

The background is a solid teal color. Overlaid on this are several large, stylized musical notes in a light green color. The notes are simplified, with thick stems and circular heads, and are arranged in a way that suggests a musical staff or a sequence of notes. The largest note is on the left side, and smaller ones are scattered towards the bottom right.

# Singing God's Mission

Youth Spiritual-Growth Study Guide

J. Ann Craig

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Published by:  
Women's Division  
United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries  
New York, New York • June 2007

# Introduction

Music and mission. It is a joy to sing. Lifting our voices in a raucous noise of praise is a great thing. Whispering a prayer or humming a gentle tune gives us hope.

I'm a whistler. People often say to me, "You sound cheerful" or "Why are you so happy?"

I smile and remind them to listen to the tune I'm whistling to know if I am happy or sad. Sometimes I whistle, "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen." It can be a lament to God. Sometimes I whistle, "This Little Light of Mine," a song that brings a smile.

If I feel over-the-top good, I may burst out singing Little Richard's "I Feel Good ... So good! So good!" Maybe that's the way Miriam felt when the Hebrews escaped Egypt. Maybe that's why she took up a tambourine and led the people with singing and dancing.

Songs we sing today are like the songs we find in the Bible. They came from people as they lived life, inspired by joy and sorrow. The Psalms were originally sung. Some are songs of praise; some are laments.

People in the Bible pick up instruments and sing out to God and to each other. Harps, lyres, tambourines, trumpets, flutes and bells were all part of the musical scene in Miriam's day. Those instruments survive in one form or another today.

Music gives us life, energy, direction. Music gives heart to words that might otherwise sound dry. Music gives us purpose. We are followers of Jesus who love to sing about our faith.

What is your purpose? What is your theme song? United Methodist Women has a purpose. Our organization is defined as "women organized for mission." We are followers of Jesus who love to sing about our mission in Christ's name.

In this study, youth and adult study leaders are asked to think about music that shapes their lives and informs their mission outreach. Music can be a source of purpose – a mission. Popular music can inspire us to be in mission, to address social injustice. While adults may struggle with the style of music popular with youth, it's the content that counts. Adults can learn from youth to get beyond style differences to hear the words and stories.

This study scans the history of mission and songs that history enlivened then moves to an emphasis on music as a shaper of identity that leads us to respond to God's call to be in mission.

As each person is coming into her or his own, discovering talents, God wants to sing each one a love song. The church is part of the choir that sings to them. Is the church singing so young people can hear?

Sometimes the church fails to hear – or even stops – people from singing if their cultures or sounds are different from what it knows. Being open to the sounds of others is crucial to understanding mission today.

Understanding our mission from God is a lifelong task. Shocks, surprises, gifts and disasters will impact our lives, yet, in the midst of change, God's still small voice whispers in each person's ear, even hums a melody. A gentle song goes with each of us. Listen to hear it.

Everyone can wake up to God's song everyday. The tune and harmony varies from day to day but God's message is the same: I love you!

The harmonies can be smooth or dissonant, but the God's message is the same: I love you!

Syncopation can spice up life or confuse, but God's message is the same: I love you!

Through it all, listen. Through it all, sing a new song for each new day.

# Session 1

## Music in Our Heads, Music in Our Lives

### Together with God

Read the following litany responsively with the study leader or a member of the group serving as the Reader.

**Reader:** Look at your feet. Look at your hands. Both sides. Put one hand on your head.

**ALL: God created everything. It is good!**

**Leader:** Look at your neighbor's feet. Look at your neighbor's hands. Put one hand on your neighbor's head.

**ALL: God created everything. It is good!**

**Leader:** Look around. People created in the image of God are here.

**ALL: God created everything. It is good!**

### Song

"This Little Light of Mine"

*(Leader: Music for this can be found at: <http://tsc.kidsmusic.com>)*

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

### Ancient Words for Today: Matthew 5:14-15

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house."

#### Did you know?

In ancient times, it was women who played the tambourine, one of the oldest instruments still in use. Today, both women and men play the tambourine. It is among many variations of frame drums used throughout the world.

