

## **Lesson 41. Why do we remit our “wider mission support”?**

UCM Biggest Coin Fellowship

Sunday Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 14, 2021

**General Concept:** *The Wider Mission Support sustains the mission work of the church and is our manifestation of being an integral part of the whole church.*

**Biblical References:** Luke 8:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5;

### **Age Level Concepts**

- *The Wider Mission Support sustains the mission work of the church and is our manifestation of being an integral part of the whole church*
- The WMS comes from the 22% of the local church giving (tithes, pledges, loose and thanksgiving offering)
- We enforce the faithful implementation of giving of 22%

### **Learning Objectives**

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

- Discuss reasons for faithfully remitting the Wider Mission Support
- Point out the allocations of the 22% Wider Mission Support for further understanding of its purpose
- Tell how they felt about other local churches which are not faithful in remitting their WMS
- Declare to enforce the faithful remittance of the Wider Mission Support

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]) song chart, offering plate or basket, Manila paper, meta cards (colored), marker pens

### **Biblical Background**

Luke 8: 1-3

Traveling and visiting places was not an easy task for Jesus and his disciples. Often, they were disrupted because of the huge crowd following them. It was not even clear if the crowd was truly interested in hearing the gospel or was there out of curiosity. However, Jesus and his disciples were supplied of their daily needs whenever they went through the support and provision of women who went with them to look after them.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

Paul, writing from Macedonia, hoped that news of the generosity of these churches would encourage the Corinthian believers and motivate them to solve their problems and unite in fellowship.

During his third missionary journey, Paul had collected money for the impoverished believers in Jerusalem. The churches in Macedonia – Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea – had given money even though they were poor, and they had given more than Paul expected. This was sacrificial giving – they were poor themselves, but they wanted to help. The point of giving is not so much the amount we give, but why and how we give. God does not want gifts given grudgingly. Instead, God wants us to give as these churches did – out of dedication to Christ, love for fellow believers, the joy of helping those in need, as well as the fact that it was simply the good and right thing to do. (Zondervan Life Application Study Bible, p. 2108)

### **Wider Mission Support (22% Assessment)**

The 22% Wider Mission Support is a basic mission support of UCCP. It comes from the 22% of local church giving (Tithes, pledges, loose offerings and thanksgiving offerings). The 22% Wider Mission Support sustains the operation of the Conference and the General assembly.

The Local Church shall set aside 22% (some conference practice 25% or more) of its actual gross collections every month for Wider Church Mission Support.

Sources: 22% actual gross collection shall mean collections from Tithes, Pledges, Loose Offering and thanksgiving Offering received by the Local Church every month. Some Conferences that practice more than the minimum of 22% Wider Mission Support.

Remittance: The 22% shall be remitted to the Conference immediately on the first week of the month.

Allocation: The 22% is allocated in the following manner:

- 3% or 13.7% of 22% goes to the National Office for General Assembly operations
- 2% or 9.1% of 22% goes to the National Office for the Church's programs
- 2% or 9.1% of 22% goes to the National Office for Church Workers Benefits
- 1% or 4.5% of 22% goes to the National Office for CRI/CRO
- 1% or 4.5% of 22% goes to the National Office for Building Fund
- 13% or 59/1% of 22% goes to the Conference for its operations

For those who practice more than the minimum of 22%, say, 25%, the Conference share becomes 16% or 64% of the 25%.



# Wider Mission Support

The 22% Wider Mission Support is a basic support of UCCP.

It comes from the 22% of local church giving (Tithes, Pledges, Loose Offerings and Thanksgiving Offerings). The 22% Wider Mission Support sustains the operation of the Conference and the General Assembly



**The Local Church shall set aside 22% (some conference practice 25% or more) of its actual gross collection every month for WMS**

Sources: 22% actual gross collection shall mean collections from Tithes, Pledges, Loose Offering and Thanksgiving Offering received by the Local Church every month. Some conferences practice more than the minimum of 22% Wider Mission Support

*"Do not withhold good from those whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it."*  
-Proverbs 3:27



**Remittance: The 22% shall be remitted to the Conference immediately on the first week of the month**

Allocations: Suppose we say:

For every Php 100.00 given, Php 78.00 is retained by the local church Php 22.00 is sent to the conference as Wider Mission Support Php 13.00 is retained for Conference operation and program. The remaining Php 9.00 is sent to the National Office: Php 3.00 is for General Assembly Operations Php 3.00 is for Church Workers Benefits Php 2.00 is for Church Institutions and Organizations Php 1.00 is for Building Fund	
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**For those who practice more than the minimum of 22%, say, 25%, the Conference share becomes 16%**

## Suggested Lesson Outline

### Greeting Time

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Song      "Thanks to God" Hymnal of Faith Journey,322

Thanks to God for my Redeemer,  
 Thanks for all that You provide,  
 Thanks for times in past and present  
 Thanks for Jesus by my side.  
 Thanks for pleasant, balmy daytime,  
 Thanks for gloomy, dreary nights  
 Thanks for tears by now forgotten,  
 Thanks for peace, my soul delights.

