

Leader's Guide

How Is It with Your Soul?

By Faye Wilson



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Preparing to Lead the Study

This study guide is designed to help study leaders guide adult participants through the basic text. The authors of the study book have pointed out several other resources to which you can refer. For me, the most important thing is to make sure you and class members wrestle with and gain new understandings through the basic text and other resources (the United Methodist Women Program Book, the Prayer Calendar, special issues of **response** magazines and *New World Outlook*), which have been prepared for this theme.

Read the book several times. Read it prayerfully. Mark it up: Make notes in the margins or write ideas in a notebook. You want to make note of things that mirror your own experiences. You want to keep track of scriptures and songs that come to mind as you are reading. You want to note areas where you need to do some additional research. You want to discover concerns that move you to action.

Also read books and magazines. Pay particular attention to stories of people who have embarked on spiritual journeys—from a Christian as well as other religious perspectives. A secular book (and movie) of one woman’s journey to reclaim herself is *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert.¹ You may also want to read the books *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed,² who hiked the Pacific Crest Trail (following the death of her mother), and *Kisses from Katie* by Katie J. Davis and Beth Clark (contributor)³—her story as a missionary in Uganda. Read, listen, and discern.

Finally, be sure that your preparation includes reading scriptures that talk about the concepts of praying, learning, mentoring, and transforming. The prayer stories of Hannah and Hezekiah remind us to ask God for the *big* things. The story of Peter and Cornelius as well as Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch tell believers again that there is always an opportunity to learn something new. The stories of Mary and Elizabeth and Elijah and Elisha take us back to how important it is to have someone to turn to, how important it is to have a hand (and a heart) to guide you. The stories of Paul and Ananias and Elisha and the Widow of Zarephath teach us about the opportunities for transformation that exist every day.

Be sure to leaf through your CD collection and listen to some songs. Let the music and words speak to you. Grab your hymnals. Even if you are not a singer, peruse the words to various hymns and songs. The song “Praise the Source of Faith and Learning” in the hymnal *The Faith We Sing* captures the sentiment of the focus of our study:

1. Elizabeth Gilbert, *Eat, Pray, Love* (New York: Viking Press, 2006).

2. Cheryl Strayed, *Wild* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Press, 2012).

3. Katie J. Davis and Beth Clark (contributor), *Kisses from Katie: A Story of Relentless Love and Redemption* (New York: Howard Books, 2011).

Praise the source of faith and learning that has sparked and stoked the mind;
with a passion for discerning how the world has been designed.
Let the sense of wonder flowing from the wonders we survey,
keep our faith forever growing and renew our need to pray.⁴

May you continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ. Have a passion for discerning how you can encourage others to respond to the Wesleyan question: “How is it with your soul?”

THE CLIMATE FOR LEARNING

Stephen Brookfield,⁵ who has written extensively on the adult learner, tells us that teaching is sharing what can be known and using our learning to create appreciable differences in the world. With this study, we certainly hope that every learner will leave with an **action plan** to have a closer walk with God and to be renewed in our commitment to engage in acts of piety and service.

As a teacher or facilitator, you will need to keep some key things in mind when working with adults. Adult learners come to any study setting with a rich background of experiences. Many come with questions and challenges. As the study leader, welcome them all—every question, every challenge, every concern, every dream, every despair. Part of your role is to create opportunities for group members to speak of their experiences and know that their comments will be listened to with respect if not agreement.

These sessions are designed to tap into what study participants have already learned. They are also laid out in a manner to allow the adult learner to use various learning styles to access new material and explore challenging and disturbing issues. The lecture is one tool to deliver material to learners. In many cases, it is most effective when adults have already begun to explore new materials and topics.

Be sure to use materials that allow learners to use as many of their senses as possible. We all have different learning styles. Some persons retain material best by reading and taking notes. Others need to talk to their neighbor about what they have read and heard in order to most effectively process new learning. Yet others are the “artists” and need to manipulate something—create with clay, draw with markers, swirl color with a paintbrush. They require a kinetic experience.

To maximize any learning experience, the study leader must pay attention to other factors besides the content. Two key factors are psychographics and rhetorographics.

4. “Praise the Source of Faith and Learning” by Thomas Troeger © Oxford University Press Inc. 1986. Assigned to Oxford University Press 2010. Reproduced by Permission of CopyCat Music Licensing, LLC, obo Oxford University Press. All Rights Reserved.

5. Stephen D. Brookfield, *Powerful Techniques for Teaching Adults* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2013).

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Psychographics is being attentive to the emotional needs of adult learners. Make everyone feel welcome. Make an attempt to learn and use the names of the class members. Set the stage for questioning and sharing. Assure participants that there are no “dumb questions” and that anything that is confusing or complex deserves attention to bring clarity.

One of the challenges is that sometimes participants come with preconceived notions that are hard for them to set aside in favor of new information. Teaching, however, invites people to consider additional information while acknowledging that past experiences and understanding have validity. (Remember, people used to believe that the world was flat.)

Part of hospitality is ensuring that every person has an opportunity to speak. That means teaching must allow time for reflection and discernment. Build some creative silences into the lesson plan—silence often brings revelation and ideas. Additionally, some people need to write down their thoughts before speaking aloud. Through times of silence and of journaling, participants will be better able to find and use their voice. Be sure to invite (not insist) that each person express a thought, a concern, a new learning.

Equally important is creating a conversation culture that does not allow one person to dominate. Some persons have the gift of gab. Others have a lot of experience on a particular topic. Others are more reticent and need an opening in the conversation and encouragement to enter. Some helpful statements for guiding conversations include:

- I'd like to have a couple of people give me a one-minute response to this issue.
- _____, I see your hand, but I also see _____'s; and I want to get her to weigh in on this concept.
- You can give me a snapshot, but I can't give you the floor.
- Take thirty seconds to bring that thought to a conclusion.
- This area has been quiet; I don't want to leave you out. Is there someone here who has an idea to place on the table? (Some shy persons need to be invited to speak)
- _____ has thrown down the gauntlet on this issue. Is there anyone else who would like to speak to this issue or present another opinion?

Despite these tips, occasionally one person in the group refuses to relinquish the floor or observe the suggested time limit. Then go stand near that person, make eye contact, say, “Thank you for sharing,” and take back the conversation. If the person says, “but I have one more point,” direct her to write it down so you can return to it at a later time.

Finally, help persons feel heard and respected. Be sure to say, “Thank you for sharing,” or restate one of the main points given. If a person makes an insightful comment, be sure to acknowledge her contribution.

RHETEROGRAPHICS

While psychographics deals with the emotions, rheterographics addresses the physical space. When you are working in an unfamiliar place, take some time to study the layout and location of the classroom. Most classrooms have some challenging elements: a noisy air-conditioning unit, proximity to the cafeteria, lawn mowers buzzing outside. Where possible, reduce distractions to help learning be fluid and seamless. (Once I unplugged a soda machine because its intermittent cycle was quite noisy.) Be sure to check the temperature and adjust where possible. If you know the air conditioning cannot be adjusted, encourage persons to bring sweaters to avoid being chilly.

Arranging seating in a u-shape allows each participant to maintain face-to-face contact with the leader and also to interact with other participants to the right and left. If desks and chairs are virtually immoveable, consider using exercises that require participants to gather in various areas of the room in order to converse with others.

