attend these activities. Spirituality was nurtured not simply in terms of cultivating piety, but equally shaped through one's faith practice in society. The Vesper Services of Silliman University Church was also one inspiring venue for the CYF and other students to come to church to lead or simply sit to meditate on the music, reading poetry and stories, and prayers. On their own desire, some students decided to become members of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines because of their exposures to these CYF activities that offered opportunities for spiritual nurturance and leadership training.

One significant involvement of the Silliman University Church CYF was hosting a national gathering of CYF. It hosted the Preparatory Consultation attended by CYF representatives nationwide in 1978. This consultation pushed for the creation of the National CYF.<sup>17</sup> Towards the 1980s, the leadership of NOC-CYF came from other churches in the conference. Former CYFers saw the important role of the University faculty and staff members in supporting the CYF and in making it flourish. Today, the CYF continued to exist at Silliman University, but the students do not get as much support and guidance from the faculty at large. A former CYFer viewed this as a result of the coming in of Protestant faculty and staff members who do not have the passion for youth ministry, and the coming in of the "non-Protestant" faculty and staff. On the one hand, and historically, the CYF of Silliman Church has contributed much to the development of lay church leaders. On the other hand, it has just started to respond to the challenge of encouraging people from among its rank to take the vocation of ministry.

## Bearing Witness Today

Today, the challenge remains for Silliman University and Silliman University Church to pick up the task and share with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines its mission to witness to the Way, the Truth and the Life. It must not simply be contented with its focus on the maintenance of its priestly function. Silliman community must be able to respond to the challenges of the times, but anchor this response on the faith that our ancestors had passed on to the present generation. In other words, Silliman must not forget its mission to serve, for service is the heart of the gospel that Jesus the Christ lived out. Silliman is called to be brave, rather than shy away from the prophetic and pastoral ministry our Lord Jesus has entrusted to the church. At a time when the lure of fame and prestige is strong, Silliman must not lose sight of its mission: to serve the needy. Indeed, may all those who walk behind the present generation find it faithful to the vision of the founders of Silliman University and that of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Paul T. Lauby, "Ten Thousand Dollars and Three Gallant Men," In Paul T. laulry, Proceso U. Udarbe and Jennifer L. Lauby, *Clouds by Day and Fire by Night: The Silliman Story* (Dumaguete City-. Sill ima n University, 2006). 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.. 9.

<sup>3</sup> T. Valentino Sitoy Jr, *Several Springs, One Stream: United Church of Christ in the Philippines Vat I: The Formative Decade (1898-1948)*(Quezon City United Church of Christ in the Philippines, 1997),16.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>5</sup> Paul T. Lauby, "Colonialization of the Philippines," in Paul T. Lauby, Proceso U. Udarbe and Jennifer L. Lauby, *Clouds by Day and Fire by Night The Silliman Story* (Dumaguete City Silliman University. 2006),5.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>7</sup> Paul T. Lauby, "God Made the Seed Grow: in Paul T. Lauby, Proceso U. Udarbe and Jennifer L Lauby, *Clouds by Day and Fire by Night The Stillman Story* Mumaguetecity. siiiiman University, 2006),23-24.

<sup>8</sup> Sitoy, *Several Springs, One Stream*, Vol. I, 154.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.. 341.

<sup>10</sup> T. Valentino Sitoy Jr., *Several Springs, One Stream: United Church of Christ in the Philippines Vol. II: The Formative Decode (1942-1958)* (Quezon City United Church of Christ in the Philippines, 1997), 844.

<sup>11</sup> Proceso U. Udarbe, "Watering the Seeds of Filipinization," in Paul T. Lauby, Proceso U. Udarbe and Jennifer L Lauby, *Clouds by Day and Fire by Night The Silliman Story* (Dumaguete City. Silliman University, 2006), 47.

<sup>12</sup> Udarbe. "Watering the Seeds of Filipinization; 58-61.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Nena Severi no Guasa, December 27, 2007. For instance, the first year High School (VF met at the Manuel Utzurum home in the campus. Nena Severino was part of this group. Among those who served as facilitators in Nena's group were Ely Maps nao and Portia Rodriguez.

<sup>14</sup> Nene Guasa became president of the CYF in 1965. Later in the mlc11980s, her son Patrick, a (YFer from Ullman University Church, also became the president of the Negros District Conference CYF.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Nena Guasa on December 27, 2002 during the wake of the late Emiliarro Ygnalaga Sr. in Sibulan.

<sup>16</sup> T. valentino Sitoy Jr., *Several Springs, Once Stream: United Church of Christ in the Philippines Vol. II: The Formative Decade (1948-1958)* (Quezon City: United Church of Christ in the Philippines. 1992), 838.

<sup>17</sup> Informant Reuel Norman O. Marigza was one of the leaders of the CYF In the national level who was Involved In all these processes. After the Preparatory Consultation at Silliman in 1978, a CYF constitutional convention was held in Cebu in 1980 to draft the NCYF Constitution and By-Laws. It was ratified by the conferences. Then, in 1982, the Founding Assembly of the NCYF was called a few days before the General Assembly in 198/. Consequently, the General Assembly of the UCCP held in May 1982 in Malolos. Bulacan recognized the NCYF officially.

# Me and the CYF

Gabriel Bugtong

***The farthest we've hiked took 12 hours because of our desire to meet the young people in that place and have fellowship with them.***

In our place in Benguet, the two dominant sources that bring food to our table is mining and vegetable farming. As for me, / was brought up in a family of farmers. I grew up helping my parents in planting vegetables and transporting our vegetable products during harvest season to the market. I am delighted with our simple way of life and find joy in doing all these because in here, I can feel how the Lord blesses and takes good care of me and my family. I also thank God that I belong to a Christian community where people help each other, not only during harvest season, but also whenever problems arise. Misunderstanding and problems are appeased with the help of God through our elders.

## **My Involvement**

Not only did ray parents teach me how to farm, but since childhood, they also taught me to praise God by bringing me to church in times of worship until such time that I joined the CYF and participated especially in playing musical instruments. It wasn't long when I was elected as a CYF officer in our local church. I believe it all started when I prayed to God that I may be able to do my part in glorifying Him by leading my co-CYFers. I continued to be involved in parish and conference activities until again, I was elected as a parish officer Part of our monthly activities is to visit local churches within our parish, and find ways on how we could be of help, at the

same time, invite them to our parish activities. In return, through these activities, we are also blessed to meet with the elders in the local church and be touched with their testimonies and stories of faith and service. All these, challenge us to do our part as officers and continue what our elders started. My term as a parish officer hasn't ended yet, when due to leadership crisis in our conference, / became the president of Highland Conference-CYF (HC-CYF). It was at those times when I experienced the happiness *and* hardships of being an officer. Starting from scrap, we continued conducting CYF activities in our conference — trainings, seminars, conventions... to cater to the CYFers' needs.

Due to great responsibility as a HC-CYF president, I needed to give much priority to the conference, sometimes we had to walk just to reach local churches located in far flung areas.

The farthest we've hiked took 12 hours because of our desire to meet the young people in that place and have fellowship with them. I didn't have time to attend to my personal needs, especially my work. It was my family who shouldered all my responsibilities so I could focus on my work in the conference, even until now that I became an officer in the NU. My only prayer is that the Lord will continue to keep and bless my family and the community where I came from.

There are times when I feel like giving up due to the pressures I faced as a servant-leader, but I thank the Lord, my savior and comforter for lifting me up and molding me to be better in this work appointed to me. I also thank the pastors who I consider my second parents and who include me in their prayers, my co-CYFers who inspire me to finish what I was called to and my family who understands and supports me.

I believe nothing is impossible if God will work in an organization. To God be the glory!

# Doing Christ's Ministry in an Urban Setting: A Passion of the Young People

Rev. Dr. Ruth Panganiban-Billena

## I. FELICITATIONS AND INTRODUCTION

At the outset, let us congratulate the national leadership of the Christian Youth Fellowship for initiating this great ministry of documenting the valuable contribution of the youth to the collective mission of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

I am privileged to be part of this project aptly called the ABAKADA NG CYF. What follows is an account of the tremendous contribution of the young people of the UCCP-Ellinwood to its total life and ministry—an account that points to God's inclusive love, amazing grace in Jesus Christ and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

## II. DOING GOD'S MINISTRY IN WORSHIP—IN REACH

### A. Music

The young people love to sing! Four (4) of the eight (8) choirs of Ellinwood are basically composed of young people. The other four are also flavored with the presence of enthusiastic young ones. The presence of the young people in practically all choral organizations speaks of their love for music and their belief that God uses music to touch people—transform them into the very people God wants them to be. Their dedication amazes me no end. Since the first Sunday worship service starts at 7:00 AM, the Youth Choir is expected to be around by 6:30 AM. No human-made or natural calamities could prevent them from honoring their service to the One and Only, True and living/Loving God.

The choice of the music pieces varies. As an urban church catering to people from all walks of life, the pieces address the diverse needs of the worshippers. Hence, the music ranges from the traditional to contemporary.

The heavenly music of the young people is often peppered with movement that borders to theatric expressions.

It is noteworthy that the young people also excel in acting. The group that is responsible for the proclamation of the word through creative arts is called the ACTS 29 which stands for ARTISTS IN CHRISTIAN TEACHING AND SERVICE. Why 29? To continue the ministry of the proclamation of the Word in the BOOK OF ACTS OF THE APOSTLES (which has only 28 chapters) through theatric language.

The many and great gifts of the young people are evident in the worship life even as they lead in worship as liturgists, ushers, and preachers.

### B. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND NURTURE (CEN)

Some other people who are not called to the music ministry find joy and fulfillment in the realm of Christian education particularly in teaching. However, the roster of the teachers is also composed of the members of the choir. Does not God give more than one talents? Many could be gifted in music and be also endowed with the skills in teaching.

The teaching ministry goes beyond the Sunday School classrooms. The young people of Ellinwood always look forward to KID'S CAMP and YOUTH CAMP. These are summer programs that last for a week. The youth leaders plan and execute their wonderful programs with the kids in mind. The pastor-in-charge of the program was too joyful and grateful that such a bunch of young people know the color of worship and service at their tender age. The form of service may include child care which involves washing the buttocks of the participants.

The young people also take the lead in the sports ministry. This ministry used to be known as BALIKATAN. However, when the term was adopted by the government, the young people dubbed the ministry as PALARONG



PINOY! At some point, the summer program was also called FAMILYMPICS. The Sports Ministry is implemented by the CEN and the Membership Growth and Development Ministry (MGD).

For their spiritual nourishment, aside from the worship experience, the young people hold annual retreat and fellowship.

### C. SHEPHERDING MINISTRY

Worship! CEN! Studies! Do they have time for some other forms of ministry? And we are not talking about outreach yet!

The young people of Ellinwood Malate Church are very much involved in the shepherding ministry otherwise known as the ministry of presence and intercession. The ministry of presence includes but not limited to visitation. The young people pay visit to fellow young ones who miss Sunday ministry and other programs, especially when the power of testing does not seem to work.