Thanks for prayers that you have answered,  
 Thanks for what you have denied  
 Thanks for storms that I have weathered,

Thanks for all that you supplied.  
Thanks for pain, and thanks for pleasure,  
Thanks for comfort in despair.  
Thanks for grace that none can measure,  
Thanks for love beyond compare.

Opening Prayer ( the facilitator may ask someone from among the learners to lead the class in prayer)

### **Learning Time**

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Assign from among the participants to read the biblical texts, Ask the following questions:

- What are the contributing factors that help sustain Jesus' ministry during his time?
- How would you justify Paul's action of asking help from other churches to be able to respond to the needs of the Christians in Jerusalem?

#### *Lessons Learned*

Discuss to the class the Wider Mission Support (WMS or commonly called 22%/25% remittance) as the local church's expression of support to the conference, and of the whole UCCP.

The facilitator may post or distribute copy of the image to help explain the Wider Mission Support to the learners.

Ask the following:

- Do you have any idea how much your local church is remitting to the conference?
- Why should local churches faithfully remit their 22%/25% share or Wider Mission Support?
- What could be the reasons why churches refuse to remit their Wider Mission Support?
- How do you feel about other churches that are not faithful in remitting their WMS or that are not remitting at all?

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

What should be done to encourage local churches to continue their faithful remittance of their share as an expression of their support to the programs and ministry of UCCP?

Solicit suggestions from the learners as to how local churches enforce faithful remittance of its Wider Mission Support.

## Closing Worship

Offering

Closing Song “Work In Your Kingdom” Hymanl of Faith Journey,302

Work in your kingdom advances and continues,  
Even through hard times, all odds and tribulations,  
Despite our human infirmities and weakness,  
Use us O Savior, till the task is done.

Lord, all our time we now offer in your service,  
All the resources to us you have entrusted,  
Use all our knowledge, our intellect and wisdom,  
Our enthusiasm, strength and might, O God.

Closing Prayer (The Pastor may be asked to close the session with a prayer)

### **Lesson 42. *What do we mean by responsible Christian stewardship?***

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 21, 2021

**General Concept:** Responsible Christian stewardship means utilizing and developing the properties and other resources under the care of the church towards self-reliance and support to its various ministries.

**Biblical References:** Haggai 1:1-15; Matthew 25:14-30

#### **Age Level Concepts**

- *Responsible Christian stewardship means utilizing and developing the properties under the care of the church towards self-reliance and support to its various ministries*
- *Our church observes responsible Christian stewardship.*
- *We live out responsible Christian stewardship.*

#### **Learning Objectives**

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

- Identify the properties and other resources that are under the care of the local church
- Discuss how the properties and other resources (material and human) are being used to support the life and ministries of the local church
- Suggest ways how these properties and resources can be developed to support the life and program of the local church.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]) song chart, offering plate or basket, Manila paper, meta cards (colored), marker pens

## Biblical Background

Haggai 1:1-15

The Jews who had returned from Babylon in 538 B.C. to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem were not able to finish their work because they were hindered by their enemies. After opposition put a halt to progress, no further work had been done on the temple for over 10 years.

God asked his people how they could live in luxury when his house was lying in ruins. The temple was the focal point of Judah's relationship with God, but it was still demolished. Instead of rebuilding the temple, the people put their energies into beautifying their own homes.

In 520 B.C., Haggai delivered a message to encourage the people to rebuild the temple. Haggai encouraged the people to finish rebuilding the temple. Opposition from hostile neighbors had caused them to feel discouraged and to neglect the temple, and thus neglect God. But Haggai's message turned them around and motivated them to pick up their tools and continue the work they had begun. (Zondervan Life Application Study Bible, p. 1604)

Matthew 25:14-30

This chapter tells of different stories being told by Jesus. All of these stories were related to his inevitable departure from the world and his coming again. The second story tells of a businessman who went away and left his business in the hands of his trusted employees or servants. He gave them money which vary based on their business abilities. Two of those employees invested their money or find ways to make profit out of their money. While the last one, fearing the money might get lost, hid it and just waited for the return of the master.

