



# National United Methodist Youth Fellowship in the Philippines

Philippines Central Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



## CHRISTMAS INSTITUTE 2017 CONCEPT PAPER

### I. The General Missional Framework

The Paragraph 122 of the 2012 United Methodist Church (UMC) Book of Discipline outlines the *Process for Carrying Out our Mission* that is to make disciples of Jesus Christ to transform the world. In sum, United Methodists, specifically UMYFers are called to **proclaim** the Gospel, **lead** people into a decision to commit to Jesus Christ and to his Church, **nurture** people in intentional faith formation and **send** people to do the same as well by being holy and being actively involved in changing the social structures to have them conform to the Gospel. As such, the ministries of the UMYFers in every level of the fellowship shall incorporate the mentioned aspects of doing ministry as United Methodists.

It can be further specified that ministries under “Proclaim” Area are those that are geared towards benefitting the people *outside the church* that includes outreach (i.e. Doing good to all regardless of creed, sex, age, etc.) ministries and in being welcoming/inviting people in the Church especially those who are outcasts. Examples of these ministries are advocacy campaigns, ecumenical and interreligious events, tree planting ministries, livelihood trainings, sports clinics, gift giving and medical-dental missions.

The ministries under “Lead” are primarily evangelistic activities (i.e. Intentional proclamation of the Gospel with the end of having the person surrender his/her life to Jesus as Lord and Saviour) like evangelistic/revival campaigns, campus ministries, hospital ministries, jail ministries, one on one Gospel sharing, publication and distribution of Gospel booklets, house to house visitations of non-members and church planting, together with baptisms/membership classes, confirmations/confirmation classes and prayer and fund raising campaigns for missions and worshipping congregations. For our mutual information, the approximately 25 churches in Nepal are part of the Philippines Central Conference, together with some congregations in Spain, Italy, Dubai, and Canada, among others, primarily led by overseas Filipinos.

The ministries under “Nurture” are ministries towards persons *inside the church* meant in developing the Christian life of a person as an individual and as a part of the faith community and it include prayer meetings, visitation of members, small group ministries, Bible studies, worship leadership development, leadership trainings and mentoring.

Finally, the ministries in “Send” are those structured to train and help *people inside the church to deal with people outside the faith community*. This includes training how to evangelize, lay servant ministries, program on short term missions (Caravan missions for some Conferences), long term missions, and Schools for Christian Youth Development (SCYD).

A single program is fungible (i.e. flexible), meaning, it can cover more than one area but it must be *primarily* under one area depending on its objectives. For example, an intensive prayer activity for our

missionaries is a very good program with multiple positive impacts as it can be a program under “Nurture,” “Lead,” and “Send” areas but it is primarily under “Lead” if its primary objective is for leading people to Jesus and not on training people how to do missions.

## **II. Locating the Christmas Institute 2017 and its Objectives**

The Institutes are the flagship programs of, by and for the youth for holistic development. And, for this biennium, the National United Methodist Youth Fellowship in the Philippines (NUMYFP) is the one in charge of offering possible and usable conceptual frame for the Institutes throughout the country and providing Bible Study Guide to that effect. This is ultimately aimed in creating, sustaining and ensuring a common ground of understanding among and between the members of the Fellowship throughout the nation.

For the Christmas Institute 2017, the NUMYFP seeks to frame and mould it as a ministry that **supports the Nurture area of our Church ministries**. Therefore, Christmas Institute 2017 seeks to **advance the fact that every believer is endowed with spiritual gifts**. In this end, the **delegates will be equipped and edified to use their faith in the service of the Church and of the society**. This is related to the objectives of Summer Institute 2017 themed “NetWork” that is affirming that every individual is essential in the Body of Christ. Further, this is to develop the UMYFers into mature Christians who are mobilized in ministry in such way that their unique gifts are maximized.