The leadership of the young people and the shepherding committee note with regret that due to distance of the church from their residence, the Friday prayer meeting (ministry of intercession) is not well-attended.

### III. DOING GOD'S MINISTRY IN SERVICE—OUTREACH

**Saved to Serve!** Propelled by this great truth, the young people of the UCCP-EMC practice their faith. The area where they express rather eloquently their faith is the Street Dwellers Ministry. This is the ministry of the church for the urban folks who do not have roof over their heads. Breakfast is served every Saturday. Around thirty five street dwellers avail of free hygienic offerings that include: bath every Saturday, free haircut every three months and free clothings and footwear.

The young people volunteer to cook for them and also lead in the Bible Study/worship before lunch.

Work camp is another avenue where the young people flex their faith. The work camp is conducted with a struggling church within the conference that needs either chancel area repainting or backyard fencing. Composed of ten campers, these young professionals also provide a token financial support to the project.

The young people are also invited by other churches to perform concerts to raise funds for their needs. Needless to say, the young people look forward to such invitation. They thunder: *naka kanta na: nakatulong pa!*

The young people are making waves in the arena of worship and service. May God continue to find them faithful as they share their passion for mission and service.

## Brokenshire College-Christian Youth Fellowship/Pastors' Kids (BCCYF/PK)

Rhea Yeza Engoc

BCCYF/PK is a school organization who upholds its fundamental faith and message Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Lord and Savior. He is present and active in the world through the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures. The BCCYF/PK exists for the service of the Filipino people in particular, and of humankind, in general. The BCCYF/PK also commits itself to the total development of the youth for a more responsive and effective leadership and service in school, local churches and in the community as a whole. It assists young people in Christian growth through study, worship, fellowship, leadership and service.

As Christian leaders, we aim to provide fun and support to attract and hold a growing young people for the purpose of revitalizing them to grow with a strong Christian faith, so that they might spread the news of Christ



through acts of compassion, commitment and love as they devote their lives to God. We, BCCYF/PK, desire to provide channels through which young people can involve beneficially in the School and in the community. It's also our privilege as a CYF and PK to follow the steps made by our parents in serving God, not just inside the church, but also in the campuses. That's why, we, sons/daughters gather together with faith and sympathy in this institution to achieve our purpose through evangelizing, equipping, and engaging youth to live a life pleasing to God and discovering our talents which are God's gift to us.

### **What is its composition?**

It composed of a group of young people gather together to worship the mighty name of GOD and spread the words spoken through songs and praises whose mission is to share the love and truth of Jesus with other young people/students by encouraging them to cultivate and nurture a genuine spiritual life, accompanying them in the challenges of living as true disciples. It provides fellowship, fun and worship where youth in Brokenshire College Campus could praise and worship our Almighty God.

### **How about the Membership?**

All Pastor's kids (including those from other denominations) and CYF members studying in Brokenshire College, Davao City are members of BCCYF/PK.

### **History:**

In the year 2002, Mr. Jovy Dungog, President of the Pag-asa School of Theology (who is a Pastor now), led and lobbied for the BCCYFRK to be recognized by the Brokenshire College, Davao City-Office of the Student Affairs as a Campus Organization. This was achieved with the assistance of Rev. Sarly Templado as their Adviser, together with Rev. Socrates Idul as School Chaplain.

When it was recognized as one of the Campus Ministry/Organizations, the BCCYF/PK made its Constitution and By-Laws, with the following Preamble:

*We, the members of the Pastor's Kids/ Christian Youth Fellowship of the Brokenshire College, believing in God as the ground of all our being, in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, in the Holy Spirit as Guide and Comforter, and realizing the significance of fostering unity among ourselves, and with all Christians towards the fulfillment of His ministry, do ordain and promulgate this constitution.*

In 2007, the organization's name BCCYF/PK was officially adopted, which was formerly PK/BCCYF. In the same year also, its official logo - initiated by Mr. Jaybee Bernaldez, a Pastor's Kid — was approved and is used to this day. The BCCYF/PK went through a lot of ups and downs for the past years but despite of that we are determined to continue fulfilling God's purpose in the lives of young people in the campus.

# **UCCP-Tondo Community Ministry at Smokey Mountain II Garbage Dumpsite**

Rev. Rannieh B Mercado

### **Background**

This Community Ministry came about as a result of a Mission Sunday afternoon (August 26, 2007) exposure-visit at the garbage dumpsite in Smokey Mountain B by the whole Church Council (officers and members), including the 18 youth members of **UCCP-Tondo** Evangelical Church.

The depressed, poverty-stricken, sub-human conditions at the dumpsite became a big awareness impact upon the church members, as well as a remarkable turning point for the local church. The experience rendered the local

church ethically disturbed. Hence, the inevitable challenge to pursue community ministry in the area. The dumpsite community, where more than a thousand families eke out a living from the garbage, is completely neglected by the government in terms of basic social services (water, electricity, health, housing and education).

Two months prior to the local church's 105<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary Celebration, which falls every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of November, the Church Council, tempered by the dumpsite exposure-experience, unanimously adopted the Anniversary Theme for 2007: *The Household of God in the Service of the Community.*"

The Anniversary Theme expressed the local church's faithful alignment with the UCCP thrusts and quadrennial theme — that is, *Vying Together in the Household of God*- and the Goal 2 of the UCCP Strategic Plan: *"Enriching the life-work of communities where the local churches are located."*

The theme wasn't meant for the Anniversary occasion alone, but would serve as a call and guiding principle for the local church to be responsive to its local context of mission throughout the year and onward. Incidentally, the community of Smokey Mountain 11 has, among others, appealed for the local church to possibly introduce and develop a sustained ministry particularly for the unschooled children at the dumpsite.

### **The Community Ministry: Its Spontaneous Development**

#### **A. Church Anniversary**

On November 18, 2007, some fifty (50) children from the dumpsite have joined the local church's momentous 105th Anniversary Celebration. The presence and participation of these children amid such solemn occasion rendered a sublime and true meaning of the Anniversary Theme — *service to the community*.

As such, it signaled for the local church to seriously pursue the UCCP Goal 2 (that is, Community Ministry) among the children and their families at Smokey Mountain 11 Garbage Dumpsite.

#### **B. Children's Christmas Celebration**

Came December 24, 2007, the local church extended gift packages, served food, facilitated parlor games and narrated Jesus' birth story as a **Christmas Celebration** for some sixty (60) children and fifteen (15) youth from Smokey Mountain IL The occasion was remarkably enjoyable and touching to the dumpsite children for it was their first-time to experience a joyous Christmas celebration.

#### **C. Seminar-Orientation on Community Service**

On December 28, 2007 (known in the Christian Calendar as Innocence Day in commemoration of those innocent children massacred/sacrificed during the childhood of Jesus), the Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF) members of UCCP-Tondo held a whole day seminar-orientation on Community Service. The activity aimed to equip the youth with proper knowledge and attitude in doing service to the community. A lecturer was invited to discuss about the UCCP Biblico-Theological Orientation and Socio-Historical Perspectives on Community Ministry. An organizer from KADAMAY (Kalipunan at Damayan ng Mamamayan) was invited to provide in-depth information on the over-all situation of the urban poor communities in Metro Manila, including Tondo.

#### **D. The Establishment of the Day Care Centre at the Dumpsite**

The New Year 2008 came, filled with hope and new possibilities. In this spirit and based on the persistent clamor of the community, the local church worked out ways to have the structure for the Day Care Centre built in two weeks, which is in January, at the dumpsite. The Centre looks very modest and made out of solicited/salvaged used light materials. It is furnished with purchased plastic chairs and wooden tables. The frontage of the Centre reads as a signage:

#### **Smokey Mountain II Day Care Center A Community Ministry of UCCP-Tondo**

The daily classes (Monday-Friday) at the Day Care Centre for the 50 enrolled children took place from the second week of January until end of March 2008.

The children were provided with study materials and school supplies (pad papers, notebooks, pencils, crayons, worksheets, etc).

Harnessing what's available in the community itself, the ministry got three youth volunteer teachers, who are simply high school level and currently out-of-school. What is admirable though is how they show much love and commitment to teach at the Day Care Centre. To enable and equip them progressively, every Sunday these teachers would come to the local church to join the worship service and fellowship as well to get an on-going coaching/training on needed teaching tips and skills.

Within three months (January-March 2008) experimental period, we observed that the children —who used to dangerously play and work at the garbage dumpsite under the scorching sun — have encouragingly began to learn how to read and recite some simple words or phrases, to write their own names and a few words, to identify colors and shapes as well as to count at least from 1-10. More than a dozen of these children, who are of ages 7-12, have not experienced kindergarten and elementary education except from these Day Care Classes.

The families in the community have observed the children's improved literacy — through classroom instruction and varied outdoor trips/activities. For this they are deeply thankful. This is, likewise, encouraging and affirming for the local church that it is in the right path (per UCCP VMG-Strategic Plan) as it whole-heartedly engages itself towards meaningful community ministry.

It is also worth noting that we gained partners and friends abroad (Australia and South Korea) who have consistently extended modest financial assistance in support of this ministry.

#### **E. Holy Week! Easter Sunday Event**

Last March 23, 2008, we had an Easter Sunday Festivity for the 50 children from Smokey Mountain Day Care Center. The occasion — especially the egg hunt activity—did impress upon the children the message and hope that *"beyond the grave or garbage, there can be life and overcoming of tragedies."*

#### **F. Summer Vacation Church School**

Last April 28 to 3 May 2008, the local church had conducted a week-long Vacation Church School (VCS) for some seventy-five (75) children from the dumpsite. They have learned a lot of meaningful children's songs, lessons and stories based on the Bible and social realities. During the week, they were served with food, which is a part of the church's feeding program for them. At the VCS Culmination Activity, all of them were given useful gifts (foodstuff, toys, pairs of slippers, etc).

#### **G. On-going Activities at the Day Care Centre**

Last June 10, 2008, classes were opened at the Day Care Center for the School Year 2008- 2009. Fifty (50) children continued to enroll. However, only children ages 5-6 and 7-11 were admitted. These children are going to be prepared for their possible entry to Grade 1 for the next school year. We continued in providing them all the needed study materials and school supplies, including set of uniforms for both girls and boys. The on-going training/coaching for the volunteer teachers continued, too. Within the school year, we occasionally brought the children outside the dumpsite on educational and recreational trips in children's centers, parks, zoos and playgrounds.

Also during the school year, Day Care Centre was integrated as an extension of the well-known *Sunbeam Learning Center* (a Pre-school Centre owned and operated by the UCCP-Tondo for around 57 years now). This was for purposes of formal school records.

#### **H. Youth for Children Program of HEM**

Last July 21 to August 18 2008, the UCCP hosted eight (8) participants for the Youth for Children Program of the United Evangelical Mission based in Wuppertal, Germany — from Germany (2), Africa (2), Indonesia (2) and Philippines (2). The two-week practicum of these international participants was done among the children at the dumpsite.