When the master returned, he was pleased with the performance of the two employees especially upon knowing that they had worked well to gain profits from the money entrusted them. he then rewarded them with added responsibilities. The last employee tried to make excuses for his laziness. The master was not pleased and even suggested to the employee that he could have just placed the money in the bank if he so thought that the master was only interested in the profits.

The meaning of the story is that God gives people different capacities and abilities/skills. These gifts (capacities, abilities, skills,talents, resources) are to be used for the business of expanding the kingdom of God. According to Donald Fleming of

Bridgeway Bible Commentary, “Those who used their gifts will be rewarded with increased capacity and ability while those who neglect their gifts will become useless.”

## Suggested Lesson Outline

### Greeting Time

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Song/s            “We Are Stewards” Hymnal of Faith Journey,285

Lord, we are the stewards of the blessings from above,  
And we who are created and whom you redeemed  
Our thanksgiving offer sincerely in your name  
We surrender all our lives to you, O Lord, our God.

The strength that you gave us now we offer back to you,  
Whatever we possess, we bring them to you,  
Our whole life surrender, entrust them in your care,  
Take them in your loving hand and use them evermore.

### Opening Prayer

We are recipients of your loving and sustaining grace, O Lord. For this reason, we come to express our gratitude. You have bestowed us with things in this world that are useful to enhance our lives. For this reason, we come to affirm our task to take care of them. Make us feel your presence Lord as we study and relearn the basic foundations of our faith. In Jesus’ name. Amen

### Learning Time

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Divide the class into two (2) groups. Assign each group a biblical text to read and discuss within their group. Instruct them to follow the questions for their sharing/discussion:

- What is the context of the story in the text you read?
- What message does the main character try to impart to his subjects?
- In what way does stewardship should be exemplified based on the story?

Let each group choose a reporter assigned to share what has been discussed within their group.

#### *Lessons Learned*

The facilitator may post this graph or print it out to be distributed to the same groupings.

Properties/ Material Resources in the Local Church	How did the local church maximize or use it?
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Human Resources in the Local Church	

Ask the groups to respond to the questions:

- How should we look at the properties and resources of the Local Church?
- How would you define responsible Christian stewardship based on the biblical lessons and the context of our local church related to its properties and resources?

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

Continue the discussion by soliciting ideas as to how properties and resources of the local church should be utilized and maximized to support the programs and ministries of the church.

Synthesize the discussion by reiterating the concepts that need to be affirmed by the learners.

#### **Closing Worship**

Offering

Closing Song        ““Give Me Oil in My Lamp””

    Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning

        Give me oil in my lamp, I pray

    Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning

        Keep me burning 'til the break of day

#### Chorus

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna; Sing hosanna to the King of kings!

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna; Sing hosanna to the King!

    Make me a fisher of men, keep me seeking

        Make me a fisher of men, I pray

    Make me a fisher of men, keep me seeking

        Seeking souls 'til Jesus comes again (Chorus)

    Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising

        Give me joy in my heart, I pray

    Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising

        Keep me praising 'til the break of day (Chorus)

Closing Prayer (The facilitator may end the session with a prayer)

**Lesson 43. Why do we encourage and provide means for amicable settlement of conflicts and disputes?**

**Palm Sunday**

Sixth Sunday in Lent

March 28, 2021

**General Concept:** *The Church encourages and provides means for amicable settlement of conflicts and disputes as manifestation of our Christian discipleship and witness to the world.*

**Biblical References:** *Matthew 5:23-24; Colossians 3:13*

**Age Level Concepts**

- *The church encourages and provides means for amicable settlement of conflicts and disputes as manifestation of our Christian discipleship and witness to the world*
- We respect and submit to the process of settling conflicts and disputes set by our church
- We pray and commit to be just in settling conflicts and disputes in the church

**Learning Objectives**

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

- Share experiences of conflicts within the local church and how it was resolved
- Mention ways how conflicts and misunderstandings are settled in their local church
- Ask God for forgiveness for hurting others.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]) song chart, offering plate or basket, Manila paper, meta cards (colored), marker pens

**Biblical Background**

Matthew 5:23-24

The passage was part of Jesus discussion about the right and wrong attitudes towards the law, Jesus gave several examples to explain his point. He was not trying to discredit the Law when he said, “You have heard that it was said in the past,” but it was intended to question the interpretation of the law that was taught by the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus was not trying to contradict the Law or write a new law but to show people the right attitude.

Jesus used the example of killing someone. To refrain from killing someone is not enough. For Jesus, the right attitude is to take away anger and revenge that leads a person kill someone. aside from controlling anger, one must also try to make peace with those who are angry with them. In other words, even in our daily worldly affairs, an offender would be wise enough to reach an agreement or settlement with the one

whom he offended to, immediately. Otherwise, things might get worse and find himself defending himself before a court.