Be sure that all your audiovisual equipment is working. Do a run-through to see how the various components work. Practice. If using a projector and presentation software, such as PowerPoint, please be sure to create the slides with a font size and background that make the text readable for persons sitting farthest away from the screen. When making notes on newsprint, write large with dark colors such as blue, green, brown, purple, and black. (Red, orange, and yellow are accent colors and should not be used for writing large amounts of content.)

Part of making the lessons engaging is to develop multiple strands of teaching. Lectures are useful in presenting specific material in a short space of time. Bulletin boards and other wall spaces can effectively display supplemental information and encourage viewers to continue to learn on their own timetable. Be sure to “mix it up”— remove some material and add additional facts and articles daily to pique participants’ interests.

Don’t forget the ceiling. You can hang “fast facts” from the ceiling (attached to fishing line or twine). Or you can string a clothesline and clip facts and concepts to it. A resource table with books, magazine articles, brochures, quotes, and leaflets are great for participants who like to browse; people can learn a lot in two minutes of leafing through magazines. You also may want to designate a space where participants can add their own knowledge and thoughts as the class progresses, using index cards, sticky notes, artwork, magazine clippings, and so on. Consider giving assignments that have participants doing in-class research using available materials.

ELEMENTS OF THE SESSION

The lessons are designed for two-hour sessions. Each component includes a time frame, which may vary from session to session. It will give you a sense of how long to devote to the activity. The time designation is a guide. Feel free to be flexible as you create a learning environment for transformative education.

- Gathering Worship
- Meet 'n' Greet
- Text and Context
- Class Meeting
- Respond and Reflect
- Call to Action
- Closing Worship
- Assignments

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

Various supplies are always available to study leaders at Mission u (regional and conference). It is helpful to also have a supply of the following items that allow you to be flexible in offering activities for your class.

- Bible (The New Revised Standard Version [NRSV] is used in our texts; you may want other translations as well.)
- Hymnals (assortment for reference)
- Prayer Calendar
- United Methodist Women Program Book
- Blue painter's tape (Use it instead of masking tape.)
- Transparent adhesive tape
- Construction paper (multicolored and various sizes)
- Markers (Some should be dry-erase markers.)
- Dry eraser
- Glue sticks
- Glitter glue sticks
- Scissors
- Yarn, twine, or clotheslines
- Push pins
- Stapler (and staples)

SEVEN TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME STUDY LEADERS

Congratulations on accepting the call to be a mission study leader! My first time leading a mission study was in 1982. It seems incredible that more than thirty years have passed since then. In those years I have learned so much from other study leaders as well as through trial and error. Based on a conversation that I had last year with persons preparing to be study leaders in their conferences, there are a few points that I'd like to emphasize (in addition to what has been spoken of so far).

The main thing to keep in mind is that the study leader is helping the class delve into the content of the study book (and other resources) while also creating an emotional and physical environment that effectively facilitates learning. To that end, here are SEVEN key tips for leading seminars and teaching in Mission u.

- 1. Learn the names of your participants and something about them.** If you receive your class list in advance, send an e-mail and ask persons to read or research something in preparation for the class. Then, continually, connect that information to something that is happening in class (unless something has been deemed private). Frequently ask: "In the next session, are you willing to share this information with the class?" The hallmark of adult learning and transformative learning is that every learner is a teacher, everyone brings something to the table.
- 2. Provide a care kit for yourself:** tissues (or terry towel for perspiration), cough drops or mints, water bottle, extra pens.
- 3. Arrive early for your class sessions.** Have everything in place. Or take a fresh look to make sure that what you want to do in the session will still work. Sometimes the facilitator might need to put things back on the wall. Once a teacher hung laminated posters . . . and they ALL came down overnight. By coming to class early, the leader managed to get most of them back up—with a little extra tape—in time for class.
- 4. Mix things up.** Use a variety of teaching styles. Have participants work in groups. Also have them work with others in addition to their assigned groups. Multicolored index cards or sticky notes are easy ways to make group assignments. For example, with this study, a yellow index card might indicate to which Wesley-like "class" you are assigned, while a green sticky note might be the group that you work in for a research project.
- 5. Refer to resources** that you have brought—even the posters on the wall. In fact, try to build at least one assignment that involves participants putting things on the wall, discovering answers from items on the wall.
- 6. Keep the energy level up.** Change your physical position. If you are sitting down, stand up. Or move to another side of the room. Pay attention to the body language of the rest of the

class, not just that of those who are speakers. Use what John Almarode⁶ calls “energizers.” He says that research has shown that physical activity can increase levels of dopamine, which enhances memory, attention, and problem solving.

So get people up and moving (even within a two-hour session). If you are leading a class after lunch, for example, often no matter how well prepared you are, someone is going to be sleepy. So thirty to forty minutes into the class you might say: “Please stand or change your position and talk one-on-one with three other people about what you feel is most important in this chapter.” Then as people return to their seats, invite them to report one thing to the whole group from their conversations. For other energizing ways of interacting, see the suggestions below.

SNOWBALLS AND OTHER ENERGIZERS

One suggestion John Almarode makes is the **snowball fight**. Have participants write questions or comments on a sheet of paper, ball it up, and toss it at someone. Once everyone has picked up a wadded paper, have volunteers read the questions or statements aloud for the group to respond to.

Another energizer is **speed talk**. Form two circles—an inner circle and an outer one—with persons facing each other. Give them a chance to give their names, then have them discuss a concern in thirty seconds or less. For example, one question could be, “Who mentored you the best—and why?” Then have one circle stay in place and instruct the other circle to move two people to the left (or right), ask another question, start the timer and let them talk. Upon returning to their seats, allow time for participants to report on their discussions.

Other examples of energizers include: **Movement** (tai chi, yoga, stretches). Conduct **agree/disagree** exercises by having people go to an area of the room that most aligns with their values and opinions. Play **music** while people take a break, or call for people to make a team of three or four persons and identify (and sing) a song or hymn that highlights something from the study. For example, for the session “Pray,” teams might sing “The Lord’s Prayer,” with the other team responding with “Hear Our Prayer, O Lord.”

7. Keep the class on track. There are times when people go off on tangents. Discussion is good; arguments and hostility do not lead to transformative education. What to do? Call for a time-out: Say something like, “We’ve discussed this back and forth. This is what I hear you saying . . . We may not come to an agreement, but are there any different concerns and ideas you want to bring to the class before we move on to the next component?”

6. John Almarode, “Six ‘Energizers’ to Increase Student Focus and Retention.” <http://developmentalresources.wordpress.com/2013/04/15/almarode-six-energizers-to-increase-student-focus-and-retention/>.

Give a visual cue such as tapping the face of your watch to indicate that it is time to let someone else talk. Also, consider giving a physical touch (on the shoulder, on the hand) of a person who has gotten long-winded, look at them and say, “I need you to wrap this up in thirty seconds—we have to move on.”

Remember, everybody is a learner. Everyone can be a leader. Creating an engaging climate for learning ensures that participants will learn from you and one another.

OVERVIEW

This chart shows the basic structure of the four sessions. However, feel free to customize each session for your group. For example, if your time is shorter than two hours, you may need to delete an activity or two. You may also prefer to switch the order of the various elements, such as having the Class Meeting before Text and Context.