#### **I. Exposure-Visit of Foreign Partners and Guests**

The local church occasionally accepts foreign partners and guests who wish to have an *urban poor exposure-immersion* particularly at the Smokey Mountain II Garbage Dumpsite, where they could witness realities of so much poverty and sub-human conditions, which are rooted on historical systems and structures of social injustice and inequality, aggravated by economic globalization. The dumpsite Day Care Centre becomes an interesting destination for these visits, wherein they see the concrete response of the church through the community ministry of the local church.

## The CYF, my Work, and I

Elsa Q. Lopez

***Like love, the undying commitment to God's ministry... strengthens my whole being, giving joy and fulfillment to my life.***

### **The CYF...**

All I ever dreamed was to be a member of the CYF when I was 11. Maybe I was inspired by the older generations of young people in my church who have very much active involvement in the church and community. Teaching Sunday school and VCS, engaging in youth activities such as fellowships, camps and workshops; that's my perspective of the CYF's role in the church, a life full of fun and adventure.

My first three years in the CYF was as light as I expected it to be. It was only when I became the president of our local church CYF that I understood how we take part in every decision of the church and how to be responsible for every action we take for the organization and the community, as well. I also began to understand the role of the church in promoting Jesus' ministry in the community. During that time, I was also appointed in our district CYF (Batangas District) as Social Action Committee Chairperson. When I was in college, I still participated actively in the CYF and became the president of our district, and eventually the conference. I was hesitant to accept the responsibility as I wanted to concentrate on my career, maybe my commitment in serving God through the CYF prevailed over my personal ambitions that I spent much of my time on church and CYF activities first. "Do it while you're young, job can wait," that's what I always thought. I'm fortunate enough that I have the support of my family.

### **My work...**

When I finished my term as the conference CYF president, I told myself that it's time for me to think of my career and eventually settle myself as one of those young professionals who serve as support group for the leaders of our organization (in STC-CYF, we call them the CYF Council of Elders). I thought that if I would accept responsibility, I wouldn't be able to perform my duties fully. But God never permitted me for He chose me to be the leader of South Luzon Jurisdiction-CYF.

It was a great challenge for me to balance my time and energy for my local church (for I was elected as the Council Chairperson), the CYF and my job (not to mention my personal life). It seemed to be not easy at first; to adjust and manage my time. There were instances when I had to choose between my job and the CYF/church activities when the schedules were so tight or simultaneous. I had to follow a very rigid time management scheme. I had to set priorities.

The next dilemma I faced was the weight of my responsibility in the church and the institution I work for. They were totally different. In addition, making decisions for the organization is not an easy task. Fear in taking greater responsibilities not just to set of young people seemed to move me to reflect and assess myself. Am I really capable of serving Him to the best of my potentials? What are my strengths and weaknesses? How should I deal with them and improve myself and balance the responsibilities.

It was amazing how my experiences in the CYF helped me a lot in building relationships with my officemates, my Christian values and principles as a responsible employee in every transactional make, the maturity in taking everyday job seriously, and how to handle individual differences. Moreover, I am proud to tell everyone that I am a member of . the UCCP and the CYF through my words and actions, a way of imparting the Gospel and the goodness of God in my own simple way. Conversely, my experiences and observations in my office also give me ideas on how to be a better leader and follower-. It also helps me in some technical aspects since I work under the legislative division. Furthermore, it gives me wider perspective and understanding of the society and people.

I am willing to serve, but the demands of my job may or may not permit me to accomplish my tasks or vice versa especially when on "busy days". I am fortunate enough that I work only on weekdays, but there were occasions when my weekends are also occupied with office activities. There were also days when I felt so tired, but my will to serve and the joy that it brings me gives me enough strength to carry on, bringing back all the energy I lost. I may not accomplish things perfectly, but at least I can tell myself that I did my best.

I was once asked how I managed to attend and take part in CYF and church activities in spite of a very busy schedule and my job. Like love, the undying commitment to God's ministry of serving the people, specifically the youth, strengthens my whole being, giving joy and fulfillment to my life. It comes from within, It may not give me the material possessions the world requires to be successful, I feel rich in experiences and reflections.

In every challenge I face, I always have a constant shield - prayer. Prayer really helps. Whenever I experience difficult situations, I just bow in silence, weigh things and decide. After all, God is in control of everything. Since day one, I never regretted any of my decisions. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Philippians 4:13. KJV). This verse inspired me so much. Being a leader of my church and the youth, and at the same time an employee, needs a broader perspective and a stronger faith to meet the demands of these duties. Whenever I encounter challenges, I hold on to that bible verse and somehow, I feel the relief, comfort and assurance that I will overcome everything.

I...

I never thought that I would spend thirteen active years in the ON. Moreover, it never crossed my mind that I would assume great responsibilities. It may be hard but the joy and fulfillment it brought into and continuously bringing to my life is immeasurable. It taught me so many things and molded me to become a better person of faith and Christian principle. I am what I am now because of my learnings in the CYF. And the reflections I had helped me a lot to be the best government employee as I can be. I look at my job not as a hindrance to my participation in the church, but an area of experience and reflection that balance my life as a Christian who continuously growing in faith. I will always be thankful to be part of CYF and will cherish the moments I had from this once-in-a-lifetime privilege from God. I will continue to be committed and dedicated to the church and its ministry.

## Resources for Youth Activities

Rev. Patrick McDivith

## **Planning/Programming Youth Activities**

### **A. What is a Plan?**

Plan is a systematic means and ways of carrying out and accomplishing the tasks we have set to solve the problems or to reach the objectives and goals identified on the basis of concrete analysis of concrete conditions at a particular time.

### **B. What is Planning?**

Planning is the process in laying down the means and ways in carrying out the tasks to reach our objectives. This is the systematic means in ordering the objectives and priorities of the organization in order to efficiently and effectively accomplish the tasks set to reach ultimate goals and objectives.

### **C. What is the importance of planning?**

Planning is important because it sets the direction of the organization as well as the blueprint to keep track of our direction. Moreover, it systematizes the activities of the organization and strengthen unity among its members.

In particular, planning helps in:

1. Ordering priorities of activities
2. Guiding members on what task to do
3. Keeping track of weaknesses and strengths of the organization
4. Drawing lessons from accomplished plan
5. Preventing conflicts among members in accomplishments of tasks

### **D. What are the principles in planning?**

The following principles should at all times be borne in mind in making plans.

1. Trust in members
2. Plan from the concrete condition of the organization and its environment
3. Plan should be representative of the majority of the members, sectors, Filipino people
4. Flexibility (consideration of options)

### **E. What are the components in planning?**

We have already discussed the social investigation is an indispensable requisite in planning. In planning proper, the following components must always be taken into consideration.

1. Objective/goal setting

This refers to the statement of the things We would like to attain at a particular time frame. Objectives and goals must be clear and definite and it must be ensured that the resolution or achievement of theses definite objectives brings us closer to the general objectives and direction of the organization, of the sector, and the Filipino people,

2. Central Task Identification

Central task identification is the statement of the overall things that are to be done so that the state of things we would like to attain in our objectives will be achieved. Tasks, specifically the key or central tasks should be clearly identified in order to reach the objectives.

3. Means in carrying out the key or central tasks

By this we mean the overall plan so that the key tasks could be carried out and consequently our objectives reached. There are four components in the means to carry out the tasks.

- a. Form

- o This is the laying down of the general and particular activities so that the key tasks to attain the objectives are accomplished.
- b. Forms of organization and tasks of members
  - o This is the assignment of activities to corresponding forms of organizations or organs which will carry this out towards the objectives. Each member of the organization is also assigned particular tasks that are related and respond to the activities laid down to that the key tasks are accomplished. In doing this, we avoid double tasking, overlapping of functions and confusion in consummating the tasks.
- c. Budget
  - o The projection of the general/specific expenses of activities that are laid down. Some of these expenses may be for materials, allowances, transportation and others. All these are to ensure that the activities will be carried out.

If no funds are available, it is also in this part that we project the source of financial requirements in order for the activities to be pushed through.
- d. Slogan Making/Theme or Title
  - o Slogans are words and phrases that capture the essence and meaning of the things we we want to attain and the methods in attaining it. It serves as ready guide in the stage by stage advance of the organization towards its particular and general directions.

Slogans serve as morale booster to our forces and constantly remind them of the importance of their work. At the same time, slogans broadcast in the briefest by readily understandable manner our objectives and goals to the rest of the sector and the Filipino people.
- e. What are the two kinds of plan?
  - e1. Short term plans
 

Plans that deal with specific/concrete problems that could be solved over a short period of time. Short term plans have immediate objectives and more detailed activities than long term plans.
  - e2. Long term plans
 

Plans that deal with the resolution of complex problems and objectives that takes considerable period. Long term plans are important especially in the advancement of the organization toward its overall directions and objectives.
- f. What is programming? What is the difference between planning and programming?
  - o While planning deals on the question of what is to be done and the question of methods in doing it, programming deals with the time frame of doing it.

Programming refers to the determination of the time frame to do the activities set in the plan in the stage by stage and step by step advance of the organization to accomplish tasks. Programming is the step by step implementation of the plan.
- g. What are the other important things related to planning and programming?
 

Plans must be documented by the organization. The documentation should be as detailed as possible. Then the documentation should be disseminated to all members to serve as guide in accomplishing their particular tasks. The documented plans should also serve as basis for evaluation while on the course of implementation and after implementation.

## **Evaluating Activities**

### **Evaluation Work (Assessment and Summing Up)**

Evaluation work is an indispensable component in the general administration and guidance of the national democratic mass organization.

**1. What is evaluation work?**

Evaluation work is the process of an overall review, investigation and analysis of the activities and other works done by the organization inside a definite time frame in the step by step advance ,towards the general direction.

**2. What are the general objectives of evaluation?**

Evaluation is directed at pinpointing the weaknesses, strong points, negative and positive character of the organization and the political work of the organization. Consequently, we aim to gain lessons and effect corresponding adjustments organizationally and politically in our advance towards the direction.

**3. What are the bases of evaluation?**

- ☐ Review of plans for the said activity
- ☐ Concrete basis that plans were implemented
- ☐ Evaluate based on concrete data
- ☐ Pinpointing the basis of actual activities that coincide with the plan

**4. What are the types of evaluation?**

**a. Assessment**

Assessment in the analysis of how a plan, program or policy is being implemented. It is the qualitative and quantitative appraisal of the tasks done and undone at a particular phase in the step by step advance towards the direction and objectives. Assessment is generally done in the course of the implementation of the program. It may not be conclusive in terms of general lessons and principles.

**a1. What are the general objectives of assessment?**

- Pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of the organization
- Grasp the objective condition
- Analysis up to what point the plans have been done
- Glean lessons
- Rectification of errors done and lay down alternative steps to propel at a faster pace the advance
- Ensure that we do not stray from the line set

**a2. How do we conduct assessment?**

**i. Data gathering related to the plan and activities to be assessed**

- Extensive investigation as to what tasks and activities were accomplished and up to what point or level.
- Take note of the tasks and activities not accomplished and why.