### Colossians 3:13

Believers are reminded to put off old habits just as they put away dirty clothes. Instead, they are reminded to put on their new self in Christ just as they put on new clothes. They are to live a new life, new attitude - that which thinks of others before thinking of self. It is a life that is bound by the "newness" in Christ - a life of love, peace, unity, forgiveness, compassion. Putting on these "new clothes", believers will exude an appearance of genuine beauty and completeness.

### Suggested Lesson Outline

#### Greeting Time

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Song      "If I Have Wounded Any Soul Today"

Hymnal of Faith Journey,66

If I have wounded any soul today,  
If I have caused one foot to go astray,  
if I have walked in my own willful way,  
Dear Lord, forgive.

If I have uttered idle words or vain,  
If I have turned aside from want or pain,  
If I offended others thru the strain,  
Dear Lord,forgive.

#### Opening Prayer

We come before Your presence, humbly bowing our heads in acknowledging how unworthy we are of Your love and grace. But You have profoundly declared that whoever calls your name, You will listen and respond. Today, we ask that You bless our gathering today. May the learnings we receive be a reminder of how you have exemplified a life of forgiveness and love. Amen

#### Learning Time

##### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask the learners to read the biblical texts silently on their seats. The facilitator may write the questions on the board.

- What did the biblical texts want to tell us?
- Why should people in conflict or with misunderstanding reconcile?

- What does it try to show when people with quarrel and misunderstanding forgive and reconcile?
- What are the implications or impact of fellow Christians or members of the same community suing each other in court outside the church?

### *Lessons Learned*

WHO AMONG YOU? (Sharing by Triads) This activity is intended to encourage learners to share their experiences in relation to resolving conflicts and disputes within the family, local church or among members of their community. The facilitator may divide the class into triads .It is important to highlight how reconciliation, forgiveness and resolutions were reached.

After all the sharing, ask the learners,"How does it feel when conflicts, quarrels or misunderstandings are settled and conflicting parties are reconciled?

### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

WHAT CAN WE DO? This activity is intended to solicit from the learners ways to settle conflicts, differences and misunderstandings among themselves, within their family and faith community/local church.

- When members of the local church are in conflict because of the result during the last election of officers.
- When some members does not like the Pastor assigned to them
- When some members of the Council are inactive because their proposal was not approved
- When members were angry at the sermon of the Pastor

### **Closing Worship**

#### Offering

Closing Song “If I Have Wounded Any Soul Today” (3rd and 4th stanza)

When you have given me some fort to hold,  
Yet I have longed for shelter in your fold,  
And I have been perverse, or hard or cold,  
Dear Lord, forgive.

Forgive the sins I have confessed to you,  
Forgive the secret sins i do not know,  
O guide me, love me, where’re I go,  
Dear Lord, my God.

Closing Prayer (Ask one of the learners to close the session with a prayer)

**Lesson 44. What are the means of settling conflicts and disputes in our church?**

**Communion Sunday**

Easter Sunday/ Resurrection of the Lord

April 04, 2021

**General Concept:** *The church provides means of settling conflicts and disputes through good offices, mediation, conciliation and arbitration.*

**Biblical References:** Genesis 33; 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

**Age Level Concepts**

- *The church provides means of settling conflicts and disputes through good offices, mediation, conciliation and arbitration*
- We submit to the means of settling conflicts and disputes set by our church
- We pray that all conflicts be resolved within the church.

**Learning Objectives**

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

- Identify who helps in settling conflicts and quarrels inside the church
- Locate the guidelines set by the church to help people in the church settle quarrels
- Affirm the ways of settling conflicts as provided in the UCCP Constitution and By-Laws

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]) song chart, offering plate or basket, Manila paper, meta cards (colored), marker pens

**Biblical Background**

Genesis 33

It is refreshing to see Esau's change of heart when the two brothers meet again. The bitterness over losing his birthright and blessing (Genesis 25:29-34) seems gone. Instead, Esau was content with what he had. Jacob even exclaimed how great it was to see his brother obviously pleased with him.

v. 33 – Bowing to the ground seven times was the sign of respect given to a king. Jacob was taking every precaution as he met Esau, hoping to dispel any thoughts of revenge.

Why did Jacob send gifts ahead for Esau? In Bible times, gifts were given for several reasons.