### Commentary on Matthew 5:14-15

You are the light of the world. Know who you are. Be who you are. Shine for the world. You may think you are just flesh and blood, but God sees who you are. You are like a city skyline or a spotlight. You can't hide a skyline. You can't dim a spotlight. You are the light of the world. Know who you are. Be who you are.

### Prayer in Unison

Dear God, we give thanks for each of the lights in this room. *(Each person says her or his full name aloud for all to hear.)*  
We are your children. We are your lights in the world. Help us to see light in each person we meet. Help each of us see our own light and share it with others. Amen.

### Song

"This Little Light of Mine"

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine!  
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine!  
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine!  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

### Read and Hear

*Read aloud the following in groups of three to five. Group members take turns reading.*

**Reader 1:** What's on your iPod? Do you own any mp3s? Ludacris? Casting Crowns? Public Enemy? Rhianna? U2? Jump5? Jimmy Cliff? Carrie Underwood? Point of Grace? Tracy Chapman? Josh Ritter?

**Reader 2:** What's your soundtrack for life? Music is a shape shifter. When you hear music, it shifts you. It shapes your worldview. Musicians know it. Listeners feel it. Retailers sell it.

**Reader 3:** Do you remember when you heard your favorite song for the first time? You may remember the song, the moment, the place for the rest of your life. The music people hear in the first 18 years of life often becomes the most powerful music in their lives. We collect memories and reinforce them with constant listening. The songs you love today will someday be "golden oldies." Your children will roll their eyes at you when you crank up the volume and start to dance. Your songs today will become part of who you are.

**Reader 4:** I want to tell you a story about a man who was shaped by songs about God and being a Christian. His name was Mr. Meyers. He lived down the street from a United Methodist pastor. One day, the pastor learned Mr. Meyers had had a stroke and probably wouldn't live long. He was in a coma.

While Mr. Meyers was ill, his life partner came to the pastor to ask if Mr. Meyers would go to heaven. She said he had not entered the church in 40 years.

The pastor told her that Mr. Meyers was in God's generous, forgiving, kind hands. She said, "Thank you pastor. I believe you, but it sure would be nice to have some reassurance."

Ms. Meyers returned home, where she found Mr. Meyers near death yet he was singing. He sang hymns, one after another. And he sang all the verses! He remembered the hymns from his childhood. He couldn't open his eyes, he couldn't move, but he could sing to God and his family. He could communicate he was going home to be with God.

**Reader 5:** God loves music. Perhaps God is music – the music of love. It is not an accident that heaven is imagined with angels playing harps and singing in choruses. It's not an accident that Miriam played the tambourine as the Hebrew people crossed the Red Sea to freedom. Perhaps the people danced their way across the parted waters. Perhaps that's where they found courage.

Have you felt the power of music? Has music made you

dance? Music inspired the Hebrews' mission. Music marked them as leaders. God gave them a song of life-saving freedom.

**Reader 1:** Miriam and Moses were on a mission from God. They led the enslaved Israelites to freedom. What do you think of when you hear the word mission? Brainstorm a list of uses of the word mission.

## Reality Game 1 Tunes, Players and the Light People

**Move 1:** Make a list of your favorite songs.

**Move 2:** Get up. Move around the room and compare lists. Find someone with music like yours. Talk about what you like about the music.

**Move 3:** Compare your lists again. Find tunes on each other's lists that are unfamiliar. Tell each other what you like about the unfamiliar ones. Get to know each other.

**Move 4:** Wander around again. Find someone who has different taste in music than you. Talk with them about your different tastes.

**Move 5:** Share in the full group what you learned. What are your differences? Is there music new to you that you want to check out?

