

Leader's Guide

Let's Explore Our Faith Lesson 11· The Missionary Church— My Church

Aims:

- To introduce the history, purpose and present ministries of The Missionary Church
- To understand how The Missionary Church and their local church are organized to serve God together
- To respond by devoting their life to the Lord's service

Preparation:

- From *The Missionary Church Constitution*, read the *Preamble and Articles I, II and III*. (concerning The Missionary Church's history, name, purpose, and objectives) Also review *Article of Faith 5*. (concerning the church) Note questions that come to mind as you view these portions of the Constitution. Any question(s) you have may be the same one(s) your students ask.
- Read the Scriptural basis for this lesson: *1 Peter 4:17; John 1:12; Deuteronomy 32:7; 2 Timothy 2:15; Romans 12:1*
- Highlight the connections between the key points of the lesson and the Scripture passages referenced.
- Prepare the student lesson. *Note:* This lesson involves significant research on your part, though most if not all of what you will need is available from The Missionary Church home office or on the MC website including current denominational statistics, district maps, and missionary profiles. If you cannot find the information you want, contact the home office via phone (260) 747-2027 or e-mail: mcdenomusa@aol.com. You will also need to talk with your pastor or other church officers to find the information necessary to complete the review section of the lesson that deals with your local church. Our desire is that through this lesson, your students and you will come to appreciate our Missionary Church heritage, become excited about what God is doing through our denomination—including your own church—and respond by wanting to be used by God in that work.

Needed:

- Student workbook, Bible and pencil for each student
- Copy(ies) of *MC Constitution with Articles of Faith and Practice*
- Marker board, markers, and eraser
- Post-It Notes, pen or markers
- Sample copies of all denominational publications—displayed on tables and lettered according to the matching exercise in the study
- Current Missionary Church statistics—available from home office or MC website: www.mcusa.org.
- Copy of *Merging Streams*, history of Missionary Church by Eileen Lageer
- Current local church information and statistics—available from your church office
- List of local church leaders' names and phone numbers—available from your church office

Getting Started:

Begin your class with a short prayer. Ask God to help students understand what He wants to say to them about the importance of the leadership and ministry of your church and The Missionary Church as a whole.

Distribute *Student Workbooks*, Bibles, and pencils. Students answer first question on page 1, decorating their family tree. Ask, **What family members live in your house? What family members do you usually see every week? What family members do you see only once a year? What family members do you almost never see? What family members can you name who lived 100 years ago?** Volunteers answer. Then say, **Why did God give us families?** Again let volunteers answer. Talk about the love, security, acceptance, training, fun, and other benefits of being part of a family. Guide the discussion to point out that biggest job of the family is to spiritually prepare children for life.

Then write the word *Church* on the marker board. Remind the students that the Bible never uses the word *church* to identify a place or building of worship. Instead, the word *church* always refers to people—people who believe in Jesus. Ask, **In last week's lesson, what three pictures of the Church did we see in the Bible that help us understand and appreciate the Church better?** Allow volunteers to answer. (*Answer: His body, His bride, His house*)

Have volunteers read 1 Peter 4:17 and John 1:12. Instruct students to fill in the blanks as the verses are read. (Answers: *family, God, received, name, children*) Say, **God's gift of salvation and eternal life makes you a child of God.** Emphasize that as God's child, not only will we be with Jesus forever in heaven someday, but God is with us—and every child of His—right now and always. Say, **That is incredible! Especially when you think about the fact that God's family is all over the world.**

Direct the students' attention to the two paragraphs following John 1:12. Read these as the group follows along in their *Student Workbooks*.

Study:

Work through the remaining study material as a group. As needed, ask students to read the Scripture passages aloud. Take time to discuss the informational material about The Missionary Church and insert the statistics you researched. Have any maps and sample publications available to share with the students at the appropriate times.

Our Past.

Instruct students to read Deuteronomy 32:7 and do the exercise. (Answers: *Remember the days of old; Consider the generation long past; Ask your father and he will tell you*) Emphasize the importance of history in helping us understand how we got where we are today.