(1) This may have been a bribe. Gifts are still given to win someone over or buy his or her support. Esau may first have refused Jacobs's gifts because he didn't want or

need a bribe. He had already forgiven Jacob, and he had ample wealth of his own. (2) This may have been an expression of affection. (3) It may have been the customary way of greeting someone before an important meeting. Such gifts were often related to a person's occupation. This explains why Jacob sent Esau – who was a herdsman – sheep, goats, and cattle. (Zondervan Life Application Study Bible, p. 70)

### 1 Corinthians 6:1-7

If a dispute arises between believers, it should be settled within the church, not in a public court of law (6:1). if Christians are to share in the future judgment of the world, surely they can judge everyday affairs of the present life(2-3). The Corinthians boast of their wisdom, yet no one among them is wise enough to decide the matter. Instead they shame themselves by taking Christian problems to non- Christian people for a decision (4-6)

Christians should not have lawsuits at all. But Corinthian Christians attack and cheat each other (7-8). They behave like the sorts of people they were before they became Christians. God has declared them righteous and holy through Jesus Christ, and therefore they should be righteous and holy in their conduct (9-11).

Notes:

#### ***UCCP BY-Laws***

Section 7. Methods of settling conflicts and disputes. The parties to a controversy are expected to settle their conflict or dispute through direct exchange of views between themselves. But where their relations have become so strained as to rule out direct negotiation, the following methods as herein defined shall be resorted to:

a. **Good offices.** The pastor, or an Elder, or a respected member of the Church, shall bring the parties together or provide the occasion for negotiations to take place between them so they can work out a settlement between themselves. For example, the Pastor (or Elder or a respected member of the Church) may invite the parties to the controversy to his office or residence for the said purpose. At the Conference level and that of the General Assembly, the tender of good offices may be initiated or done by the Conference Minister, the Officers of the Conference, the General Secretary, and other officers of the General Assembly, or by any respected lay leader of the Church.

b. **Mediation.** Where the one tendering his/her good office actively participates by proposing a solution and offering his/her advise to the parties to the controversy, he/she plays the role of a mediator. Good offices and mediation may take place on the same occasion. The mediator does not concern himself/herself with the merits of a dispute: his/her task is to encourage compromise rather than advise adherence to legal technicalities.

c. **Conciliation.** This is the process of settling a controversy about disputed facts by referring the same to a person or persons, designated by agreement of the parties to the conflict of dispute, for the purpose of clarifying and elucidating the facts in issue between the parties in the hope of bringing them to a compromise settlement.

d. **Arbitration.** This is a quasi-judicial, informal procedure for the settlement of a controversy between the parties by referring the conflict or dispute to one or more impartial persons for final and binding determination. The arbitrator or board of arbitrators, not more than three (3) in number, shall be freely chosen by the parties themselves from a pool of Church arbitrators. In arbitration there is a legal obligation on the part of the parties to the controversy to comply with the award or decision.

Arbitration shall be resorted to by the parties where there is a failure or inability to arrive at a settlement through such means as good offices, mediation, or conciliation and there is a strong probability that litigation may ensue between or among Church members who are parties to a controversy. In such a situation, the Church Council, in case of a controversy at the level of the Local Church, shall adopt a detailed procedure of arbitration, in accordance with the UCCP Constitution and By-Laws and in line with such rules as may be issued from time to time by the National Commission on Discipline and Conflict Resolution (NCDCR). For this purpose, said Council shall immediately constitute a pool of arbitrators, not more than five (5) in number, who are known for their moral integrity, competence, impartiality, and independence of mind. Where the controversy occurs at the level of the National Church, the Conference Council or the National Council, as the case may be, shall do likewise.

An example of an Arbitration Agreement, which may be modified to suit the requirements of a particular case, is found at the end of these By-Laws as APPENDIX II.

The decision or award of the arbitration or arbitrators freely chosen by the parties to a controversy, shall, as a general rule, be final, binding and unappealable, in accordance with law.

For the purpose of insuring that said decision of award shall be recognized and enforced by the courts, boards or commissions established by the State, the NCDCR shall promulgate the procedural rules that shall serve as guide to the Local Churches, the various Conferences and the National Church, on the basis of the Manual of Arbitration appended to these By-Laws as APPENDIX III, particularly with respect to such matters as qualifications of arbitrators, manner of effecting arbitration, procedure of arbitration, the decision or award and the compliance therewith by the parties. The Manual of Arbitration (Appendix III) shall apply in toto as the procedural rules to all

cases submitted for arbitration pending promulgation of said procedural rules or in case of inability or failure of the NCDCR to promulgate the same.

In case the present Arbitration Law is amended, the NCDCR shall make the necessary modification or adjustment in its procedural rules.

e. **Traditional method of adjudication.** Those church members who are involved in a justiciable case and wish to waive or forego arbitration, after having failed to settle their dispute through the use of good offices, mediation or conciliation, may entrust the resolution of their controversy through the traditional method of adjudication. If and when such a situation arises, the Church Council shall establish a local unit of the NCDCR (formerly the Local Judicial Commission), in accordance with the procedural rules that shall be adopted and promulgated by the NCDCR.