**ii. Data analysis**

- How was the task implemented?
- If not implemented, why?
- What are the external and internal factors that affected the implementation of tasks and activities?
- Take down the weaknesses and strengths, positive and negative points how they relate to the activity and take note up to what level is the overall advance of the organization towards the objectives based on the plan.

**iii. Lay down resolutions based on the analysis of strength and weaknesses and the level reached and disseminate information to all membership.**

**b. Summing Up**



Summing up is the analysis of actual experiences from the entire phases by phase implementation of tasks set to reach the objectives. It draws lessons from the general trends of the actual implementation of the entire plan taking not of the major changes that took place and what led to such changes.

Summing up is usually done at the end of the plan's implementation to evolve and further elaborate principles in political and organizational work. It is conclusive in terms of general principles and lessons.

**b1. What are the objectives of summing up?**

- Learn conclusive lessons
- Point leading factors decisive in the success or failure of the plan
- Further advance and refine theories and methods for more effective march towards the general direction

**b2. How do we conduct summing up?**

- Organize and discuss the data according to order of time (chronological). This will provide the framework of the summing up.
- Divide the history into nodal points or turning points where marked, distinct and conclusive changes occurred. Identify major and secondary problems and why they cropped up.
- Systematically analyze the history. At each stage or period, take note of the achievements and specifically the shortcomings and identify which are dominant. Analyze all aspects of each orientation, organizational and political work. Specifically dissect if we have gasped the proper orientation of each stage, have performed the tasks of the organization and have performed the agreed political tasks. Analyze also the main reasons for the failure or success of such tasks.
- Relate these to the fundamental tasks. After thoroughly analyzing these things, we should relate these to the fundamental tasks of the YS and people's movement, which is dismantling of Imperialism, Feudalism, and Bureaucrat Capitalism. Have we positioned ourselves nearer to the accomplishment of the fundamental task?
- Based on the above analysis, project the general needs and tasks for the next period. These take the form of formulating resolutions and planning. Projected general needs and tasks should correspond to the levels reached by the organization and the political capability of each member. **It** should ensure that the organizations *are* positioned more and more towards the eventual accomplishment of the fundamental task.
- Document and disseminate summed up experiences to proper units in the organization,

## **Organizational Meetings**

### **Definition:**

An act or process of coming together based on democratic procedures and principles.

### **Purpose**

1. Deliberate on the agenda of the meeting
2. Transact business by making action or decision
3. Opportunity for consultation

### **Organizational Meeting is Recommended for**

1. Consolidation of membership
2. Unification of ideas
3. For decision making of course of action
4. As venue for organizational meetings
5. Venue for leadership expression and organizational management

### **Parts of the Meeting**

## 1. Pre-Meeting

There should be notice of meeting given at least a month or two weeks to the members of the group (participants). The agenda has been prepared by the chairperson, or president and the secretary. Necessary documents like the minutes of previous meetings should be ready by now.

## 2. Meeting Proper — Determine the quorum, the presence of the presiding officer.

The following format of agenda is hereby suggested:

1. Opening prayer, hymns
2. Roll call and determination of quorum
3. Approval of the agenda
4. Reading of previous minutes
5. Reports/main discussion on the business of the meetings
6. Summing up
7. Closing Prayer
8. Adjournment
9. Dismissal

## Tips

1. Ideas are not monopoly of one person alone, there should be a free flow from everyone.
2. Exhaust all possibilities, problems in the meeting to arrive at a consensus.
3. Meeting should always be in consonance with the objectives set and discussion should not digress too much.
4. Present the agenda in advance to the members.
5. Start and end the meeting on time. Regularize the meeting.
6. Endure democratic participation among members by giving time for everyone's opinion to be heard.
7. Apply simple parliamentary procedures.
8. Ensure conducive meeting place.
9. Ensure systematic agenda or framework of discussion. This may be made by tackling reports and recommendation of committees or officers.
10. Always provide official documenters to make the minutes of the meeting.
11. Sum up if possible the salient points, decisions made and task assignment delegated with the help of the secretary.

## Three Types of Meetings

Mechanical	Bull	Organic
1. Goal often set up in advance of inert-action, and frequently determined by a chairman or a committee.	1. No shared group except the desire on the part of individuals to express personal interests.	1. Emergent or common determined through interaction of members.
2. Decisions are made by some formal means, such as a voting or by the chairman, or are clique- controlled decisions.	2. Not a decision-making problem -solving group.	2. Decisions developed consensus after resolving differences and exploring alternatives through problem-solving.
3. Role of the chairman usually filled by one person who has been elected, appointed or who has taken over.	3. No chairman.	3. Role of chairman usually filled by different members, depending on the problem s and the resources.
4. Group functions, such as summarizing, testing for	4. Group functions, such as summarizing, testing for a	4. Group functions - summarizing, testing for feasibility, etc. are

feasibility, or calling for a vote are performed as directed by the chairman.	consensus, or taking a vote, are not usually performed.	performed by various members depending upon the requirements of the situation.
5. To move the group towards a goal, the group follows "Roberts Rule of Order" or some rather explicit set of rules governing procedure and interaction.	5. Method of interaction is on an individual out-to-win own point basis. Each person talks about her/his personal interests or goes along with the group.	5. Procedure for movement toward a goal is consistent with needs of the situation rather than the direction of an elected person or rigid procedure of interaction.
6. Members get permission of chairmen to speak.	6. Members speak when they can get a word in.	6. Communication pattern is self-regulating, each person taking responsibility for participation of others.

# Community Organizing: A Christian Youth Imperative

Lesley G. Capus

## Introduction:

it is a pity that we will be discussing this topic in a very academic approach. It is always my opinion that to know what community organizing really is, it is best learned directly or together with the very people who are subject and object of your organizing work. The best training schools and centers of CO are the marginalize community or peasant, workers or indigenous people. The lowly farmers, workers, tribesfolk, the prisoners, etc. are the perfect resource persons for this subject in my experience as a student of Sociology *and* a community development worker. The best intellectual and experiential references and resource material for anyone who intends to do community organizing could be found as well not only with our intellectual professors and, or with the excellent books and journals, but to the very stories and experiences of our modern *anawim* and *ochlos*, because they are immersed in the circumstances of their communities.

As a Christian believer, it helped me deepened my faith to God the Emmanuel. A God who deeply and dearly loved the people, and one who is just and merciful. Through my encounter with God's people in these communities. I understood perfectly well what Jesus Christ meant in his mission (Matt. 11:2-10; Luke 4:18-21; John 10:9-14) and the life he had opted to embrace (Philippians 2:1-11). Given our limitation, we will once more look into the Holy Scripture to help

incite and excite you, to follow Jesus Christ, love your brothers and sister whom we often treat as others, and serve God's people (Mark 10:43-45).

## Some Essential Definitions

As a starter, we need to level off and define some concepts related to the topic

1. **Community Exposure:** An academic definition of *Exposure* is the fact of being exposed in a condition and the elements or attributing to it current state. Other references defines exposure an 'act of disclosing or revealing something; or the act of subjecting someone to an influencing experience

2. **Community Organizing** as commonly understood, is characterized as bringing together comparatively large numbers of citizens to define for themselves and confront the forces that are undermining their individual lives, families, and communities. Their goal is to reduce and resolve their problems by taking common action that holds accountable and transforms social, political, and economic institutions and relationships.

Other experts and practitioners define Community Organizing as:

3. **Community integration:** Integration is a term derived from the Latin word *integer*, meaning whole or entire or generally means combining parts so that they work together or form a whole. In community integration, one is not only being exposed to the realities or situation of the community, but integrates or immersing themselves to the very situation of the community and tries to be part and work with the community.

The best contemporary examples of community organizing integration have gone beyond the common understanding of its noble purpose. Current practice is more consciously value-based and vision-inspired, and it is marked by growing professional competence and commitment.

4. **Community Development:** informally called **community building**, is a broad term applied to the practices and academic disciplines of civic leaders, activists, involved citizens and professionals to improve various aspects of local communities.

### **Christian Faith Perspective on Community Integration and Organizing**

Christians are also social being. We could not escape the fact that we are merely a part of a larger community and thus we need relate and live with our fellow human beings and the rest of God's creation. We cannot be selfish to just merely be concerned on our own development and attend to our own needs (spiritual, political, economic, socio-cultural). One over used but yet a very worthy adage to describe my point is " **No man is an island!**"

### **The Old Testament Experience**

The entire Old Testament is replete with stories, characters and events demonstrating the significance of community integration and organizing. They might not be the kind of exposurists, integrees or interns, organizers or community workers the way we define this today, but the principles, practices and methods they applied in their respective context are the same.

In the Old Testament, there is a heavy emphasis in the concern for communities of those who are suffering and marginalized - the *anawim* who are experiencing various form of deprivations, exploitation, and oppression.

The most significant and notable among these are the stories of Jeremiah and Jonah who at first were reluctant and afraid to heed the command of God. Moses transformation from his exposure to the exploitation and oppression of his people (Exodus 3) towards a leader who will set them free, Jethro's aiding of Moses in organizing the community (Exodus 18). Nehemiah rebuilt not only the battered walls of Jerusalem but their nation as well. Gideon and Joshua not only harnessed their organizing capabilities but even harnessed their military skills by integrating with their own community and their foreign enemies. Hosea was not only concerned about organizing the people to address their issues but also is very concerned about their relationship with God and the environment. Micah and Elijah focused heavily their organizing in the concerns for justice and eradication of exploitation.

### **The New Testament Experience**

Jesus Christ, the young organizer, remarkably affirmed the Old Testament experience especially the salvific and liberating concern of God and God's love, mercy and justice especially for the poor people-the *ochlos*. His very story is of how he himself performed community organizing and enabled his disciples and other followers, to do the same.

In terms of principles, the most beautiful example and story we can refer in this subject matter could be found in Matthew 23:23-39; 24:42-51:25:14- 46. I will emphasize on Matt. 25:34-46:

In terms of actual organizing and community development work, the entire life, involvement and engagement of Jesus and apparently his disciples and apostles were devoted in this area of work. To effectively preach the Good News of salvation and liberation and organize the people. Jesus and company undergo the education (Lk. 2:46-52),

analysis and study of the situation (Matthew 9:35-38), trainings and exposures while organizing others as well (Matt. 30 with emphasis to verses 1-15; Mk. 1:14-24, 6:7-13), organize peaceful assemblies (Lk.6:12-26; Mk. 4:1-8, in. 18:20-24), medical services (Lk.4:16-22; Mt. 11:4; Mk. 1:41-42), para-legal services (John 8:1-11, Mt. 5:38-48; John 8:3-8, 10:31-36), socio- civic initiatives (6:8-14).