Activities/ Sessions	Session 1 (Pray)	Session 2 (Learn)	Session 3 (Mentor)	Session 4 (Transform)
Gathering Worship	"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"	"Praise the Source of Faith and Learning"	"In the Garden" ————— Stay on Track	"I Am Thine, O Lord"
Meet 'n Greet	Get in Line! Get Started	Get in Line! Those Praying People	Trace Hands; Get in Line! Great Cloud of Witnesses	Get in Line! "I Am Going to Church"
Text and Context	Chapter 1 Ten key learnings; Study group together time	Chapter 2 Ten key learnings; Study group together time	Chapter 3 Ten key learnings; Study group together time	Chapter 4 Ten key learnings; Study group together time
Class Meeting	How have you prayed this week?	How have you studied God's word this week?	Who are your mentors? Whom do you mentor?	Brag on God; Longing for transformation
Respond and Reflect	Create your diary; Write in it	Favorite story about Jesus; Writing	Name that Mentor; Writing	
Call to Action	Stay on Track; Passing Prayer	Stay on Track; Put It on the Wall; Plan Your Work	Make a Faith Journey Chart; Match the Mentor Game	Call on the Community; Create an Action Plan
Closing Worship	<i>Tong-sung-ki-do</i> , prayer posture of Korean Christians	<i>Lectio Divina</i> method of praying scripture	Speak names of mentors and those who may need one	Service of Commitment
Assignments	Read Chapter 2; Recruit worship leaders; Ask if someone has the class system in their church	Read/Review Chapter 3; Make a list of ten people who have mentored you; List ten significant spiritual events in your life	Read Chapter 4	

*This chart is the brainchild of Sue Raymond, author and children's mission study leader. Used by permission.

Session 1: Pray

MEMORY QUOTE

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.
At the same time pray for us as well. Watch and pray!

—based on Colossians 4:2-3

OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION

- To gain a portrait of prayer through recalling Hannah’s prayer story
- To renew our commitment to prayer as a privilege not a chore or duty
- To revive our spiritual covenant with God and each other by connecting with John Wesley’s class system model

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Nametags
- Index cards (5 different colors—blue, green, yellow, purple, and pink are typical colors)
- Sticky notes (look for five or six different colors, *i.e.*, hot pink, neon green, royal blue)
- Painter’s tape (blue)
- Construction paper
- White, lined paper, or a small notebook
- Markers
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Glue
- Assorted craft items for decorating individual diaries

PREPARATION

- 1. Create the Wall of Reflection.** Label a wall space or an area of the room where class participants can share their thoughts via writings and art.
- 2. Write the words for *Welcome and Peace*** (from the Introduction, page 1) on construction paper and place the sheets around the room.

- 3. Display the Memory Quote.** Write or type the words of the quote individually on sheets of paper; glue them to construction paper of various colors. (To increase their durability, laminate each word sheet.) If possible, tape the words in a haphazard fashion in the center of the room or a separate area of the class. Then, using blue tape, create a rectangular border around the words. (See Appendix D for a visual of how to arrange the words in the rectangle.)
- 4. Prepare a table with materials participants can use to create their own journals** for the study. Include a stack of lined paper, construction paper for covers, various craft items for decorating, as well as scissors, markers, glue, and staplers. Or simply provide small notebooks and markers for people to put their name on the outside.
- 5. Be prepared to recruit volunteers for helping to lead worship.**
- 6. Make five copies of Appendix B** (Leading a Class) and give to persons who are appointed or chosen as class leaders.
- 7. Give out assignments.** Have five different colors of index cards; put one on each participant's table or chair (to assign participants to a Wesleyan class). Also, give each participant a sticky note (have four or five different colors), which is their discussion group assignment during the "Text and Context" section of class.
- 8. Review the Wesley Class Meeting information.**

WESLEY CLASS MEETING

John Wesley created three basic organizations for the nurture of people who wanted a closer walk with God: local societies, bands, and classes.

The first of the structures, the **local societies**, most mirrors what we might refer to as our churches. In this basic organizational unit, society members met weekly to pray and support one another in the Christian life.

A second structure was that of the **bands**. These were small groups, organized by gender, age, and marital status. Research indicates that in these groups the discussion focused on examining the spiritual health of the societies to see if people were maintaining their Christian walk.

The third structure is known as the **class meeting**. These were support-type groups of ten to twelve persons in which people practiced accountability for their faith walk and for one another. It is in this small group where members individually answered the question, How is it with your soul? There were actually three questions that answered this main one:

Have you carefully abstained from doing evil?

Have you zealously maintained good works?

Have you constantly attended on all the ordinances of God?

Answering these questions, as well as recounting acts of piety and acts of mercy, brought strength to those who participated. The practice also helped deepen the commitment of those who were deciding whether this way of life was for them. John Wesley believed that this group helped people to go on to “perfection.”

Sin Ho Kim said that John Wesley wanted the members of the societies to “watch over and help each other” so they would not “[fall] away from faith and holiness.” Salvation, fellowship, and discipleship were emphasized. Philip F. Hardt describes the class meeting structure as the “soul of Methodism.” He advocates that churches use this historical model to enhance unity, strengthen leadership, and gain new members.⁷

Session Plan

GATHERING WORSHIP (5 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

“Precious Lord, Take My Hand,” *United Methodist Hymnal* #474. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for this song.)**

SCRIPTURE: (volunteer)

1 Samuel 1:1-15

PRAYER: (unison)

God, we come today to present our minds to be transformed by the power of your Word in scripture and in the lives of each other. We present ourselves so that you may speak to our inmost souls and say, “I am thy love, thy God, thy all.” We are your children. We put our hope and our trust in you. Amen.

7. Linda Bloom, “Class meetings, a part of Methodist history, have relevance today,” *United Methodist News Service*, 2004, <http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=2&mid=5937>.

LITANY

One Voice (volunteer): Gracious God, we open our hearts to you. Jesus, our Teacher, teach us to pray as you taught your disciples.

Many Voices: **Gracious God, we are a praying people.**

One Voice: You said that if your people who are called by your name would humble themselves and pray and seek your face and turn from their wicked ways, you would hear them, forgive their sins, and heal their land. [reference: 2 Chronicles 7:14]

Many Voices: **Gracious God, we are a praying people.**

One Voice: We lift our voices to ask for your guidance and direction. Speak to our hearts, Lord. We long for a word from you so that we may do the work to which you've called us.

All Voices: **Gracious God, teach us to pray. Teach us to love. Teach us to act according to your will, O loving God, for we are a praying people.**

Song/Hymn: "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying," *The Faith We Sing* #2193. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for this song.)**

MEET 'N' GREET (10 MINUTES)

GET IN LINE!

Divide the class into groups of eight to ten persons. Once they are in their groups, have them line up alphabetically by the name of the church to which they belong (with Aldersgate being first and Zion last; Mt. Hope alphabetized by *M* and St. James by *S*). Then have the group stand or sit in a circle. Invite a few people to give their name and tell something they absolutely love about their church.

GET STARTED

When the class members have returned to their seats, introduce them to the goal of Session 1, which is to **renew our commitment to pray for one another and for the world, a key principle of discipleship**. You may also wish to point out the objectives for the session, which are printed in the Participant's Guide. Invite a few persons to tell why they are taking part in the study.

Review the Code of Confidentiality and Conduct (also in the Participant's Guide), and emphasize the importance of being able to share freely with people who can be trusted. (Alternatively, you may choose to have the class create their own code.)

Point out that the class will be delving into the text while also modeling teaching exercises and activities that will help them (and their participants) gain the most from the spiritual growth study.

Emphasize that the class will use a variety of grouping activities, so at some point members should have an opportunity to work with every person in the class. Each participant will be assigned to two groups throughout the study: the Text and Context discussion group, and a “Class,” which is to help participants experience the Wesley Class Meeting model. Use sticky-note colors to assign persons to discussion/study groups and the index card colors to divide the group into classes.