In drafting and promulgating said procedural rules, the NCDCR shall take into account applicable provisions of the 1974 By-Laws concerning the Local Judicial Commission, with provision for appeal to the higher bodies in the context of the system of Conflict Resolution under the present Constitution, always keeping in mind that controversies involving church members, officers, and the Church itself shall be resolved in a non-adversarial, non-combative way and in light of the fundamental values of truth, justice and love.

In line with Article XI, Section 4 of the UCCP Constitution, “cases pending in the National Judicial Commission at the time of the effectivity of the present Constitution may be settled, if the parties so desire, through any of the amicable methods set forth in Article VIII”, namely, good offices, mediation, conciliation and arbitration. In the absence of such a desire, the cases, if any, will be resolved in accordance with the rules of procedure prevailing before the effectivity of the present Constitution.

## Suggested Lesson Outline

### Greeting Time

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Song                   “Not My Brother, nor My Sister”

Hymnal of Faith Journey,217

Not my brother,nor my sister, but it's me, O God,

Standing in the need of prayer;

Not my brother, nor my sister,but it's me, O God,

Standing in the need of prayer.

It's me, it's me O God, standing in the need of prayer,

It's me, it's me O God, standing in the need of prayer.

Not the preacher, nor the deacon, but it's me, O God,  
Standing in the need of prayer;

Not the preacher, nor the deacon, but it's me, O God,  
Standing in the need of prayer.

It's me, it's me O God, standing in the need of prayer,  
It's me, it's me O God, standing in the need of prayer.

Not the stranger, nor my neighbor, but it's me, O God,  
Standing in the need of prayer;

Not the stranger, nor my neighbor, but it's me, O God,  
Standing in the need of prayer;

It's me, it's me O God, standing in the need of prayer,  
It's me, it's me O God, standing in the need of prayer.

### Opening Prayer

Most gracious and loving God, despite our wicked ways causing us to turn away from Your will, You have shown us the way of forgiveness and reconciliation. Jesus's life and death exemplified that way through which we have received the gift of grace and salvation. Bless us today as we relive that experience through our study. In Jesus' name. Amen

### Learning Time

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Instruct the learners to read the texts silently. The facilitator may ask the following questions:

- What was the context of the story as narrated in the text?
- Who were involved in the conflict and in the process of settling the conflict?
- What steps were taken by the characters to get reconciliation or settlement of their conflicts?
- What were the contributing factors that help achieve reconciliation?

#### *Lessons Learned*

CASE STUDY. The activity is intended to solicit ideas from the learners as to how conflicts should be settled within the church. The responses of the learners may be based upon the guidelines set by our church as provided for in the UCCP constitution and By-Laws

Case:

*A member stopped going to church for a month. The Pastor got worried because this member happens to be the Treasurer of the church. Her*

*presence is highly needed because the local church is undergoing construction. The Pastor learned from other members of the church that the Treasurer got into argument with the Financial Secretary over some issues that involve money.*

*What should be done to settle the problem?*

Section 7. Methods of settling conflicts and disputes. The parties to a controversy are expected to settle their conflict or dispute through direct exchange of views between themselves. But where their relations have become so strained as to rule out direct negotiation, the following methods as herein defined shall be resorted to:

- a. **Good offices.** The pastor, or an Elder, or a respected member of the Church, shall bring the parties together or provide the occasion for negotiations to take place between them so they can work out a settlement between themselves. For example, the Pastor (or Elder or a respected member of the Church) may invite the parties to the controversy to his office or residence for the said purpose. At the Conference level and that of the General Assembly, the tender of good offices may be initiated or done by the Conference Minister, the Officers of the Conference, the General Secretary, and other officers of the General Assembly, or by any respected lay leader of the Church.
- b. **Mediation.** Where the one tendering his/her good office actively participates by proposing a solution and offering his/her advise to the parties to the controversy, he/she plays the role of a mediator. Good offices and mediation may take place on the same occasion. The mediator does not concern himself/herself with the merits of a dispute: his/her task is to encourage compromise rather than advise adherence to legal technicalities.
- c. **Conciliation.** This is the process of settling a controversy about disputed facts by referring the same to a person or persons, designated by agreement of the parties to the conflict of dispute, for the purpose of clarifying and elucidating the facts in issue between the parties in the hope of bringing them to a compromise settlement.
- d. **Arbitration.** This is a quasi-judicial, informal procedure for the settlement of a controversy between the parties by referring the conflict or dispute to one or more impartial persons for final and binding determination. The arbitrator or board of arbitrators, not more than three (3) in number, shall be freely chosen by the parties themselves from a pool of Church arbitrators. In arbitration there is a legal obligation on the part of the parties to the controversy to comply with the award or decision.