Have students work with a partner to complete the Missionary Church story. (Answers: *denominations, preaching, world, Ramseyer, baptized, love, Sanctifier, teach, meeting, Christians, prayer, public, organized*) Ask, **What do we learn about The Missionary Church from this short story?** Allow students to answer. **How can this bit of Missionary Church history help us now and in future?** Again, allow discussion. Guide discussion to point out that knowing a little history of The Missionary Church and about the people who made the history, can encourage us to follow their example to live by faith, help us be more appreciative of our church family, and challenge us to boldly reach people for Jesus. Show students a copy of *Merging Streams* by Eileen Lageer. Arrange for students interested in reading the book to borrow it.

Our Purpose.

Now direct the students' attention to The Missionary Church purpose statement in the workbook. Read the purpose statement from the Constitution one phrase at a time as students follow along. Have students circle any words that are new to them (words printed in **bold** are listed in the *Glossary*) and take time to discuss possible meanings for new terms they identify. Look those up in the *Glossary*. Then discuss the paragraph, noting any concepts that may require more explanation during the study.

Explain that a purpose statement is a sentence that tells what a church's goal is—its reason for existing and growing. Ask for a volunteer to re-read the purpose statement of The Missionary Church. Have students answer the two related questions. (Answers: *to give glory to God, being holy people, building His Church*)

Ask, **What does it mean to give glory to God?** Allow students to respond. Basically, giving glory to God means to praise, honor, and worship God by what I think, say, and do. The Bible is clear—God is the only One worthy to receive glory. Then have students look at the paragraph that defines *being holy people of God and building His Church*, and do the matching exercise. (Answers: *evangelism—sharing the Good News, discipleship—helping new believers in Jesus to grow, multiplication—planting or beginning new churches...*)

Our Present.

Say, **So what does The Missionary Church look like today?** Understanding how we are organized and how we serve God together will help us have a clearer picture.

Question 1. How are we organized?

Have students read the paragraph that describes how The Missionary Church is organized, crossing out one of the bolded words or phrases to make each sentence read correctly. You have the option to let students work in pairs. (Correct Words: *districts, geography, care for, mission, leaders, congregational, the final, elect, work, advise*) Then give students the Missionary Church fast facts related to how we are organized. **Leader:** Remember, for the latest fast facts, contact the MC home office or for the computer-savvy, browse the MC website.

Question 2. How do we serve God together?

(Answer: *World Missions*) Have a volunteer read the paragraph on world

missions. Stress that from our beginning, The Missionary Church has been committed to sharing the Good News of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ with people everywhere. More than ever we are distinctly dedicated to missions—telling people in a different country or in a different language group about Jesus and helping them to start new churches. Give students the Missionary Church fast facts related to World Partners and our missions ministries.

(Answer: *Church Planting*) Have a volunteer read the paragraph on church planting. Emphasize that obeying Jesus' command to "go and make disciples" includes reaching the people who live next door, in our city, in our state, and throughout our country. It requires starting new churches, also called *church planting*. Give students the Missionary Church fast facts related to Church Planting. If your church is involved in planting a new church, spend some extra time talking about that ministry. Maybe your church has plans to parent a new church, talk about that. If not, plant a seed—encourage these students to help whatever church they are part of to catch a vision to multiply itself by starting new churches.

(Answer: *Higher Education*) Have a volunteer read the paragraph on higher education. Give the Missionary Church fast facts related to higher education. Point out that having a school like Bethel College is very important, especially as we continue to see new churches started and people becoming followers of Jesus. We need trained pastors, church planters, missionaries, and other church workers who will lead the way in making disciples. Again, this is a great time to plant a couple seeds—maybe God will call your student(s) to be the pastor, church planter, missionary, or church worker that we need in The Missionary Church. Encourage them to be listening and obedient to whatever God calls them to do. Also, challenge your students to consider Bethel College specifically when the time comes for them to choose a college.

Direct the students' attention to the display of denominational magazines, booklets, and newsletters. Talk about how important communication is to a family—and emphasize that our church family is no different. Point out that the magazines, booklets, and newsletters shown are the way we communicate with each other in The Missionary Church, and that each piece informs our church family of something different. With workbooks in hand, let students look at the resources firsthand, discover what message each sends, and complete the matching exercise. Set a time limit such as

5 minutes for looking at the materials. Also, to avoid a bottleneck at the display, have students spread out. They don't all have to look at "A" first. (Answers: H, E, A, J, I, B, G, C, D, F) When time is up, share answers with the group.