In the Apostolic period or the beginning of the expansion of Christian communities, community integration and organizing has been one of the main tasks of the apostles. Amongst the most notable models of successful organizing Christian communities at that time could be found in Acts 2:42 and Acts 4:31-37,

### **The Need for Social Analysis**

A successful community organizing depends on the concrete social analysis of the situation of the community. Such an analysis must have concrete bases:

1. Anchored on the factual situation obtaining in the community and society in general.
2. Goals and objectives should not be divorced from the prevailing conditions that affect the lives of the people.
3. The people should be regarded as the prime movers in whatever collective action to be undertaken.

Therefore the relevance of social analysis entails that:

1. Social analysis gains significance only when done in close consonance with the lives of the people, and when it is rooted to the needs and aspirations of the community.
2. Social analysis becomes meaningful only when done with the people.
3. Continuing social analysis of social conditions fires the people's resolve to act.

In the experience of Jesus Christ, people were easily convinced to join his movement because they can identify with Jesus. He enjoyed the people's support because he never failed to address the needs of its adherents. In the analysis of the concrete situation of communities and people that Jesus worked with, Jesus made it a point that he engages his disciples and his listeners to participate in this process of social analysis. For example, his use of parables, story telling, public assemblies and forums was meant to:

1. Provide straightforward answers.
2. Make the people realize their potentials to address the very questions they are raising.
3. Rebuke his detractors, making them realize their frailty, or incoherence of their analysis and arguments.

### **Step-by-Step Organizing: Jesus the Organizer Model**

#### **Step 1- Why did Jesus Organize?**

Jesus wants to emancipate the people from their suffering and hapless conditions and to give the life abundantly (John 10:10). His exposure to the condition of the people has led him to embrace this vocation (Mt. 9, Mk. 6:33-44). It is love for God's people that is the main reason for his involvement in organizing.

But at first he needs to confront the question of alternative leadership for the people.

1. The traditional system of leadership Jesus opposes is a kind of power and authority enjoyed as a matter of birth right, or elitist leadership-taking advantage of their social status and privileges to undermine, exploit or oppress others.
2. Jesus chooses to empower people rather than associate with the hierarchy. He sided with those in margins and is considered social outcast the nameless and unknown who later played significant roles to change society.
3. Jesus advocated servant leadership- he would rather serve his followers than be served by them.
4. Jesus did not operate in an organizational vacuum; he organized to ensure the fulfillment of his goals. He recognizes that in proclaiming God's messages, he needs the participation of the very people whom he opted to serve.
5. He uses his analysis, teachings and services to be springboard of organizing and collective action.

## Step 2- Whom did Jesus Organize?

1. Jesus organized people who are at the periphery, or at the bottom-of-the power structure rather than to be drawn to the center or at the top of the socio-economic and political systems.
2. He rose from the ranks of simple, plain folks and sometimes controversial ones. And having familiarity, acquaintances and social investigation over them, he prioritized organizing them as co-organizers and subjects for community organizing and development work. There were even times when the people even doubted their credibilities (Mk. 6:1- 6, John 1:56).
3. Example:

Peter, James and John - fisher folks, called as Men of Thunder

Philip of Bethsaida - peasant/fisher folk Bartholomew (Nathanael) - a real Israelite (John 1:47) referring to his lineage, social or religious standing, character, and integrity

Matthew - a tax collector

Simon the Patriot - a Jewish nationalist and Zealot

Judas Iscariot or Sicarius - member of the *Sicarii* movement

Luke - physician and a scholar of Greek literature

(Note: 2 Simon (Peter and the Patriot), 2 James (Zebedee's son and Alphaeus son), 2 Judas (one Thaddeus and the other, Iscariot))

## Step 3- Organizing a Core Group

1. Jesus acknowledged that he needs reliable and entrusted co-organizers. Out of the initial:
  - a. To share his vision and mission.
  - b. To help him implement effectively their plans, program of action and project.
  - c. To enable and develop new leaders to prevent dependency and individual- centered leadership.
2. Primarily Jesus Christ chose ordinary people to do extra-ordinary tasks (e.g. Mark 1:16- fishers of men; 3:14,15)
3. The initial disciples were not only twelve based on the accounts in Luke 6:13, Luke 10:1-24, Mk. 1:21,29, 2:23. Jesus decided to choose and designate 12 apostles out of them. For him it was an ideal and manageable number to handle so they can easily work collectively. It is neither big nor small and is a very symbolic number representing the 12 tribes of Israel.

Process:

- a. self discovery among his disciples (i.e. Peter the Rock and Doubting Thomas)
- b. on-the-job training programs and delineation of tasks (Mk. 1:16-20, 6:7- 13)
- c. teamwork or group work approach vs. one man job (James and John in Mk.10:35-45)
- d. criticism to determine the strengths and weaknesses of his disciples (Mt. 8:18-25, Mt. 14)

## Step 4- Knowledge of Social and Cultural Milieu

1. As repeatedly mentioned, Jesus went to the process of social integration with the people-living and sharing with them in their frustrations and aspirations, suffering and struggle. A more develop definition of this process could also be referred to as conducting social investigation or familiarization process. Social investigation is the process of systematically learning and analyzing the various structures and forces in the community-economic, political and socio-cultural. It results in a community portrait which is a scientific collation and synthesis of data gathered. It provides a clear picture of the community.
2. Apart from learning and being acquainted with the community, he identified with them enabling the people to identify with him and to follow him as well.

3. Jesus and his apostles conducted data gathering in order to understand the social and cultural milieu: Population, community and people's history, relationships and interaction, political and economic systems, structures and relationships. This method is almost very visible even in how all the Gospel books and Epistles were written.
4. There are two kinds of data- primary and secondary. Primary or first hand data could be gathered through direct knowledge of the community, interview and surveys, direct contact or field observation and investigation. Secondary data on the other hand, could be gathered from other people's stories or accounts, and previous records or studies.

#### **Step 6-People in Need as Priority**

1. Needs of the people take precedence over compliance and observance of rites and rituals, rules and regulations, and the requirements of bureaucracy and hierarchy fulfill the spirit of the law rather than just observe the letter of the law. (Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6)
2. Community development is meaningless unless it is viewed in the context of the lives, experiences and aspirations of the majority of the people in need. To be meaningful, development must touch their lives and give them hope. It must be contextualized to their lives, experiences and aspirations. Again, the fundamental aim of development is to improve the quality of life of the people.
3. Obviously and indisputably, Jesus addressed and prioritized the suffering people (Mk. 2:15-17), the exploited and impoverished, those who were denied justice which in effect their faith undermined, and their moral lives are ruined. Their problems vary from spiritual to physical needs, petty personal concerns to far more complex moral, economic, social and political issues.
4. But it is clear to Jesus Christ that in order to alleviate the people from their various form of suffering and needs, this can be addressed by utilizing the very resources they have—personnel, material, moral and spiritual. Often we emphasize the things we don't have or denied from us. But as we search further and look around, we have the very resources we are longing for. But this resources are not broken, the products are not divided, a filthy few monopolizes and control this resources, why the majority left with crumbs. The empowering experience in Mk. 6:31-34, and Acts 2:42; 4:31-35 are very good models regarding this point.

#### **Step VII- Mass and Popular Education**

The main thrust of Jesus ministry is to preach and teach people about the Kingdom of God, its values and its demands. A distinction is implied between the kind of education espoused by Jesus and that upheld by the traditional rulers of his time. This can be gleaned from how Mark noted the response of people to the teachings of Jesus, *"The people who heard him were amazed at the way he taught, for he was not like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority" (Mark 1:22)*

1. Jesus intends to inform and educate the people and it means reaching a broad section of them. His approach is ministering while catering to their particular needs.
2. Jesus takes advantage of every opportunity to spread his teachings anywhere he goes.
3. He's methods are as varied and creative as the occasion provides; He picks resources and materials which are common, available and known to people e.g. story telling, parables, lessons and diagrams, those reflective of the people's daily activities.
4. Jesus is also resourceful, concrete and straightforward (John 6:8-14; Mark 1:22; 10:17-23)
5. Jesus also employs questions to respond to questions making the person answer their own inquiries. In effect he encourages others to participate in problem-solving process and to draw from them their own understanding.
  - to gather information
  - as a learning tool and to encourage further understanding
  - to explore alternatives and broaden perspectives
  - to provoke reactions

- to rebuke his enemies and expose their ignorance and hypocrisy
6. In contemporary settings, Jesus is employing mass and popular education that promotes knowledge and ideas that liberates and addresses issues and concerns that have a direct relation and impact on the daily lives and aspirations of the people.

#### **Step VIII- Training Program for the Core Group**

1. Jesus acknowledges the necessity of leadership capability building and enhancement of his co-organizations to make them more effective and efficient in performing their responsibilities. (Mark 6:6-13).
2. Very prominent in the training program of Jesus is the use of exposure and integration of his disciples to experience what it means to be deprived, homeless, hungry and poor, and even to be rejected. And yet even in such a situation of helplessness, Jesus impresses upon them that they can still do great things.
3. Jesus introduces a process of mutual learning and education that transpires between the people and the apostles.
4. The training of the disciples and apostles also addresses the conversion of bad attitudes, lifestyles, and perspectives (i.e. Lk. 9:51-56; 18:18-30, Mt. 10:35-45)
5. In CO work, an organizer must at least possess the following qualities:
  - a.) Irreverence
  - b.) A Sense of humor
  - c.) Creativity
  - d.) Flexibility
  - e.) Tenacity
  - f.) A genuine love for the people
6. After the training program, Jesus also underscores the need for reports and conducting assessment of their organizing work. St. Paul in his actual work in the early Christian communities employed this methodology to keep abreast over the development and progress of the work done by succeeding disciples and followers of Christ.

#### **Step IX— Jesus and the Religious and Political Powers of His Time**

1. From womb to tomb, the organizing of Jesus has constantly been viewed critical of the religious and political powers of his time being bearer of the Good News and of the Kingdom of God (Mk. 1:14).
2. He took the risk and stood up against the guardians of long-established and well-entrenched institutions and traditions.
3. He challenged the self-serving and vested interest of the Roman Empire, Herodian rule, and the religious opportunist.
4. Jesus prevailed over the persecution, violence and repression against him, his disciples/ apostles and followers. His death is not the final event for the organization and movement he started. The resurrection served as an impetus for the movement he founded. The risen Christ overcomes the power of evil intents and forces who tried to put an end to the cause of the Kingdom of truth, righteousness and justice that emerged (Mk. 16:1-20)
5. From crib to grave, he selflessly defended the rights of the poor and underprivileged.
6. For Jesus, to be great is 'to serve and not to be served even if it means losing every privileges, comforts and even our lives. (Mt. 5:20-28, Mk. 10:42-45)

#### **Step X- Challenges and Risk**

For Jesus Christ, Christian community organizing:

1. Requires total and full commitment. (Mt. 8- 20-22, Lk. 9:57-58)
2. Unconditional service. (Mk. 8:34-36)



3. Entering danger zones or an area with the sign 'enter at your own risk'. (Mk. 13:9-13) i.e. replete with hardships and sacrifices, persecution, betrayal, failures, etc.
4. Promises no earthly rewards and compensation. (Mk. 10:26-30)
5. Popularly unpopular to many as a vocation and profession.