TEXT AND CONTEXT (30 MINUTES)

Have participants gather in their **study groups** according to the color of their sticky note. They are to read Chapter 1. They may do so individually or take turns reading aloud. Then, working together, each group is to do three things:

- List ten things that stand out in the text
- Note two ideas they would like to know more about
- Share five things that evoke memories in their lives

For example, Hannah’s story may remind someone of a couple who struggled with infertility. Others may recall a prayer routine such as the one Kyung Za Yim, a former Women’s Division president, used. Someone else may talk about setting up a sacred space for prayer and devotions at home.

Tell the groups that they will be reporting to the larger group their key findings and things they would like to know more about. So they need to have someone recording the group’s ideas. Encourage members to use a shared leadership model, having different persons take turns guiding, recording, and reporting the group discussion.

Give the groups an idea of the time they have to read and to list their responses. Indicate a “four-minute warning” before bringing all the groups back together for a period of reporting.

During the **together time**, have each group relate a few key findings from reading the study book. Give opportunity for questions from other class members. Finally, ask groups to identify things they’d like to know more about. (Have someone list those areas and find a way in the remaining sessions to address the inquiries.)

CLASS MEETING (25 MINUTES)

ORGANIZING FOR THE CLASS MEETING

Give an overview of the Wesley Class Meeting model. Refer the participants to the information in the Participant's Guide as you present the information. Remind the class that the Covenant of Confidentiality and Conduct is very critical to sharing within the class meeting because, indeed, this is an opportunity to "watch over one another in love," which was a hallmark and strength of the class meeting.

Ask groups to organize by index card colors, to name themselves and to ask for a person to serve as the leader for all four sessions. Direct them to Experience the Class Meeting, which is in the Participant's Guide. You may choose to appoint class leaders or have the groups select someone. You may need to monitor the time for the classes and give them a wrap-up warning.

EXPERIENCE THE CLASS MEETING

1. Select a name for the class. (*Classes are requested to name themselves using the name of a biblical woman such as Hannah, Dorcas, Ruth, Naomi or that of a key woman in Methodism/ United Methodist Women such as Susannah Wesley, Sarah Crosby, Barbara Heck, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Rider Meyer, Phoebe Palmer, Fanny Crosby, Isabella Thoburn, Clara Swain, Anna Howard Shaw, Frances Willard, Thelma Stevenson, Mai Gray, Theresa Hoover.*)
2. Name a class leader (may be appointed by study leader) and a class recorder.
3. Introduce yourselves (name, conference/church, and one gift you use in your church).
4. Briefly answer the questions (one- to two-minute responses):
 - How is it with your soul?
 - For whom or what have you prayed this week?
5. Make notes about the prayer concerns you have just heard.
6. Close the meeting with a benediction:

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in God's sight.
Amen.

RESPOND AND REFLECT (15 MINUTES)

Making time for personal reflection helps participants gain new insights, solidify learnings, and be ready to take action. Tell the group that Philip F. Hardt, in researching the history of John Street United Methodist Church in New York, found original diaries of individual members of classes along with several class lists in the rare books room of the New York Public Library.⁸

Direct people to the table where the supplies are and encourage them to make a personal diary for use in these four sessions. Or they may simply write in a notebook. Items for inclusion in the journal or diary might include names of members of the class, prayer concerns, significant scriptures, books that have been important to them or that they want to read, information learned in the class, personal challenges, areas for growth. Participants may be as creative as they choose, perhaps even continuing beyond the sessions to add items such as artwork, magazine photos, or pictures of family and friends.

Ask the participants to work on their diaries, but to be sure to save time to write in them. Today's particular focus is on the importance of prayer in our life—both when we were prayed for and when we prayed for someone. As more people move from creating their journal to beginning to fill it with their thoughts, encourage everyone to allow quiet time for one another.

As you transition to the Call to Action, remind participants to bring their journals to each session. But also tell them they may write in them at other times as well.

CALL TO ACTION (20 MINUTES)

STAY ON TRACK⁹

Turn the focus of the participants to learning the Memory Quote (which will be the same for all four sessions):

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. At the same time pray for us as well. Watch and pray!

To help learn the quote, the group will use an exercise called Stay on Track. Direct their attention to the words of the quote, which have been scattered on the floor. (See Appendix D.) Recruit teams of four persons to step on the words in turn.

8. Linda Bloom, "Class Meetings, a Part of Methodist History, have Relevance Today," United Methodist News Service, 2004, <http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=2&mid=5937>.

9. Stay on Track activity adapted from *WhyTry* by Christian Moore. www.whytry.org. Used by permission.

There are just two rules:

1. Only one person's foot, toes, or cane may be inside the square at a time. (A person who has to remain seated may use a ruler or cane to touch the words.)
2. No person may step on contiguous words. A person cannot step on "devote" and "your-selves"; another player *must* step on the next word in the phrase.

Someone else might say the words out loud to help guide that person. The goal is to be able to touch the words in turn—and increase the speed by which it's done.

Give each team of persons two turns to step on the words. Keep a record of the time that it takes each group to complete the quote.

PASSING PRAYER

Have participants return to their seats, take a sheet of white paper, and write a prayer request. (They may leave it unsigned.) They can then crumble up the papers and toss them at one another, throwing back and forth for sixty seconds. Call time and ask everyone to pick up a paper, unfold it, and read the prayer request.

Have readers first give their name and then the prayer request: "My name is _____ and I am praying for _____ (person or concern)." Ask the class to commit to keeping this person or situation lifted up in prayer for the next twenty-four hours. Encourage them to make notes in their diary.

CLOSING WORSHIP (10 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

"Sweet Hour of Prayer," *United Methodist Hymnal* #496; "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying," *The Faith We Sing* #2193; or "All I Need Is You," *The Faith We Sing* #2080. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for these songs.)**

TONG-SUNG KI-DO PRAYER:

Invite class members to kneel at their chairs—or in an open space (if able)—in the posture of Korean Christians, using the *Tong-sung ki-do* prayer model (see page 19). Those who are not able or choose not to kneel may remain seated and pound their fist on table or desk or use a cane to thump the floor. Remember, everyone prays at once.

Pray,

Jooyeo – Jooyeo – Jooyeo! [*JOO-ee-oh*]

[pound fist on floor or table three times, then raise hands upward]

Dear God, hear our cries. Jooyeo – Jooyeo – Jooyeo!

[pound fist on floor or table three times, then raise hands upward]

Can't you see the needs of your people? Hear us, we pray, and come speedily to help us. Jooyeo – Jooyeo – Jooyeo!

[pound fist on floor or table three times, then raise hands upward]

We lift our hearts and voices to you. Deepen within us a desire to be in fellowship with you or share your love in the world. Jooyeo – Jooyeo – Jooyeo!

[pound fist on floor or table three times, then raise hands upward]

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Return to your seat.

Closing: Read aloud the names of persons and mission projects from the Prayer Calendar. Experience a moment of silence and then join in this recommitment:

Lord, we go forth this day, renewed in our desire to pray. We will pray so that the world will be blessed. We will pray so that others may come to know you. Amen.

ASSIGNMENTS (5 MINUTES)

Recruit volunteers to lead worship for the remaining three sessions.

Assign the group Chapter 2 to read and to list ten things that stand out for them. Encourage them to write more in their diary about the importance of prayer in their life (for example, when you were prayed for and when you prayed for someone).