Let's Review.

This review is meant to be a fact-finding adventure to show students how their local church relates to The Missionary Church. It requires students to take their *Student Workbooks* home. (Optional: photocopy the review pages and give them to the students as worksheets.) Have students put a Post-it note on the page in the *Student Workbook* where the review starts, with an inch of the note showing outside the workbook. Have students write the word *HOMEWORK* on the inch showing outside the *Student Workbook* as a reminder to do the review. Also give each student the list of your church leaders and their phone numbers to use in their research. As a courtesy to your leaders, let them know to expect the students to contact them. Be sure to have students report their findings at your next meeting.

Emphasize the *Scripture to Learn*. To teach Hebrews 10:25 to students, play this adaptation of "Duck, Duck, Goose!" Have the students stand in a circle. Choose one student to walk around the outside of the circle with a beanbag. Tell him/her to drop the beanbag behind someone. As soon as the beanbag is dropped, have all the students except the picked student run to the ends of the room or play area. Call the students back by saying, "Meet together!" As the students re-make the circle, lead the group in reading the verse. Repeat as time permits.

My Response:

Direct the students' attention to the *My Response* section of the *Student Workbook*. Read the paragraph as they follow along. Then give your students a couple minutes of quiet time to read the *Dear God* letter, and think seriously about it BUT not sign it. Then pray with the class—seed sown in this class will likely bear much fruit in The Missionary Church today and in the future! NOW, any students wishing to sign the letter may do so. Encourage those who do make this commitment to share it with their parent and a trusted member of the church family.

Let's Explore Our Faith

Lesson 11 · The Missionary Church—My Church

Decorate the Tree—Your Family Tree!

Write names or draw pictures of as many family members as you know.

From our last lesson, we know that the Church is *people*—people who believe in Jesus. We also learned that the Bible pictures the Church as the Body of Christ. **Read 1 Peter 4:17 and fill in the blanks to find still another picture of the Church.**

“The F _____ of G _____”

When we receive Jesus as our Savior and Lord, the Bible tells us that we become God's children, members of His family—and a large family it is, too. **Read John 1:12 and fill in the blanks.**

“Yet to all who _____ him, to those who believed in his

_____,”

he gave the right to become _____ of God.”

God's family is all over the world—it's *universal*. But you should also remember from our last lesson that God gave us the local church—a small group of Christians organized to serve God together and who meet in a *specific* location. Your local church is one part of God's family. It is also part of a bigger or extended church family called *The Missionary Church*.

The Missionary Church is a group of churches—including your local church—organized to serve God together meeting in *many places* across the United States. To better understand how your local church family and our Missionary Church family are related, let's take a closer look at our past, our purpose, and our present.

Our Past.

We look at the past by studying history. History helps us understand how we got where we are today. The Bible even tells us to think about the past.

Read Deuteronomy 32:7 to answer this question. What three things are we told to do about the past?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The complete story of how The Missionary Church began is called, *Merging Streams* by Eileen Lageer. Here is just a little bit of what you discover by looking at our past. **Use the words in the word bank to complete the story.**

The Missionary Church was formed in 1969 when two smaller d_____

WORD BANK

world
Sanctifier
baptized
public
denominations
love
Christians
Ramseyer
meeting
preaching
teach
organized
prayer

(another name for a group of churches)—*The Missionary Church Association* and *The United Missionary Church*—combined. This **merger** or coming together was possible because both groups were committed to p_____ only what was in the Bible and reaching the w_____ through **missions.**

Joseph R_____ founded *The Missionary Church Association* after he was told to leave his former denomination because, as a believer in Christ, he wanted to be b_____ by immersion. Rev. Ramseyer continued to preach the message of God's l_____

through Jesus Christ as Savior, S_____, Healer, and coming King. In 1898, his congregation or local church adopted the name *The Missionary Church Association* because of their desire to t_____ the world about Jesus.

The United Missionary Church was officially founded at a m_____ near Dayton, Ohio in 1883. However, it first began in the 1850's when several C_____ were told to leave their former churches for having p_____ meetings, holding revival services, and giving p_____ testimonies. It was largely through Rev. Daniel Brenneman's leadership that the denomination was o_____.