#### **Conclusion:**

Let me conclude by sharing with you that the success of the organizing of Jesus Christ and company is likened to a stone thrown in a pool of water, producing ripples in ever-widening concentric circles. At our present context, the experience is repeated with variations and distinctive elements, but the same challenge and commitment are demanded to share the Gospel and spread the reign of God. The invitation for organizers, leaders and common folks is the same as it was in the beginning of the organizing ministry of Jesus- that is not only expressing love to Jesus but to *'Follow him'* (John 21:15-19). Indeed, Community organizing is definitely a genuine reality-extra challenge for devout Christians today!

The Christian Youth Fellowship must include in its integral ministry the need not only to be 'organizers' of their fellowship. Rather, you should become tremendous workers of God to emancipate our people from the suffering they

face in their respective communities. Finally, let me refresh to you one of my favorite challenges from our old buddy Jose Rizal:

*"Where are the youths who will dedicate their innocence, their idealism, their enthusiasm to the good of the country? Where are they who will give generously of their blood to wash away so much shame, crime, and abomination?... Where are you, young men and women, who are to embody in yourselves the life force that has been drained from our veins?... WE want you, come for we wait for you?" (Dr. Jose Rim!)*

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# Painting the Walls of Kgothatso

Felma M. Lucerio

Already a day late, I am happy to have finally arrived safely at Sir Keretse International Airport in Gaborone, Botswana on September 2nd, 2007. After the postponed trip, gone through long discussions and lots of explaining with strict airline and immigrant officers, flown more than 16 hours, been a waitlisted passenger, slept on an airport bench at Juberg, and roamed at the airport for almost 1 day waiting for my flight. Isn't it a tough and challenging first - time out-of-the-country trip? After learning that my flight will be postponed due to some problems with my visa - a result of miscommunication between the contact person and me, I really demanded of God to help me push through. I believe God would have not allowed me to go this far, leaving my work and my family, if in the end not letting me. I know God isn't joking and is very serious With the Church's programs and ministry.

The United Evangelical Mission, a communion of churches in Europe, Asia and Africa where UCCP is an active member church, seriously implemented the Youth for Children 2007 program in Botswana, South Africa. It was participated by nine young people from different countries of different cultural, social, economic political orientations who lived together for almost a month at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Woodpecker, Gaborone, Botswana learning and sharing the faith in Jesus Christ. The program reminded us of the importance of children in the church and society, to be sensitized on Children's Rights and Violence against Children especially the "Girl and Boy in the HIVAIDS Era" as the theme says.

The first week of the program didn't turn out that well as planned though participants were able to visit congregations in the villages, rehabilitation centers for HIV positive individuals and attended lectures on HIV AIDS and children's rights. Participants and the host were faced with a challenge. Sister Crista, the manager of Kgothatso Orphanage, backed out. Kgothatso Orphanage is a home for 3-6 year old orphans who lost their parents because of HIV AIDS. I don't know if she is not convinced with the seriousness of the program. To her, the group's presence at the orphanage is a sort of distraction to the kids from their regular programs and classes. After nights of prayer and negotiation, the sister's heart softened and gave in. In the next two weeks the group was allowed to interact play, sing and learn with these kids.

The group was halved and took turns with the 15-minute-a-day interaction with the kids. We started working and doing sketches with the wall as teaching tool from 8:30 in the morning until 2:00 in the afternoon under 40-degree centigrade heat of the sun. After tea break at 10:00 am the first group would go in the classroom while the other continued with wall. We even joked the program should be called "youth for the wall". During the first week everybody seemed to be too pressured proving and showing the seriousness of this program. To whom? Maybe not just to Sister Crista but to ourselves, too.

At the start of the second week, the wall started to have colors; lively colors fit for lively, joyful and innocent children unaware why they are *here* in Kgothatso. But we adults are very much aware. Why the ignorance? We don't need to fly for more than 16 hours to show and let the world know of Christ's love and compassion; we only have to look around in our local churches, in our communities. We don't have to paint the walls of Kgothatso but the walls of the heart of God's people regardless of gender, race, color, language, culture and status. Yes the work is so vast and challenging that it needs us, our seriousness and openness; frequent communication with one another and with God to make His plan a reality for all

Even if I have to jump off again the flaming plane in Juberg I would still go to paint the walls of Kgothatso and to paint wonderful memories in the hearts of those children and to Sister Crista.

# Statement on the Illegal Abduction of Dr. Alexis Montes

February 8, 2010

The National Executive Committee of the UCCP-CYF through the Office of its National President condemns in the strongest possible terms the abduction, illegal arrest and detention of Dr. Alexis Montes and forty-two other health workers while they were conducting a First Responders Training in Morong Rizal on 06 February 2010.

Reports had it that Dr. Montes was illegally arrested and detained by the 202<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army and the Rizal Philippine National Police. The youth now has been left wondering and asking itself this question how can a government truly serve and protect its people when its own institutions are the very ones committing gross violation of human rights? The illegal arrest and subsequent disappearance of Dr. Montes and his trainees can never be justified by just shoddy search warrant for a certain Mario Condes which supposedly formed basis for their raid! Initial reports recount that more than 300 military and police raided the retreat center at gunpoint. Dr. Alex was then blindfolded and was taken away in a military truck and his whereabouts are not yet confirmed up to this time.

Further, the allegation that Dr. Alex was involved in a bomb-making training is obviously a false fabrication. We know Dr. Alex to be an active lay leader of the UCCP and one who has devoted his years to serving the poor and the marginalized through his profession as a medical doctor. The military claim that he is involved in bomb-making is just incomprehensible to us who know him and have watched him with admiration for his passion to serve the poor.

We stand with our church and raise our voices in demanding for his immediate release. Let justice be served by holding accountable the ones truly responsible for his abduction and disappearance. Let justice be served to the hundreds who have fallen victim to the blatant human rights violations in our country.

We resound the call to resurface Dr. Alexis Montes and to put an end to all forms of human rights violations and the impunity that has taken the country with the senseless deaths and disappearances of our sisters and brothers. Resurface Dr. Montes! Let justice be served!

For the National CYF,

**Shalom Grace A. Tomas**  
President

# Sumabay Tayo!

## Walking Together for Justice

June 9, 2009 (Press Release)

Stand for Truth! Stand for Justice! This re-echoes the call of the Asian Methodist Youth Network (AMYN) as they took the streets with ecumenical friends and lit with 150 white candles the front blocks of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (UCCP) and the old office compound of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) along EDSA in Quezon City.

155 young people, all members of the AMYN from the UCCP-Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF), the United the United Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF), the United Methodist Young Adults Fellowship (MYAF) and the Pambansang Kapisanan ng Kabataang IEMELIF (PKKI) in cooperation with the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP)-Youth Desk (YD), successfully held **SUMABAY TAYO! Walking Together for Justice** on Sunday, 07 June 2009 at the National City United Church (NCUC) West Triangle, Quezon City,

The two-part program, with its first part joining the participants in fellowship and giving in-depth focus to an Economic Justice Forum and the second part, on the liturgical Prayer Gathering for the Victims of Human Rights Violations in the Philippines saw the lighting of 150 white candles which commemorated the deaths of martyrs-friends, sisters and brothers in the ministry, mothers and fathers, and many others-who have been summarily executed under the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo since 2001. The human rights group KARAPATAN holds the count to a shocking 1,014, which numbers include Pastors, Church Workers and Youth Leaders of AMYN member-churches.

The youth, deeply engaged with Panelists Dr. Rommel Linatoc from the NCCP, Mr. Bobby Tuazon who serves as Director of the center for Peoples Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG) and Ms. Biyaya Quizon of the Student Christian Movement of the Philippines (SCMP), were moved to action as they learned more about the worsening situation of the Filipino youth amidst the prevailing global economic crisis and how these directly relate to structures of oppression and the repression of civil liberties. Creative presentations from Teatro Shams and Dan Fabella of Musikang Sayan also challenged the participants to deeper reflection. The young people were even further seen contemplative as pictures of youth martyrs were shown on the screen. Pictures of **SUMABAY TAYO!-Germany** was also viewed in a pensive moment while Roland Bagatua of PKKI plays the flute as background music.

Cheekai dale Cruz of the NCCP Youth Desk stated that the 155 young people mobilized for the activity is the biggest ecumenical youth forum and gathering so far She added: "It's the first time that the church youth, with this big number, initiated among themselves an action which took them to the sidewalks of EDSA which lighted the whole facade of the NCCP-UCCP blocks."

Shalom Tomas, who is the present Coordinator of AMYN clarified that the candle lighting was done not only to remember the victims of extra-judicial killings but more importantly, to join the call for justice and demand for the perpetrators to be exposed and prosecuted.

The action also saw the call of the youth to stop the hastily-formed Constituent Assembly in Congress. The candles, also signifying the youth's ' aspiration for a bright future, lit-up the placards of the participants which called for Genuine *Change and Not Charter Change*.

Joining the action with AMYN are ecumenical friends from the Youth of Iglesia Filipina Independiente (YIFI) and the Samahan ng mga Kabataang Episkopal sa Filipinas (SKEP).

**SUMABAY TAYO!** is a parallel activity to a solidarity event in Bremen, Germany as part of the Kirchentag, the biennial German Protestant Church gathering , which had been held from 20 to 24 May of this year. It was held through the German-Filipino initiative dubbed "Sumabay Tayo & Walking together for Justice, which is supported by youth of the United Evangelical Mission (UEM), Communion of Churches in Three Continents, the Philipinenbuero

e.V.; the German Action Network on Human Rights; the Institute for Mission, Ecumenism and Global Responsibility (MOWE) of the Protestant Church of Westphalia; and Church based partnership groups such as Barkadas of the Ey. Kirchenkreis Munster and the Ev. itirchenkreis Koblenz. The Philippine activity sought to connect the issue of Economic Justice with Human Rights and further, to locally articulate the international call for justice and peace in the Philippines.

In the Philippines, **SUMABAY TAYO!** is a first for AMYN. It is a humble attempt to seek deeper understanding on economic justice, and the church's prophetic ministry on human rights and a further opportunity for AMYN members to gather in fellowship, learn together with ecumenical friends and partners and to forward AMYN's active participation in the journey towards an abundant and meaningful life for ALL as it proclaims the Lordship of Jesus Christ in this present time and context.

## Message

August 1, 2006

Yesterday, July 31, 2006, Rie Mon Gwen, an active CYF member from the Bulan Evangelical Church, Sorsogan of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP)-South Bicol Conference (SBC) and a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Political Science student at the Aquinas University in Legaspi City, Albay, was gunned down at around 6:00am by unidentified men while on a bus to Legaspi City. Witnesses' accounts recounted that a lone gunman, with companions, boarded on the same bus he was on and killed him. Police reports revealed that he acquired 4 gunshot wounds — 1 in the head and 3 in the body.