Ask if anyone has a Wesleyan class system in her church. If yes, invite that person to come prepared to tell about the value of the class system during Session 2.

Session 2: Learn

MEMORY QUOTE

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.
At the same time pray for us as well. Watch and pray!

—based on Colossians 4:2-3

OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION

- To rededicate ourselves to study and action
- To understand the intense learning process that accompanied the spread of the gospel in the disciples' time as well as in the early days of Methodism
- To continue our spiritual covenant with God and each other by using the Wesley Class Meeting model

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Those Praying People matching activity (Participant's Guide or copies)
- Keep on Track (Memory Quote words still in place)
- Sticky notes (a stack for every three to four persons)
- Sheets of paper (at least one for each participant)

PREPARATION

The matching activity, Those Praying People, is printed in the Participant's Guide. However, you may want to make a few extra copies to have on hand in case some people do not have their book with them.

Session Plan

GATHERING WORSHIP (5 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

“Praise the Source of Faith and Learning,” *The Faith We Sing* #2004; or “Tell Me the Stories of Jesus,” *United Methodist Hymnal* #277. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for these songs.)**

SCRIPTURE: (volunteer)

Psalm 119:10-16

PRAYER: (volunteer)

LITANY

One Voice (volunteer): Lord, teach us to hide your Word in our hearts so that we may not sin against you or others.

Many Voices: **I am a student of your Word, Lord.**

One Voice: When my heart is breaking, I recite the Twenty-third Psalm. Your promise to walk with me through every valley sustains me.

Many Voices: **I am a student of your Word, Lord.**

One Voice: Find me, like Mary, Lord, sitting at your feet. Find me like Priscilla, Lois, and Eunice, Lord, eager to know your Word.

All Voices: **Lord, we are students of your Word. Open our hearts and minds that a fresh Word from you will strengthen our service to others.**

MEET ‘N’ GREET (15 MINUTES)

GET IN LINE!

Divide the class into groups of eight to ten persons. Have them stand in a certain area of the room. Ask them to line up in order by the number of siblings they have (alive and deceased). Within these groups, have two or three persons say what is best about their family. Recognize the persons with the greatest number of siblings: Ask if anyone has ten

or more siblings (wave a hand), continue until you reach one or none. Have everyone return to their seats.

THOSE PRAYING PEOPLE

Tell the class that there will be a mini-review on prayer before delving into the “Learn” session. Direct them to the activity in the Participant’s Guide (or hand out copies); have them work alone for two minutes, then find a partner and work another minute or so to get all the answers correct. Review the correct answers and tell where the scripture references can be found. (See Appendix C.)

TEXT AND CONTEXT (20 MINUTES)

Have participants gather in their **study groups** according to the color of their sticky note. Introduce the chapter on learning by stating the goal of Session 2, which is **to renew our commitment to learning by understanding the role of study in the spreading of the gospel in the disciples’ time as well as in the beginning of The United Methodist Church**. You may also wish to point out the objectives of the session, which are listed in the Participant’s Guide.

Lift up the quotation from Eugene Peterson, who wrote *The Message*: “Without exegesis [serious Bible study], spirituality gets sappy, soupy” (page 32 in *How Is It with Your Soul?*). Invite persons to tell briefly about a favorite book or author, devotional material or Bible study that has been important to their spiritual learning.

Next, assign each study group a section of Chapter 2 to explore and review. Once again, have them work together to write ten things that stand out for them; two ideas that they would like to know more about, and five things that evoke memories in their lives. For example, someone may compare the “force of learning” like what happened in Antioch to what happened in their church when they used DISCIPLE Bible Study or when they use the United Methodist Women Program Book. They may also recall persons who are like Barnabas and Lucy Rider Meyer in our churches and in our denomination.

In the **together time**, have each group report, in turn, a few key findings from reading the study book. Give opportunity for questions from other class members. Next, ask groups to identify anything they’d like to know more about.

CLASS MEETING (15 MINUTES)

Have the participants regroup to join their class. Class members are to answer a question of their choosing, giving brief (one-minute) responses:

- How is it with your soul?
- How have you studied God's Word this week?
- What favorite scripture sustains your faith journey?
- What book or author helps you learn God's Word?

Close the meeting with a benediction:

May God open our hearts and our minds so that we may be hearers and doers of God's Word. Amen. Amen.

Optional: If you have a volunteer whose church uses the class system or who has been a part of a class system, provide two or three minutes for her or him to talk about its significance.

RESPOND AND REFLECT (15 MINUTES)

As a warm-up, invite participants to name a favorite story about Jesus. (For example, I love the Zacchaeus story in Luke 19.) Be ready yourself to contribute one.

Then encourage people to write (or draw) in their diary their thoughts about what they have read and heard in this session. They may also want to reflect on how they learn God's Word and on people who have been significant teachers for them on their faith journey. They can also record favorite Bible passages, identify sermons or books that have made an impact, or list favorite Bible teachers. Allow quiet time.

CALL TO ACTION (25 MINUTES)

STAY ON TRACK

Continue memorizing scripture. Recruit two teams of five persons to do the Memory Quote activity. Give each team two turns. Time the activity. See if they can improve their time in touching each word in the Memory Quote. Talk about the importance of learning and working together to commit the quote to memory.

PUT IT ON THE WALL

Ask persons to take a few sticky-notes and write (or draw) something to put on the Wall of Reflection. It could be a new learning, a scripture that is important, a song that helps them to "watch and pray."

PLAN YOUR WORK

Give each participant a single sheet of paper. Participants are to put their name on one side of the paper, then turn it over and write an area of concern in their life or ministry at the top of the paper. One sentence is sufficient. Then, at one- to two-minute intervals, everyone is to pass the papers to the right, one person at a time, allowing each person time to read the area of concern and then add a note: what to do, a book/website to read, a song to listen to, someone to talk to. (See the sample below.) The idea is to support personal and societal transformation by gathering ideas and choosing a path of action.

Sample: My heart aches for youth who are aging out of the foster care system. The first person writes: Read Michael Oher's book, *I Beat the Odds*. The second person writes: Call your local foster care agency and volunteer to help. The third person writes: Have you heard of the Open Table movement for youth aging out of the foster care system? The fourth person writes: I am praying with you.

CLOSING WORSHIP (20 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

"Only Trust Him," *United Methodist Hymnal* #337. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for this song.)**

PRAYER:

Lift up persons and institutions from the Prayer Calendar. Enter into silent prayer for them. (1–2 minutes)

Then, read aloud this excerpt (volunteer):

Sisters and brothers, through serious study and lively conversation, we enter with Jesus into the fray of life. Bible study must always be practical, always applicable to how we live, always producing in us, not only a spirit of openness to dialogue, but also a spirit of openness to action.

Learn Jesus through *Lectio Divina*:

As the study leader, read aloud this invitation and the instructions:

As our session comes to a close, let's "learn Jesus" through *lectio* [LEX-ee-oh] *divina*.¹⁰ Let us enter a "quiet center" and listen for God speaking to us. Hear the story of Jesus from Luke 19:1-6. I will read it three times.

10. Becky Dodson Louter and Pat Hoerth, Participant's Guide to *The Call: Living Sacramentally, Walking Justly* (New York: United Methodist Women, 2013).

This **first** time, listen for a word that summons your *attention*. (Read the scripture; allow for two minutes of silence. Encourage the participants to record their word in their diary.)