Arbitration shall be resorted to by the parties where there is a failure or inability to arrive at a settlement through such means as good offices, mediation, or conciliation

and there is a strong probability that litigation may ensue between or among Church members who are parties to a controversy. In such a situation, the Church Council, in case of a controversy at the level of the Local Church, shall adopt a detailed procedure of arbitration, in accordance with the UCCP Constitution and By-Laws and in line with such rules as may be issued from time to time by the National Commission on Discipline and Conflict Resolution (NCDCR). For this purpose, said Council shall immediately constitute a pool of arbitrators, not more than five (5) in number, who are known for their moral integrity, competence, impartiality, and independence of mind. Where the controversy occurs at the level of the National Church, the Conference Council or the National Council, as the case may be, shall do likewise.

An example of an Arbitration Agreement, which may be modified to suit the requirements of a particular case, is found at the end of these By-Laws as APPENDIX II.

The decision or award of the arbitration or arbitrators freely chosen by the parties to a controversy, shall, as a general rule, be final, binding and unappealable, in accordance with law.

For the purpose of insuring that said decision of award shall be recognized and enforced by the courts, boards or commissions established by the State, the NCDCR shall promulgate the procedural rules that shall serve as guide to the Local Churches, the various Conferences and the National Church, on the basis of the Manual of Arbitration appended to these By-Laws as APPENDIX III, particularly with respect to such matters as qualifications of arbitrators, manner of effecting arbitration, procedure of arbitration, the decision or award and the compliance therewith by the parties. The Manual of Arbitration (Appendix III) shall apply in toto as the procedural rules to all cases submitted for arbitration pending promulgation of said procedural rules or in case of inability or failure of the NCDCR to promulgate the same.

In case the present Arbitration Law is amended, the NCDCR shall make the necessary modification or adjustment in its procedural rules.

**e. Traditional method of adjudication.** Those church members who are involved in a justiciable case and wish to waive or forego arbitration, after having failed to settle their dispute through the use of good offices, mediation or conciliation, may entrust the resolution of their controversy through the traditional method of adjudication. If and when such a situation arises, the Church Council shall establish a local unit of the NCDCR (formerly the Local Judicial Commission), in accordance with the procedural rules that shall be adopted and promulgated by the NCDCR.

In drafting and promulgating said procedural rules, the NCDCR shall take into account applicable provisions of the 1974 By-Laws concerning the Local Judicial Commission, with provision for appeal to the higher bodies in the context of the system of Conflict Resolution under the present Constitution, always keeping in mind that controversies involving church members, officers, and the Church itself shall be resolved in a non-adversarial, non-combative way and in light of the fundamental values of truth, justice and love.

In line with Article XI, Section 4 of the UCCP Constitution, “cases pending in the National Judicial Commission at the time of the effectivity of the present Constitution may be settled, if the parties so desire, through any of the amicable methods set forth in Article VIII”, namely, good offices, mediation, conciliation and arbitration. In the absence of such a desire, the cases, if any, will be resolved in accordance with the rules of procedure prevailing before the effectivity of the present Constitution.

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

Sharing of Reflections. Encourage the learners to share their reflections from the issues and matters that were discussed.

The facilitator may synthesize all the reflections and discussion.

#### **Closing Worship**

Offering

Closing Song      “We Want to Learn to Live in Love”

Hymnal of Faith Journey, 188

We want to learn to live in love  
To follow what is good and true,  
Through friends at church, at home, at play  
We find what God would have us do.

When we are sad or feeling mean  
And fail to love or to be fair,  
Our friends at church, at home at play  
Can help us know that God does care.

When others are unkind to us  
And make want to cry or fight,  
We can reach out to be good friends  
and help them know that love is right.