Thank God for the lives of the men and women who set an example for us to follow. God chose them because they trusted Him, wanted to live right lives, and were eager to tell others of God's gift of salvation.

Our Purpose.

Looking at the past also helps us to know our purpose or reason for being.

The Missionary Church, in obedience to Jesus Christ the Lord, is committed to *being holy people* of God in the world and to *building His Church* by worldwide **evangelism, discipleship, and multiplication** of growing churches, *all to the glory of God.*

This *purpose statement* from the beginning of the Constitution explains what the Missionary Church aims to do (what our goal is) as a group of churches organized to serve God together.

Re-read the purpose statement and answer the questions below.

- What is the ultimate purpose of the Missionary Church?

- What two things is the Missionary Church committed to do, so we reach the ultimate goal?

Being holy people of God means to live lives that please God—being careful to stay away from sin, do His work, and tell others the difference Jesus makes in our lives. *Building His Church* means helping people meet Jesus as Savior, know Jesus as Lord, and serve just like Jesus. Then based on what the Bible teaches, we practice *being holy people of God* and *building His Church* in three ways.

Draw lines to match the activity with the correct explanation.

Worldwide evangelism

Helping new believers in Jesus to grow in knowing and serving Him

Discipleship

Planting or beginning new churches that will plant more

Multiplication of Growing Churches

Sharing the Good News of salvation by faith in Jesus with people everywhere

Even the name of our denomination tells others what we are about. The word *Missionary* means that we are committed to reaching people for Jesus—starting where we live and going all over the world. The word *Church* says that we are an organized group of believers who get together—locally and nationally—to worship, teach, fellowship, and share the good news of Jesus.

Our Present.

Earlier you read that *The Missionary Church family is a group of churches (meeting in many places across the United States) organized to serve God together.* To have a clearer picture of The Missionary Church today, we need to answer two questions: *How are we organized?* and *How do we serve God together?*

How are we organized?

Read the paragraphs below that describe how the Missionary Church is organized. Cross out one of the bolded words or phrases to make each sentence read correctly.

The Missionary Church is divided into groups of churches called **DISTRICTS STATES.**

The churches are arranged into districts by **SIZE GEOGRAPHY.** There are two kinds of districts—*organized* and *mission*. Each organized district has a district superintendent and

other leaders who **CARE FOR SPY ON** the local churches within its borders. **MODERN**

MISSION districts are groups of churches in an area that are just beginning. They are not large enough yet to have their own **LEADERS** **BANK ACCOUNTS**.

The Missionary Church also has a **MILITARY CONGREGATIONAL** form of government. This means that the people of the local church have **THE FINAL NO** responsibility for making church decisions.

Every four years people from each Missionary Church meet together to **ELECT CROWN** a president. His job is to watch over and coordinate all the **TRAVEL WORK** of the denomination. He also is free to **ABUSE ADVISE** church leaders.

MISSIONARY CHURCH FAST FACTS

1. Today the Missionary Church has _____ organized districts and _____ mission districts.
2. The President of the Missionary Church is _____
3. Our national office is in _____

How do we serve God together?

The churches of the Missionary Church work together to share the good news of salvation, help new believers grow in Jesus, and begin new churches.

Unscramble the words below to find the three main ways Missionary Churches serve

God together and write them on the line.

DROLW SSNMIOIS. _____ .

One important way we serve God together is by telling people in who live in different countries or who speak different languages about Jesus. Not only do we send missionaries, but also The Missionary Church has a large, short-term, volunteer service program for people from our local churches.

MISSIONARY CHURCH FAST FACTS

- 4. Our denomination's missions department is called _____
- 5. World Partners has approximately _____ missionaries serving in _____ countries.
- 6. We also loan _____ missionaries to serve God with other missionary-sending groups.

URCHHC GNITNALP. _____ .

Another important way we serve God together is by starting brand-new congregations or local churches all over the United States and beyond. To help districts and local churches begin new churches in their area, The Missionary Church began a training center to educate church planters (another name for pastors who start new churches). Today our *Church Multiplication Training Center* is used by many other denominations to train their new church pastors or church planters.