Hear the story of Jesus for the **second** time. This time, identify an *emotion* that is evoked as you listen to the interchange between Jesus and Zacchaeus. (Read the scripture; allow for two minutes of silence. Encourage the group to write in their diary.)

Please listen for a **third** time. With this reading listen for an *invitation* to *do* something. (Read the scripture; allow two minutes of silence. Encourage the participants to write in their diary.)

After the participants have finished writing, ask them to face another person and say the following declaration:

My sister (or brother) in Christ, I pledge to grow in spiritual practices. I pledge to read my Bible, to use my devotional, and to hear God's words in response magazine and other mission resources. And with God's help, I will obey God's commandment to love God and to love my neighbor as myself.

ASSIGNMENTS (5 MINUTES)

Read or review Chapter 3.

Write down ten things that stand out for you.

Identify ten people who have mentored you.

List ten significant spiritual events in your life.

Continue to write in your journal, as you are moved.

Session 3: Mentor

MEMORY QUOTE

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.
At the same time pray for us as well. Watch and pray!

—based on Colossians 4:2-3

OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION

- To remember the hands and hearts that have guided us in our life
- To discuss key mentorships in the Bible
- To commit to helping others, even the not-so-perfect protégés

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Construction paper
- Markers
- Glitter glue sticks
- Clothesline, twine, or other strong cord
- Clothespins
- Scissors
- Painter's tape
- Scarf (blindfold)

PREPARATION

1. Set up for the Great Cloud of Witnesses. Hang a clothesline in the classroom (if able); have a clothespin for each participant. Place two sheets of construction paper at each person's seat. Put markers in baskets or small plastic bags for participants' use. Have several scissors available.

2. Set up the Match the Mentor Game. Using construction paper (or 4 x 6 index cards), create a card set to match mentor with protégé. Write these names individually on a card or a half sheet of paper: Philip/Eunuch; Elijah/Elisha; Barnabas/Paul; Moses/Joshua; Elizabeth/Mary; Kenny/Jack; Etta Barton/Chinsook Kwon; Sarah Ennalis/Henry Boehm; Maya Angelou/Oprah; Naomi/Ruth; Mordecai/Esther. Follow the instructions in Appendix D to make the board on a wall for the Match the Mentor Game. On a sheet of newsprint, list the mentor/protégé pairs and post alongside the Match the Mentor Game.

Session Plan

GATHERING WORSHIP (5 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me,” *United Methodist Hymnal* #521; or “In the Garden,” *United Methodist Hymnal* #314. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for these songs.)**

SCRIPTURE: (volunteer)

Acts 8:26-31

PRAYER: (volunteer)

LITANY

One Voice (volunteer): If it had not been for the Lord on my side, where would I be? Where would I be?

Many Voices: **Lord, we thank you for being a “guide on the side.”**

One Voice: You have sent teachers and preachers, encouragers and nurturers, briars and prod-
ders so we can learn your way and do your will.

Many Voices: **Lord, thank you for those “guides on the side.”**

One Voice: Open my eyes to any opportunity to speak a word of truth and hope to those around me.
Teach me to be the “hand that guides,” the mentor that supports, and the voice of wisdom and hope.

All Voices: **Lord, we have prayed, but we need your power. We have studied, but we need
your strength. Make us able servants and guides to those who need your love in human
form. Bless us that we may be a blessing. Amen.**

STAY ON TRACK (10 MINUTES)

This memorization activity usually comes later in the session, but explain to the group that today it serves two purposes: To continue to help them learn the scripture and to serve as a warm-up for today’s topic: mentoring.

Ask for a team of three persons to navigate the Stay on Track game. Only this time, one person (the protégé) steps on the words but that person is blindfolded. A second person serves as the mentor. This guide, however, must stand outside the rectangle while giving directions (for example, two steps to the left, four steps forward). The third person serves as the spoiler or distractor and tries to interfere with the progress.

The rest of the group remains silent onlookers. After a few teams have done the activity, take time to discuss the experience. How did protégés/mentors feel? What was helpful? What was not?

MEET 'N' GREET (15 MINUTES)

TRACE YOUR HAND

Use one sheet of construction paper to trace or draw a large hand. Cut out the hand. On one side, write the names of several people who have served as mentors in your life. On the reverse side, place the names of persons who have been “assigned to you” to mentor and guide.

GET IN LINE!

Divide the class into groups of eight to ten persons. Have them bring their “hands” with them. Stand in a certain area of the room and form a line by the number of miles traveled to attend Mission u (from fewest miles to the most).

GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES

While standing in line, find a partner and go sit together and tell stories about the persons you have named as mentors in your life and also about persons you have been privileged to guide. At the end of the session, clip the hands to the clothesline to create a “great cloud of witnesses” to our faith.

TEXT AND CONTEXT (25 MINUTES)

Introduce the chapter on mentoring and today’s goal, **to delve into the experience of mentoring from biblical and current sociological perspectives, identifying key components that make mentoring successful and discovering ways in which mentoring strengthens the community of faith.** You may also wish to refer to the objectives, which are printed in the Participant’s Guide.

Ask if anyone has been part of a “sword drill” club like Jack’s mom. Allow for several brief responses. Ask: When you think of biblical mentors in the Bible, who comes to mind? Point out that the lesson will be on our preparation and service for sharing God’s love through ministry as well as one-on-one involvement with others.

Ask participants to gather in their **study groups** and review Chapter 3. Once again, have them write ten things that stand out for them; two ideas that they would like to know more about, and five things that evoke memories in their lives. How have our homes, our churches, our schools served as a place for mentoring? Identify community organizations that serve as mentoring forces (for example, Boys and Girls Club; The Links organization).

In the **together time**, have each group report key findings from reading the study book. Also encourage volunteers to briefly tell mentoring stories from their own lives. Give opportunity for questions from other class members. Continue to ask groups to identify anything they'd like to know more about. Be sure to add your personal learnings from the text and other sources as well as your life experiences to this session.

CLASS MEETING (15 MINUTES)

Regroup, forming the classes. Have them answer a question of their choosing, giving a brief (one minute or so) response:

- How is it with your soul?
- Who are your mentors? Who has guided you in your faith journey?
- Who are you mentoring and why?

Close the meeting with a benediction:

May God grant us time and strength and courage to walk alongside those who need a friend. May we be beacons, lighthouses, flashlights—even a candle in the wind. We have heard the cry of the needy, and we are saying, “Send me, I’ll go.”

RESPOND AND REFLECT (10 MINUTES)

Bring the group back together as a whole and read in unison John Wesley’s quote, which is in the Participant’s Guide:

Make us faithful in all our contacts with our neighbors, that we may be ready to do good and bear evil, that we may be just and kind, merciful and meek, peaceable and patient . . . that so glorifying thee here we may be glorified with thee in thy heavenly kingdom.¹¹

11. Donald Demaray, ed., *Devotions and Prayers of John Wesley* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1959), 107.

Invite the participants to a time of quiet reflection with their diary. Refer them to the Participant's Guide for suggestions of what to write about.

CALL TO ACTION (25 MINUTES)

PLAY MATCH THE MENTOR

Divide the class into three teams. Have them try to match the mentors and protégés. Each team sends a person from their team to find a matching pair. Continue going in turn (a representative from Team 1, 2, or 3) until all the matches are made. When a team secures a match, the team gets a chance to try one more time to find another match. (If the second time is also successful, play moves on to the next team.) After all matches are made, have the class review how the mentors and protégés interacted with each other.