Closing Prayer ( An elder may be asked to close the session with a prayer)

## **Lesson 45. Why does our church affirm and uphold the inviolability of the rights of persons?**

Second Sunday of Easter

April 11,2021

**General Concept:** *Our church affirms and upholds the inviolability of the rights of persons because we believe that persons are created in the image of God; that human rights are gifts from God and God's will is for us to enjoy the fullness of our humanity.*

**Biblical References:** *Genesis 1:26-27; Psalms 8:4-9*

### **Age Level Concepts**

- *Our church affirms and upholds the inviolability of the rights of persons because we believe that persons are created in the image of God.*
- *Human rights are gifts from God and that God's will is for us to enjoy the fullness of our humanity.*
- We assert and defend our rights and uphold other peoples' rights
- We commit and participate in our church's endeavors in defending human rights

### **Learning Objectives**

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

- Tell why we respect the basic human rights of persons
- Identify reasons why other churches find it hard to support the church's stand and program for justice, peace and human rights
- Suggest ways to show respect of other people's rights.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]) song chart, offering plate or basket, Manila papers, marker pens, construction paper, tape

### **Biblical Background**

Genesis 1:26-27

Why does God use the plural form, "Let us make man in our image"? One view says this is a reference to the Trinity – God the Father, Jesus Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit – all of whom are God. Another view is that the plural wording is used to denote majesty. Kings traditionally use the plural form in speaking of themselves.

In what ways are we made in God's image? God obviously did not create us exactly how God looks like because God has no physical body. Instead, we are reflections of God's glory. Some feel that our reason, creativity, speech, or self-determination is the image of God. More likely, it is our entire self that reflects the image of God.

Knowing that we are made in God's image and thus share many of God's characteristics provides a solid basis for self-worth. (Zondervan Life Application Study Bible, p. 6)

### Psalms 8:4-9

This psalm mentions the majestic power of God manifested in the creation of the vast universe. Great is God's power that gives to "feeble insignificant human beings a position of dignity that makes them unique among all created things, for they alone are created in the image of God". (Bridgeway Bible Commentary)

God gave human beings the authority to use and manage the physical world in which they live. But this doesn't mean that human beings become God. Being made in God's image, human beings are to become representatives of the Creator. Their dignity and worth reflects the glory and power of the One who created them. Their duty is to pay homage, worship, praise and glory to God whom they serve.

### **Suggested Lesson Outline**

#### **Greeting Time**

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Song      "Pray for a World" Hymnal of Faith Journey,371

Pray for a world where every child finds welcome in a sheltered place,  
Where love is tender, undefined, and firmness intertwines with grace.

Pray for a nation just and fair that seeks the welfare of us all,  
Where leaders guide with prudent care to nurture life for great and small.

Pray for a world where all have voice and none will batter, rape, abuse,  
Till then, may all have rightful choice and pray for wisdom as they choose.

#### **Opening Prayer**

This is the day that You have made for us all whom You created. You even bestowed upon us humans the gift of will and reason but also being created in Your image. From your authority and power we draw out our dignity and value as human. There is nothing we can give back but our praise and adoration of your name -our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Amen

#### **Learning Time**

*Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Assign learners to read the biblical texts. Let the learners pick one affirmation and then tell them to explain it in their own words and understanding.

- What faith affirmations can we draw out from the biblical texts?

We are created in God's image.

We are given the task to take care of the created world.

Human dignity is a gift from God.

Respect for human rights is upholding human dignity.

Our respect for the rights of people shows our respect to the Creator.

Human life is valuable because it comes from God.

### *Lessons Learned*

After all statements are being picked out and explain, the facilitator may further the discussion by asking the following:

- What could be the reasons why other local churches can't accept the church's stand to protect and uphold the basic rights of people?
- How would you justify the church's stand and ministry for justice, peace and human rights?

### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

Reading of the Church's resolution. Request someone to read it before the class.

## **RESOLUTION FOR THE CREATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS DESK General Assembly 21-26 May 1978**

WHEREAS, as a church body, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines should look at the prevailing universal concern for human rights as a great opportunity to advance the Christian concern for the dignity and well-being of people;

WHEREAS, we believe that human rights are gifts from God, and that His will is for us to enjoy the fullness of our humanity;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need for us as a Church to make more manifest our concern for human rights;

THEREFORE, It is hereby resolved that a desk for human rights be created within the structure of the Church, and that human rights be among our major thrusts in the next quadrennium.

Ref:General Assembly, 21-26 May 1978. The Resolution is in Appendix XXII, p. 564.

After reading the resolution, the facilitator may ask from among the learners to share their reflections.

### **Closing Worship**

Offering

Closing Song        "Sing Praise to God for Life"

Hymnal of Faith Journey,372

Sing praise to God, sing praise to God for life  
For beauty, hope and love, for tenderness and grace,  
Sing praise to God, sing praise to God for life  
With all of earth sing the praise of God's life.

Open your ears to hear the cries of pain  
Arising from the poor and all who are oppressed,  
Open your minds and use your wits to find,  
who are the cause of this world's unjust ways.

With all our heart we'll love the world with Christ  
Each person in this world, each creature of the earth  
With all our heart, we'll love the one who hates  
And in their heart find a part of our selves.

Closing Prayer ( Ask from among the women to close the session with a prayer)