## **III. Explanation of the Theme**

As approved in the 34<sup>th</sup> National Youth Conference, the theme for the Institute is “**Am-Power!**” This is a quasi-derivative of the word “empower.” The word, taken as a verb, means “to give official authority or legal power to act.” The word play transform “empower” to “Am-Power” because the Great “I AM” is the source of Power for us to be able to do ministries in His name. Thus, the theme seeks to convey that **for us to be able to do something, we need to have or receive an official authority or legal power from someone more powerful than us- from Jesus of Nazareth, the King of kings and Lord of lords!**

## **IV. The Over-arching Biblical Foundation**

The 34<sup>th</sup> National Youth Conference also decided that Romans 12: 6-7 will be the key verse of the Christmas Institute 2017 as the Romans 12: 3-13 serves as the primary Scriptural inspiration of the proposed themes for the Christmas Institute 2016 to Summer Institute 2018. The other supporting Bible texts were provided in the proposed Bible Study curriculum. Romans 12: 6-7 states that:

**We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.**

As understood in its context, Apostle Paul made this call to the believers in Rome back then and now to the modern-day followers of Jesus after carefully laying out the ground that everything good, especially when it comes to salvation, is a gift of God, and that the proper response is not trying to repay such or to prove one’s worthiness but rather a humble faith. In addition, out of generosity of God, He also conferred upon the redeemed different gifts. Therefore, in response to the extravagant endowments of God, Paul is calling everyone to be excellent, to eschew mediocrity and to offer the best that we can be.

## **V. The Christmas Institute 2017 Bible Study Curriculum and Daily Thematic Program**

Below is the *curriculum/lesson focus* for every lesson in the Bible Study materials. **Please understand that this curriculum is premised on the understanding of *By Water and the Spirit***

which is the official understanding of UMC about baptism that affirms that in baptism, God confers upon us His gift of being marked as His own through the Holy Spirit. Thus, there is no distinction between baptism of water and baptism of Holy Spirit and between adult and infant baptism. The Bible Study Material writers are free to alter this as they see it fit:

Lesson Number	Freshmen (First timers and 12-15 years old)	Juniors (16-19 years old)	Seniors (20 years old and above)
1	<b>Topic:</b> Grace is a Gift: Never deserved	<b>Topic:</b> Grace went ahead: Understanding what our Baptism by Water and the Spirit means	<b>Topic:</b> Grace as Understood in Wesleyan Tradition
2	<b>Topic:</b> Grace to Talk to God: Prayer life	<b>Topic:</b> Grace is Sustaining: The Holy Eucharist as a <i>Means of Grace</i>	<b>Topic:</b> Spiritual Gifts: The Source, its Discovery and Use
3	<b>Topic:</b> Grace to talk with God: Studying the Holy Scriptures	<b>Topic:</b> Grace is Freely Given: The Spiritual Gifts	<b>Topic:</b> Small Group Ministries in Wesleyan Discipleship and as a Venue for Gift Discovery and Usage
4	<b>Topic:</b> Grace not to be alone: Public Worship	<b>Topic:</b> Accountability in Grace: Responsible Use of God's Gifts	<b>Topic:</b> Practical Ways in Forming, Leading and Sustaining Small Groups

It is also highly enjoined that the Bible Study materials to be used will teach the delegates of “doing theology” by employing the Wesleyan Quadrilateral of Scripture, Tradition, Experience and Reason as a way of presenting the lessons and more so in teaching the delegates to do and use the same. The primacy of the Scripture is to be highlighted as it should be the final authority of faith and practice upon which everything must be subjected to test without disregarding the importance of Christian tradition, communal experience of the believers and the employment of reason by an individual follower of Jesus.

The curriculum above can be adapted as the daily thematic program for the Institutes. The curriculum can be framed as the following for daily thematic program:

- **Gifted** by God (Area: Proclaim)
- **Giving** oneself to God (Area: Lead)
- **Growing** in God (Area: Nurture)
- **Going** where God leads (Area: Send)

#### VI. Key Target Competencies

Through the Christmas Institute 2017, it is targeted that all of the delegates will embrace the love of God so richly undeserved to the end that they are inspired to commit themselves to God, to His Church, and to use their gifts to give glory to God. Specifically, the value of accountability before God of each and everyone especially in the utilization of one's gifts is to be inculcated to everyone.