REMEMBER YOUR FAITH JOURNEY

Have individuals take a piece of construction paper and create a "picture" of their faith journey, charting eight to ten elements. They may include milestones such as being confirmed, meeting a best friend, going to college, finding a church home, volunteering in mission, having children. At the end of their faith journey, have them draw a circle and inside it draw or write what they see as their next opportunity. For example, I would write the words "forever families" to signify my desire to continue to find "families of the heart" for young adults who have aged out of foster care systems and often have no consistent caring adults in their lives to guide them.

If there is time, encourage persons as they finish to find another person available and talk together about their journeys.

CLOSING WORSHIP (10 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

"God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian," *United Methodist Hymnal* #648; "Send Me, Lord," *United Methodist Hymnal* #497; or "How Shall They Hear the Word of God," *United Methodist Hymnal* #649. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for these songs.)**

LITANY FOR HONORING MENTORS

One Voice (volunteer): Let us remember that Elisha had Elijah, Paul had Barnabas, and Ruth had Naomi. Knowing that we do not journey alone, let us call out the names of our mentors and guides with thanksgiving.

Many Voices (several volunteers): _____, I speak your name . . . thank you!

One Voice: And in the same spirit, let us call forth by name (or concern) those to whom God has assigned us.

Many Voices (several volunteers): _____, I am here for you. (or) _____, I am praying with you.

All Voices: Lord, we thank you for blessing us with your love and guidance. Thank you for our chance to pay it forward and pass it on!

DECLARATION

Today, we pledge to be the one who reaches one. We pledge to be a shoulder to lean on and an ear attuned to hear. We pledge to break through the busyness of our lives, the struggle of our own pains, simply to say, "Here I am, neighbor; how can I serve you?"

ASSIGNMENT

Read Chapter 4, noting key learnings and questions.

Session 4: Transform

MEMORY QUOTE

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.
At the same time pray for us as well. Watch and pray!

—based on Colossians 4:2-3

OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION

- To examine the lives of persons who have prayed and planned for transformation of evil and unjust structures
- To hear anew the scripture's call on each believer's life to "do the right thing"
- To make a renewed commitment for advocacy in light of the fervor of John Wesley

MATERIALS NEEDED

- White paper
- Business envelopes
- Stamps
- Pens

PREPARATION

Place stamps on the business envelopes (one for each participant)

Session Plan

GATHERING WORSHIP (5 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

"I Am Thine, O Lord," *United Methodist Hymnal* #419; or "Spirit of the Living God," *United Methodist Hymnal* #393. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for these songs.)**

SCRIPTURE: (volunteer)

Isaiah 58:1-12

PRAYER: (volunteer)

LITANY

One Voice (volunteer): Jesus calls us o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea . . . asking us to follow him, to give our hearts to his obedience.

Many Voices: **Let my work, through you, be the change that someone needs.**

One Voice: Lord, you have come to the lakeshore; you need my hands full of caring, through my labors to give others rest.

Many Voices: **Let my work through you, be the change that someone needs.**

One Voice: We promise God, like the early disciples, to be change agents, to turn the world upside down, so that things can be *right* in this time and space.

All Voices: **Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart. Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart. Lord, I want to be your eyes, hands, and feet. Transform the world through me.**

MEET 'N' GREET (10 MINUTES)

GET IN LINE!

Divide the class into groups of eight to ten persons. Have them stand in a certain area of the room and form a line by the number of letters in their name. If people have the same number of letters, they should stand in descending alphabetical order . . . Rose, Pete, Glen, Faye.

I'M GOING TO CHURCH . . .

Next, remaining in place, have the group form a standing circle and play "I am going to church and I am going to take _____ with me." The person with the longest name begins the game; continue with the next longest name. Each person must say her or his name AND everyone's name that has come before them.

For example, if I am the fourth person, I must say: My name is Faye; I am going to church and I am going to take Teresa, Trish, and Jamey with me." The next person might say: My name is Dee; I'm going to church and I'm going to take Teresa, Trish, Jamey, and Faye with me." If someone misses or forgets a name, the group should chime in, as encouragers, and tell them who that person is.

TEXT AND CONTEXT (25 MINUTES)

Introduce the chapter on transformation. Point out the goal for today: **To hear the call to go forth and change the world, following the witness from biblical times as well as of modern-day workers for justice and peace.** You may also wish to refer to the objectives for the session, which are printed in the Participant's Guide. Ask if anyone there has ever filed a justice lawsuit as did Ida B. Wells-Barnett. Allow for several responses.

Pose this question: When you think of the call to transform, what people, events, or regions come to mind? Invite popcorn answers, such as care for the earth, racial tension, countries consumed by war, poverty, religious strife and distrust. Tell the group that, like this question, today's lesson will call us to examine ourselves as well as our church.

Ask participants to gather in their **study groups** and review the assigned pages of Chapter 4. Once again, have them write ten things that stand out for them, two ideas that they would like to know more about, and three things that evoke memories in their lives.

In the **together time**, have each group report key findings from reading the study book. Also encourage participants to talk about their visions for transformation in their own lives and communities. Give opportunity for questions from other class members. Continue to ask groups to identify anything they'd like to know more about. Be sure to add your personal learnings from the text and other sources, as well as your life experiences, to this session.

CLASS MEETING (20 MINUTES)

Regroup, forming the classes. Have participants answer a question of their choosing, giving a

brief (one minute or so) response:

- How is it with your soul?
- Brag on God: What is your testimony of transformation (either personally or someone else's life)?
- What situation(s) are you longing to see transformed?

Close the meeting with a benediction:

May God give us wisdom and courage to do every day, everything that God has called us to do. May God make us willing and able. Amen.

RESPOND AND REFLECT (15 MINUTES)

Invite participants to a quiet time of reflection. Encourage them to write or draw in their journals about situations that hurt their heart and where they are committed to making changes, personally and corporately.

CALL TO ACTION (25 MINUTES)

CALL ON THE COMMUNITY

Have the participants form groups of twos or threes to talk about areas they have passion or hope for transformation. These can be personal or corporate, within the church or community or world. After sharing these, the question they need to address is: How can we support one another? Encourage them to identify some ways to help, even though they will not necessarily be together.

After several minutes, invite the various small groups to share their ideas with the others. Listen closely to the ideas. Are there ways you as the leader can help bring those ideas to fruition, perhaps through United Methodist Women structures?

CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

Give everyone a sheet of paper and a stamped envelope. Ask them to tear the paper in half. On one piece, ask them to list ways in which they will engage in personal transformation. Ask the group to suggest some examples, perhaps fasting, retreats, reading books, working with a life coach, serving in mission, and so on).

On the second piece, ask them to create an action plan by listing areas of challenges and concerns that they plan to address within the next three months. These may well be the same as what they shared with their small group in the previous activity. If in their previous conversation they have identified ways to be supportive of someone else, they should also write that down. Persons may list more than one item; they should put a proposed date by each item on their action plan.

Have them self-address their envelope, place their action plan inside, seal the envelope, and return it to you, the study leader. Tell them they will receive these in the mail from you in three months. Invite them to share with you their response to what they wrote via e-mail if they desire.

CLOSING WORSHIP (15 MINUTES)

SONG/HYMN:

“Change My Heart, O God,” *The Faith We Sing* #2152; “The Summons,” *The Faith We Sing* #2130. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for these songs.)**

PRAYER: (unison)

Through these sessions, Lord, we have heard you calling our names. You have called us to pray like Hannah, lead like Deborah, mentor like Philip, and transform the world like Paul and Barnabas. May the Word and the words that have been sown in our hearts take root, flourish, and lead to our being a true disciple for you each and every day. Amen.