Rie Mon is only 21 years old. He is a regular attendee of our Christmas Camps/Institutes and even worked as technical staff for the SBC-CYF. He could have taken the lesser difficult road of being an ordinary student, but, young as he is, Rie Mon decided to lead a life of idealism — dedicated to serving the interest of his fellow young people. Rie Mon is former BS Agricultural Student of the University of the Philippines in Los Banos, Laguna, where he chaired the local chapter of the League of Filipino Students at the Aquinas University.

The youth are now confounded with questions. We wonder what it is that Rie Mon has done which merited such a brutal end of his life. What could have possibly motivated his killers to gun him down? All indications seem to point that he is a victim of another extra-judicial killing. Sadly, he is said to be the third youth leader victimized by extra-judicial execution since January of this year and the 717<sup>th</sup> victim since 2001.

It is therefore, with pain and sadness that I call upon all members of the CYF to join hands as we united ourselves in prayer to our one God and as one fellowship, take the stand for truth and justice and denounce with outrage, the cold-blooded murder of one of our brothers in the CYF. **In the strongest terms possible, we condemn the murder of Pie Mon Guran.**

We pray for President Gloria Arroyo to uphold civil liberties and put a stop to this culture of impunity-allowing death squads to roam around freely while so-called leftists, journalists, church people - innocent civilians, live their lives each day in fear. We pray that this administration, instead of beefing up military funds, re-channel the same to education and other social services in service of the people and the youth of this nation. Needless to say, the youth do not deserve to be treated harshly *and* violently by any government. Instead, they must be empowered and assured of quality education, protection and support as they seek and reach for their dreams.

We pray that respect for human life and dignity be restored in this land. As much as life is sacred and a gift from God, we say, **STOP THE KILLINGS!**

For the CYF,

**Shalom Grace A. Tomas**

National President

## Various Resources

# An Overview of the CYF

The CYF is the youth arm of the UCCP. As such, it has a strategic role in fulfilling the church's task in continuing Christ's ministry. Even before the UCCP was born, young people already emerged as dynamic, effective and committed church workers. Through the CYF, young people are trained, honed and developed to serve and to lead. And until now, the CYF continues to heed God's call to service for it is from the ranks of the youth that the future leaders and workers of our church emerge.

In the 1940s until the 1950s, youth work in the UCCP was largely seen as a training ground in church membership for the young people of the church, as well as a means of drawing young converts from non-Protestant families.

It was in 1949 that the Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF) was adopted as a program of the church. By 1955, 21 out of 22 annual conferences had Conference CYFs. This can be attributed to the vigorous campaigns of the churches and the youth to organize CYFs. They had either Christmas or summer conferences, or both, and these were very effective in establishing fellowship and a sense of belonging among the young people of the church.

A National Youth Seminar (NYS) was launched in 1961 for Christian leadership, fellowship and a sense of oneness among the CYFs nationwide. This was followed by a second NYS in 1964, where initial moves were advanced to organize a national CYF. It took a while before the National Christian Youth Fellowship (NCYF) was finally created in 1979 at the National Consultation in Dumaguete City.

Thereafter, a Constitutional Convention took place in Cebu in 1980. The Constitution and By-laws that was drafted was later ratified in the first National Youth Assembly (NYA) in 1982, held in Malolos, Bulacan. Since then, the CYF's NYA meets every four years.

The second Constitutional Convention was held in the UTS in Dasmarinas, Cavite. The new CBL was ratified during the 6th NYA.

It was also in the year 2002 that the first National Youth Camp (NYC), entitled 'The Journey,' was held in Visayas State College of Agriculture (VISCA), Baybay, Leyte. The second NYC was held in 2005 at the Kaamulan Grounds, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon with the theme "The Journey Continues".

The building blocks of the CYF as a national organization are the, more or less, 2000 local CYF all over the Philippines.

Local CYFs may group themselves together into small units called districts, zones, parishes, chapters, circuits or clusters. A District zone, parish, chapter, circuit or cluster CYF is not recognized a policy-making body.

The policy-making body geographically grouped. CYFs is called a Conference CYF. Like local CYFs, each conference elects a set of leaders and is free to carry out programs that will address the needs of its local CYFs, the conference and the community it is in.

The conference CYFs are also geographically grouped into Jurisdiction CYFs. Each jurisdiction CYF also elects its own set of leaders and acts as implementing arm of the national executive committee and program committees tasked by the NYA. We belong to the South Luzon Jurisdiction (SLJ). The other five jurisdictions are: North Luzon Jurisdiction (NLJ), East Visayas Jurisdiction (EVJ), West Visayas Jurisdiction (WVJ), North West Mindanao Jurisdiction (NWMJ), and South East Mindanao Jurisdiction (SEM JUR).

The NYA is the highest policy-making body of the CYF. It meets every four years and is composed of delegates from all the conferences as well as the incumbent national officers and program committee chairpersons. There are four program committees, namely: Christian Education and Nurture (CEN), Christian Witness and Service (CWS), Christian Stewardship and Resource Development (CSR D), and the Ecumenical Relations Committee (ERC).

It is the duty of the conference delegates to bring the needs and concerns of the local and conference CYFs to the NYA and together address them, as well as the needs of our Church and society as a whole in the programs of the CYF for the next four years.

The NYA also elects the CYF's national officers and program committee chairpersons and tasks them to implement the programs agreed upon during the Assembly.

The national executive committee (NEC) and the program committees must ensure that the programs are implemented and that these programs reach the local CYFs whom they are accountable. The NEC is composed of: the President the Jurisdiction Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, and Program Committee Chairpersons.

#### **List of National CYF Officers**

##### **EY 1982-1986**

Chairperson	Reuel Norman Marigza (NLJ)
Vice Chairperson	William Genotiva
Secretary	Corazon Maravillas / Avelyn Apostol
Treasurer	Jo Aberia
Auditor	Marilyn Raboy

##### **EY 1986-1990**

President	Lauro Milan (SLJ)
Secretary	Marilyn Badajos
Treasurer	Avelyn Apostol
Auditor	Marilyn Raboy
Christian Education	Arnie Alcober
Leadership	Reuel Norman Marigza
Membership	Gina Inocencio

##### **EV 1990-1994**

President	Myra Luz Vivarez-Waddington
Secretary	Rhoda Bruno
Treasurer	Joy Baldevia
Auditor	Miguel Quiros
Christian Education	Jerry Akut
Leadership	Rico Collegado
Social Action	Rex Everett Tibus
Membership	Eva Toledo
Communications	Michael Palaruan
Vice Presidents	NLJ Frederick Carmelo / Marjorie Tolentino
	SLJ Luisito Saliendra / Rommel Linatoc
	VJ Yasmin Primavera
	MJ Donald Salvador

##### **EY 1994-1998**

President	Jeffrey Roda (VJ)
Secretary	Isaiah Wagas
Treasurer	Joselito Aguas
Auditor	Leni Grace Lumapguid
Christian Education	Eva Toledo
Leadership	Ronnie Publico
Social Action	Rex Everett Tibus
Finance	Joy Rivilla

Membership	Rodolfo Tigas, Jr.
Communications	Rommel Linatoc
Vice Presidents	NLJ Ray James Sabian SLJ Rommel Liriatoc VJ Ramon Jetzu Baay / Alexis Gem boa MJ John Erwin Salomon

### **1998-2002**

President	Rachel Gail Abad (SLJ)
Secretary	Abbey Gail Maguad
Treasurer	Sarah May Salen
Auditor	Flouellen Amor
Christian Education	Hazel Tequis
Leadership	Eduardo Fortaleza
Social Action	Benjie Gomez
Finance	Maybelle Ramil
Membership	Magiting Olanday
Communications	Richie Al Vigilante
Vice Presidents	NLJ Marie Palaruan SLJ Ian Joseph Saliendra VJ Wilnard Indonilla / Meriam Joy Valle MJ Sohrab Sardual SEM JUR Jay James Jamandre

### **2002-2006**

President	Jay Sichon (SEM JUR)
Secretary	Yvette Camba
Treasurer	Geldolin Inte
Auditor	Beloved Vallente
CEN	Jonathan Dollage
CWS	Rommel Salterio
ERC	Lemuel Valle, Jr.
CSRD	Rosalind Hernandez
Vice Presidents	NLJ Sarah May Salen / Shalom Grace A. Tomas SLJ Czar Quinto VJ Alona Abia MJ Cliff Borres / River Tabada SEM JUR Bridget Degracia

### **2006-2010**

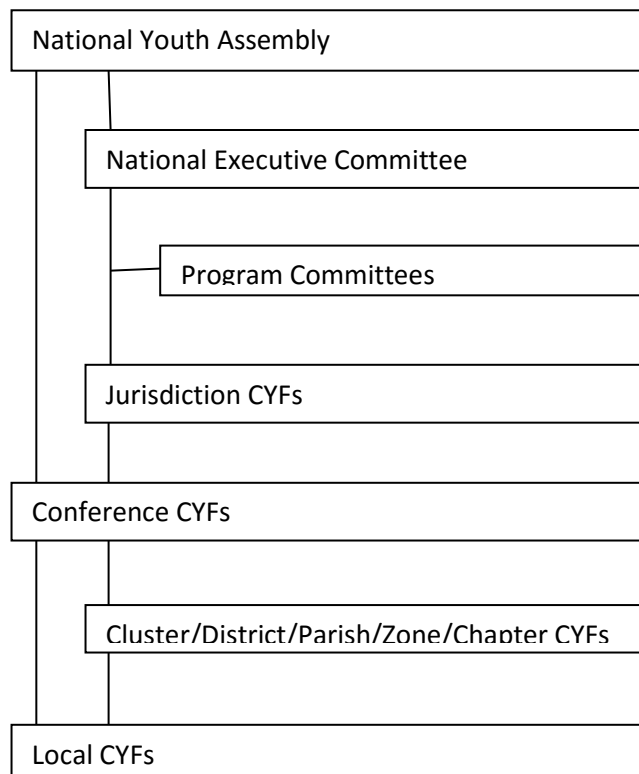
President	Shalom Grace A. Tomas (NLJ)
Secretary	Jeffrey J. Rivera
Treasurer	Jasmin A. Dejito-Quinones
Auditor	Tito A. Bodiongan
CWS	Leojo A. Mateo
ERC	Emerald May Fernandez
CSRD	Dagami A. Padillo
Vice Presidents	NLJ Gabriel Bugtong / Fhebe Maglanoc SLJ Jay-Jay R. Dames / Elsa Q. Lopez EVJ Lemuel Valle, Jr. / JayValle WVJ Osel Sherwin Melad / Lloyd Prestin NWMJ River Tabada / Felma Luceno



### **NYA Themes**

1 <sup>st</sup> NYA	The CYF: Towards a Transformed Community
2 <sup>nd</sup> NYA	The CYF: Towards Unity in Christ with the People
3 <sup>rd</sup> NYA	Together We Can... Build Communities: Uphold Integrity of Creation: Venture New Horizons: and Establish a Just Social Order
4 <sup>th</sup> NYA	Renewing our Servanthood in the Changing World Towards Christian Maturity, Organizational Strengthening and a Sustained Youth Dynamism
5 <sup>th</sup> NYA	Building on our Dynamic Heritage Towards Grassroots Organizational Strengthening to Respond to the Challenges of our Times
6 <sup>th</sup> NYA	The Gospel, Globalization and the Call for Unity in the Ministry
7 <sup>th</sup> NYA	Living Together in the Household of God

### **THE CYF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**



## Various Resources

# CYF Ecumenical Friends

### CYF ECUMENICAL FRIENDS

True to the tradition of being a united and uniting church, our Church, the UCCP, is also in solidarity with many other churches. Our Church is in partnership with the following:

1. Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI)
2. Iglesia UNIDA Ecumenical
3. Uniting Church of Australia
4. United Church of Christ in the USA

Various judicatories also have direct partnerships with other churches abroad such as: South Bicol Conference with Munster District of Evangelische Kirche der Union in Germany; SEMJur with Michigan Conference of UCC USA; Northeast Southern Tagalog Conference with Sacramento Presbytery of Presbyterian Church USA and the Cagayan de Oro Church with Genesco, Chicago, Illinois.