MISSIONARY CHURCH FAST FACTS

- 7. Another name for the *Church Multiplication Training Center* is _____
- 8. The *Church Multiplication Training Center* is located in _____

GHHIER NOITACUDE. _____ .

God made us to learn as long as we live. He wants us to do our best to become good workers for Him. (See 2 Timothy 2:15.) That involves schooling and studying. One more way we serve God together is by encouraging people to get an education. We do this by providing a college where people can study a variety of different subjects, receive proper and godly training, and complete their education.

MISSIONARY CHURCH FAST FACTS

- 9. _____ College in Mishawaka (IN) is the college of the Missionary Church.

10. Over _____ men and women from the US and around the world attend Bethel College.

11. The college's website is www._____

And just like members of a family need to keep in touch, it is important for members of the Missionary Church family to communicate with each other. **Match each of the following magazines, booklets or newsletters published by The Missionary Church to what each communicates.**

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|--|
| A. Missionary Church Today | _____ | Lists all Missionary Churches and their staff |
| B. Priority | _____ | A missions newsletter for children |
| C. Harvest Times | _____ | Contains information about denominational ministries, church activities, as well as challenging articles on Christian living |
| D. Youth Disciplemakers | _____ | An insert with Missionary Church news worldwide |
| E. Acorn'R | _____ | Internet information on MC people, churches, and ministries |
| F. Under Construction | _____ | Important news for pastors and local church leaders |
| G. The MC Calendar | _____ | Highlights district and denominational events |
| H. The MC Directory | _____ | A newsletter all about church planting |



- I. The MC Website _____ A newsletter all about ministry to students in middle, junior, and high school
- J. _____ People and Places _____ A newsletter about children’s ministry

Let’s Review.

You have been part of the *Let’s Explore Your Faith* study because your local church wants to help you grow in your love for Jesus and other believers in Jesus, your love for God, in obeying God’s commands, and in winning over the temptation to sin. You have also been part of this study because your church is part of the larger Missionary Church family.

Let’s go on a little fact-finding mission to review what we have learned about The Missionary Church as it relates to your church. **Fill in the blanks with information about your local church to better see how your local church and The Missionary Church are related.**

MY CHURCH FAST FACTS

1. The full name of my church is

Our PAST

2. The year my church started was _____ . If your church began before 1969, what are its roots—**Missionary Church Association** or **The United Missionary Church**. (Circle one.)

3. My church began...

4. The first pastor of my church was _____ .

Our PURPOSE

5. My church’s purpose statement says...

Our PRESENT...How We are Organized

6. My church is part of the _____ district.
7. Our district superintendent is _____ .
8. My church has _____ members. To vote, a member must be _____ years old. To become a member of my church a person must...

9. My church has the following boards and/or committees:

10. People are chosen to serve as committee members, church officers, or teachers by...

Our PRESENT...How We Serve God Together

11. My church supports these missionaries in these countries...

12. My church also participates in world missions by...

13. My church participates in church planting by...

14. My church communicates with each other by...

15. Each week my church has the following services or ministry activities...

16. My church regularly ministers to...

...children by _____

...youth by _____

...adults by _____

...senior adults by _____

...people outside the church by _____

...people in other countries by _____

17. In my church, the sick and needy are cared for by _____ .

18. Right now, from my church we have _____ students at Bethel College. They are...

19. My church shares the Lord's Supper or communion every...

20. My church family communicates with each other through...



21. I think the top three most positive things about my church are...



Scripture to Learn.

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:25 (NIV)

My Response .

Only God knows for sure what the Missionary Church—including your local church—will look like ten, twenty, or even fifty years from now. But we expect great things from God as we continue to see new churches, new believers, and new people serving God as pastors, church planters, missionaries, and other church workers. God has a place in our future for YOU, if you will let Him use your life. Will you devote your life to the Lord?

Read Romans 12:1 re-printed below. Then look at the *Dear God* letter. If this letter describes the desire of your heart, sign it and date it. Then show this letter to two people—a member of your immediate family AND a member of your church family.

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers,
in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices,
holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Romans 12:1*

Dear God,

I give You permission to use my life for whatever You want.