LITANY

One Voice (volunteer): Will you come and follow Jesus if he but calls your name?

Many Voices: **I will, the Lord being my helper!**

One Voice: Will you regularly create time and space to pray?

Many Voices: **I will, the Lord being my helper!**

One Voice: Will you carefully learn Jesus through the study of the scripture?

Many Voices: **I will, the Lord being my helper!**

One Voice: Will you wisely mentor someone, whether familiar or unexpected?

Many Voices: I will, the Lord being my helper!

One Voice: Will you zealously transform pockets of injustice?

Many Voices: I will, the Lord being my helper!

One Voice: O God, as in biblical times, you have come to the lakeshore—this Mission u—looking for followers (not fans). We recommit ourselves to abstain from doing evil, to zealously do good works, and to constantly attend on all your ordinances.

*Many Voices: Lord, I have studied, but I need your strength. I have prepared, but I need your power. I am willing—and I want to—but only you can make me able. Silently now, I wait for thee, ready my God, thy will to see, open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine. Amen. Amen.*¹²

CIRCLE PRAYER:

Ask the group to join in a circle (or form two concentric circles, one inside the other). Invite volunteers to pray aloud as they feel led, prayers of thanksgiving for the community and the learnings from the study, prayers of intercession for the challenges and possibilities ahead. As appropriate, move into singing as the final act of worship.

SONG/HYMN:

“A Charge to Keep I Have,” *United Methodist Hymnal* #413. **(See copyright notice on page 2 that must be included when copying words and/or music for this song.)**

Go in peace.

12. Sermon preparatory prayer used by Rev. Dr. Alyn Waller, pastor, Enon Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA, since 1988. Used by permission.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Code of Confidentiality and Conduct

Recommendations for Holy Conferencing

Appendix B: Leading a Class

Appendix C: Those Praying People

Appendix D: Setup for Match the Mentor Game

Setup for Stay on Track Activity

Appendix A

CODE OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONDUCT¹³

(This is a sample; each class, with the facilitator, may develop its own)

Every class member is valued.

Everyone has a right to speak.

No one is to use her or his voice or actions to hurt another.

No one is to dismiss the words and concerns of another classmate.

What is said in class remains in class.

No one's story shall be repeated without that person's permission.

Provide empathy and care where appropriate.

Listen. Speak. Listen. Pray.

13. Code of Confidentiality and Conduct from Leader's Guide: *Poverty* © 2012 United Methodist Women. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Recommendations for Holy Conferencing¹⁴

Every person is a child of God. Always speak respectfully. One can disagree without being disagreeable.

As you patiently listen and observe the behavior of others, be open to the possibility that God can change the views of any or all parties in the discussion.

Listen patiently before formulating responses.

Strive to understand the experience out of which others have arrived at their views.

Be careful in how you express personal offense at differing opinions. Otherwise, dialogue may be inhibited.

Accurately reflect the views of others when speaking. This is especially important when you disagree with that position.

Avoid using inflammatory words, derogatory names, or an excited and angry voice.

Avoid making generalizations about individuals and groups. Make your point with specific evidence and examples.

Make use of facilitators and mediators.

Remember that people are defined, ultimately, by their relationship with God—not by the flaws we discover, or think we discover, in their views and actions.

14. "United Methodists seek change in tone at assembly," August 3, 2007, United Methodist News Service, http://umc.org/site/c.lwL4KnNlRrH/b.3082929/apps/nl/content3.asp?content_id={2B1F5695-20AD-47C1-BAC7-18E6878B6063}¬oc=1#.UpAVVul_SRM.

Appendix B

Leading a Class

Congratulations! You have been selected to be the class leader. You have the responsibility and joy of helping guide discussion among class members as they wrestle with the age-old question: How is it with your soul?

If teaching at Mission u, be sure to record each class member's name (you may recruit a peer to assist with this). As you are able, also make note of special talents and interests that each class member has and any prayer requests. As much as possible, learn each person's name, and be sure to greet them at breakfast, lunch, and dinner . . . wherever your paths cross. Please maintain the spirit of the class throughout Mission u.

As class leader, you will initiate the discussion using the suggested questions or others that may come to mind. Be sure to keep track of the time. Be sure to invite everyone to speak; some persons are shy and need an "invitation" from you to speak about what is on her or his heart.

Remind the class that they are using a code of confidentiality and urge them to adhere to the recommendations for holy conferencing.

Take special joy in being appointed as a "watcher" over the souls of your friends and colleagues. It is an honor and a privilege to help them stay true in their walk with Christ. Blessings on you!

Appendix C

THOSE PRAYING PEOPLE

(Match the name of person with their prayer/petition—in two minutes.)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Daniel | A. that his territory would be enlarged |
| 2. Hezekiah | B. for daughters-in-law to find security |
| 3. Syrophenician woman | C. deliverance from Nebuchadnezzar's wrath |
| 4. Jesus | D. to be spared the wrath of David and his men |
| 5. Paul and Silas | E. to worship God in the Temple with fasting and praying |
| 6. Thief on the Cross | F. prayed to God three times a day |
| 7. Moses | G. for healing; granted fifteen more years of life |
| 8. Elijah | H. that her daughter would be healed |
| 9. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego | I. that the people with him would be sanctified in truth |
| 10. Mary | J. right to grant inheritance to daughters of Zelophehad |
| 11. Jabez | K. to be remembered by Jesus in paradise |
| 12. Hannah | L. for Peter to be delivered from jail |
| 13. Abigail | M. to have a son |
| 14. Anna | N. that it would not rain; it didn't for three and a half years |
| 15. Naomi | O. to praise God in prayer and song while in jail |

ANSWER KEY TO THOSE PRAYING PEOPLE MATCHING ACTIVITY

1. Daniel [F] (Daniel 2:18)
2. Hezekiah [G] (2 Kings 20:1-6)
3. Syrophenician woman [H] (Mark 7:26)
4. Jesus [I] (John 17:17)
5. Paul and Silas [O] (Acts 16:25)
6. Thief on the Cross [K] (Luke 23:42)
7. Moses [J] (Numbers 27:5)
8. Elijah [N] (James 5:17)
9. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego [C] (Daniel 3:17)
10. Mary [L] (Acts 12:12)
11. Jabez [A] (1 Chronicles 4:10)
12. Hannah [M] (1 Samuel 1:11)
13. Abigail [D] (1 Samuel 25:28)
14. Anna [E] (Luke 2:36-37)
15. Naomi [B] (Ruth 1:9)

Appendix D

SETUP FOR MATCH THE MENTOR GAME

Using blue painter's tape, create a grid of twenty-four squares. Each should be large enough to fit a piece of construction paper or two 4 x 6 index cards—depending on creator's choice. Tape paper or card with a word upside down and face down in a square. On the outside of the paper or card, at the bottom, place a rolled piece of painter's or masking tape.

To play the game, have persons flip up two words that they think will match. If a match occurs, those words stay revealed; otherwise, the papers are flipped back down and next player tries to find a match. When a match is found, the player (with help from her or his team) must give some information about the people (or concept).

					

SETUP FOR STAY ON TRACK ACTIVITY

[note: Add rest of words randomly: In, With, At, The, Same, Time, For, Us, Well, And.]

Devote	Thanksgiving	Prayer	
	Pray!	As	It
Watch		Yourselves	
	Alert		
Pray		To	Keeping

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