Here are also various religious formations which we, as a church, are part of:

1. National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP)
2. Christian Conference of Asia (CCA)
3. World Council of Churches (WCC)
4. World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)
5. United Evangelical Mission
6. World Methodist Council

Being young members of a Church born out of ecumenical efforts, we too, take pride in joining hands with other young people within and outside the Philippines, through the following:

### AMYN

The Asian Methodist Youth Network is a network of youth organizations in Asia belonging to Methodist churches or rooted in Wesleyan traditions and beliefs. Prior to the establishment of AMYN in 2003, Asian Methodist Youth have already gathered in 1992, 1995 and 1999 during the Asian Methodist Youth Conference. Among the founding youth organizations, two come from the Philippines the Christian Youth Fellowship of the UCCP and the National United Methodist Youth Fellowship of the NUMYFP of the United Methodist Church (UNIC). The other founding members of AMYN are Methodist Youth Fellowship of Korea (MYFK), Methodist Youth Fellowship of Indonesia, Methodist Council of Youth Work in India, the United Methodist Church of Cambodia and the Methodist Church, Hong Kong. Rachel Gail Abed of the CYF became the first CYF leader to have been elected as AMYN Coordinator in 1999. From March 2008, AMYN leadership once again rested in the CYF as Shalom Grace A. Tomas was chosen to be Coordinator during the AMYN Tagaytay Conference of the same year. Her term ends at the AMYN Conference in Siam Reap, Cambodia in October 2009.

### PROK-Youth

One highlight of this present quadrennium is the successful tie-up which the CYF nurtured with the Youth of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea. In December 2007, this relationship progressed into the PROKY's conduct and sponsorship of a Solidarity Night with the CYF held in Seoul, Korea. The event highlights the program and ministry of the CYF and calls for support and prayers for youth victims of human rights violations in the Philippines.

### UEM

The United Evangelical Mission (UEM) is a Communion of Churches in three continents, namely: Asia, Africa and Europe. Its headquarters is at Wuppertal, Germany while it also maintains Regional Offices in Medan, Indonesia and Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania. The CYF has an active engagement in the UEM life-work, heightened even more this Quadrennium, as it participates meaningfully in its many programs on South-to-South Exchange by sending CYF members to the following: Youth for Children Program in Botswana and UCCP Exchange Volunteer for a partner church in the Javanese Island in Indonesia. The CYF also co-hosted the 2007 Youth for Children Program where CYF members worked with German, Indonesian and African youth volunteers on a teaching and building program for the children of the Smokey Mountain Garbage dumpsite in Tondo, Manila for over a month. UEM shares an active accompaniment of many CYF programs including this publication and the 3'd National Youth Camp held in Mayoyao, Ifugao.

The youth of UEM and the CYF relates directly on very specific youth-initiated and youth-led programs, including the first-ever parallel program on *Sumabay Tayo!*, integrating a program on economic justice forum and liturgical candle-lighting for victims of human rights in the Philippines. *Sumabay Tayo! Philippines* held its program on June 7, 2009 at the National City United Church, West Triangle, Quezon City with the Asian Methodist Youth Network, while *Sumabay Tayo!* in Germany was held at Bremen Square from May 20-24, 2009 during the German Protest Day.

### **EASYN**

The Ecumenical Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Network is a voluntary network of students and youth organizations to promote dialogue and cooperation in Asia Pacific. Its organizers include the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs, World Young Women Christian Association, International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) Asia-Pacific, International Young Christian Students (IYCS) Asia, World Student Christian Federation (VWSCF) Asia Pacific Region and the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA).

### **EASYN-Philippines**

The Ecumenical Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Network-Philippines is a voluntary and inclusive network initiated by five national ecumenical youth and student organizations, namely: Student Christian Movement of the Philippines (SCMP), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Student Catholic Action of the Philippines (SCAP), and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) Youth Desk.

Since the UCCP is a member of the NCCP and the CCA, the CYF, being the youth organization of the UCCP, is welcome to participate in this network's programs and activities.

### **KKKP**

The Kalipunan ng mga Kristiyanong Kabataan sa Pilipinas is the expression of the ecumenical movement among Christian youth in the Philippines founded on October 21-25 1987. This federation working closely with the NCCP Youth Desk is characterized by conciliar unity. Its members include all members with the following organizations:

1. UCCP-Christian Youth Fellowship
2. Student Christian Movement of the Philippines
3. Kabataang UNIDA Ecumenical (KUE)
4. Samahan ng mga Kabataang Episcopal sa Pilipinas (SKEP)
5. Youth of Iglesia Filipina Independiente (YIFI)
6. Pambansang Kapisanan ng Kabataang IEMELIF (PKKI)
7. Philippine Lutheran Youth League (PLYL)
8. National United Methodist Youth Fellowship of the Philippines (NUMYFP)
9. Convention of Baptist Youth Fellowship in the Philippines (CBYFP)
10. The Salvation Army Youth Desk (TSA-Youth)

In October 2007, the UCCP-CYF, NUMYFP, YIFI and SKEP co-steered and organized the first-ever National Ecumenical Youth Peace Camp held at the Union Theological Seminary. Over 100 youth from the four

organizations and other ecumenical friends participated in the program. 17 UCCP youth leaders from all six (6) jurisdictions represented the CYF in this historical gathering.

So the next time you meet other people from the organizations and churches mentioned above, do not hesitate to smile and offer a hand-of-friendship. GOD needs more hands working together in rebuilding His Kingdom. Let the spirit of ecumenism live on in and through you!

# **Basic Parliamentary Rules of Procedure**

**(adopted by the 1990 UCCP General Assembly)**

I

The Chairperson shall call the meeting to order at the beginning of the session.

II

Any delegate shall speak only when granted the right to do so by the Chairperson.

III

A delegate may speak only to propose or second a motion, to engage in debate on a pending matter, or to state a point of order, inquiry, or personal privilege.

IV

If a delegate desires to propose a motion, he or she shall state it orally, and await a second to the motion. It shall not be considered until seconded. Once seconded, it may not be withdrawn except by permission of the body.

V

The debate upon the motion shall be opened by the delegate who proposed it, to be followed by any delegate who is in opposition to it. Thereafter, speakers shall alternate between those who oppose the motion. When the debate is closed, the delegate who proposed the motion may reply.

VI

During the debate, each speaker may speak for not more than three minutes. With the exception of the reply by the delegate who proposed the motion of the amendment. The Secretary may ring a bell once a speaker's time is up, unless the Chairperson proposes and receives consent that an additional minute be allowed the speaker.

VII

Should the Chairperson wish to participate in the debate, he or she shall first relinquish the chair to another. The Chairperson shall not resume the chair until the matter on which he or she has expressed views has been decided.

VIII

A majority of the Convention present and voting shall determine any matter. Any delegate voting with the minority may have his or her name recorded as dissenting, but may not assign reasons for his or her dissent unless granted permission to do so by the Assembly. Any delegate abstaining from voting may have his or her name recorded as abstaining. The Chairperson shall vote only in the event of a tie.

IX

When an amendment has been proposed and seconded, the Chairperson shall allow debate on the amendment only. The Chairperson shall rule out of order and not entertain an amendment which is substantially the negative of the motion. An amendment to an amendment may be proposed, but the Chairperson shall rule out of order and not entertain any further amendment. The debate and voting shall be first upon the amendment to the amendment, then upon the amendment, and finally upon the motion.

X

Any delegate may propose a motion to close debate at anytime. If seconded, a vote shall be taken immediately

without debate. If 2/3 of the members present and voting concur, the debate shall be closed. But before final vote is taken on the pending motion (or amendment), the proponent of the motion or amendment has the right to reply.

#### XI

When a **Principal Matter** is under consideration, the following **Subsidiary Motions** (in the order of their priority) shall take precedence over the pending business:

- a. lay on the table (undebatable);
- b. close the debate (undebatable);
- c. postpone consideration to a definite time;
- d. refer to a committee;
- e. amend a motion;

indefinitely postpone consideration.

#### XII

When a **Principal Matter** is under consideration, any of the following incidental motions (without any order of priority) shall take precedence over the pending business and over any subsidiary motion:

- a. to divide the house (undebatable);
- b. point of inquiry (undebatable);
- c. point of information (undebatable);
- d. point of order (undebatable);
- e. withdraw a motion (undebatable);

#### XIII

When a **Principal Matter** is under consideration, the following **Privilege Motions** (in their order or priority) shall take precedence over the pending business and over any **Subsidiary Motion** or any **Incidental Motion**:

- a. fix time to adjourn (undebatable);
- b. to adjourn (undebatable);
- c. to recess (undebatable);
- d. question of privilege (undebatable);
- e. call for the order of the day (undebatable);

#### XIV

The **Principal Matter** refers to any of the following:

- a. a main motion
- b. a motion to take from table (a matter previously laid on the table; undebatable);
- c. a motion to rescind (2/3 vote);
- d. a motion to reconsider (2/3 vote).

#### XV

If a motion **to recess** or **to adjourn** prevails, the matter under consideration at the time of recess or adjournment shall be taken up when the body reconvenes, unless there is an **order of the day** at that time, in which event the said matter shall be taken up immediately thereafter.

#### XVI

When a matter is postponed indefinitely, it may not be taken up again at the entire meeting of the body except by a vote of 2/3 of the members present and voting.

#### XVII

When a matter is postponed to a time specified, it becomes the order of the day for that time and takes precedence over all other business.

#### XVIII

A motion to reconsider a matter which has been previously determined may be proposed and seconded only by a

delegate who voted with the majority in the previous vote on the matter.

XIX

These rules of procedure may be suspended or amended by a vote of 2/3 of the members present and voting.