## Reality Game 2 Moses or Miriam

**Move 1:** Read Exodus 15:1-19 or tell the story of this passage.

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord:  
"I will sing to the Lord, for the Lord has triumphed gloriously;  
horse and rider the Lord has thrown into the sea.  
The Lord is my strength and my might,  
and the Lord has become my salvation;

This is my God, and I will praise my God,  
my parents' God, and I will exalt God.  
The Lord is a warrior;  
the Lord is my God's name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his army the Lord cast into the sea;  
His picked officers were sunk in the Red Sea.  
The floods covered them;  
they went down into the depths like a stone.  
Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power –  
your right hand, O Lord, shattered the enemy.  
In the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your adversaries;  
you sent out your fury, it consumed them like stubble.  
At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up,  
the floods stood up in a heap;  
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.  
The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake,  
I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them.  
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.'  
You blew with your wind, the sea covered them;  
they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

"Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods?  
Who is like you, majestic in holiness,  
awesome in splendor, doing wonders?  
You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them.

"In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed;  
you guided them by your strength to your holy abode.  
The peoples heard, they trembled;  
pangs seized the inhabitants of Philistia.  
Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed;  
trembling seized leaders of Moab;  
all the inhabitants of Canaan melted away.  
Terror and dread fell upon them;  
by the might of your arm, they became still as a stone  
until your people, O Lord, passed by,  
until the people who you acquired passed by.  
You brought them in and planted them on the mountain of your  
own possession,  
the place, O Lord, that you made your abode,  
the sanctuary, O Lord, that your hands have established.  
The Lord will reign forever and ever."

When the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his chariot  
drivers went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of

the sea upon them; but the Israelites walked through the sea on  
dry ground.

In Exodus 4:10, Moses complained to God that he was  
slow of speech and tongue. So who do you think led the  
singing the day the Israelites escaped from Egypt? In Exo-  
dus 15:20-21, Miriam picked up a tambourine and led the  
women in the first lines of the same song that appears in  
Exodus 15:1-19.

**Move 2:** Discuss in pairs or small groups what the Is-  
raelites' "reality" might have been. Possibilities include:

1. Moses and the men sang first. The women waited then  
sang the first few lines.
2. Moses, Miriam and the Israelites sang together, then  
Miriam led the women with a tambourine to repeat the  
chorus.
3. Miriam led the people across the Red Sea with her tam-  
bourine while Moses kept the waters away and made sure  
everyone made it across safely. Then Miriam led a song  
about Moses.
4. Brainstorm other possibilities.

**Move 3:** Assign a corner of the room for each the four  
"realities." Have each person go to the corner of the  
room that best fits her or his response.

**Move 4:** In the four groups, discuss why people selected  
the groups they did.

**Move 5:** Have everyone return to her or his seat. Have  
each group share briefly.

## Reality Game 3 Music and Mission

**Move 1:** Write out a few lines from one or two of your fa-  
vorite songs. Think about what is the mission-purpose of  
one of your songs. Maybe it's expressing love to someone  
or longing to share love. One jazz song says there is noth-  
ing greater than to love and be loved. Often we experi-  
ence God's love through other people. Maybe your song  
has barely decipherable words or trashy words. What is it  
about the song that moves you?

**Move 2:** After working individually for five minutes, share your thoughts with one other person.

**Move 3:** If anyone wants to share with the whole group, that would be great.

## Different Drummers

Have you ever heard the saying, “They march to the beat of a different drummer”? Moses and Miriam were out of step with their time. Leaders often are. They refused to put up with the oppression of slavery when it would have been easier to just leave things alone. Moses had to free the Israelites. He was getting along just fine without starting a revolution, but God’s rhythm called him and got his feet moving.

When we hear various interpretations of the Bible, we have to allow for the fact that people dance to different drummers. Think about the times you have felt out of step with your peers.

Anti-slavery work in the United States was one of the inspirations for women organizing for mission in the 1800s. Women sent women missionaries to teach recently freed slaves and Native Americans. These women, and the missionaries they sent, marched to a different drummer than the majority of people in their time.

What drummer are you marching to? Where do you feel called to go? What do you feel called to do with your life?

## Closing Mission Moment: Made in the Image of God

*Read the following responsively with the study leader or one member of the group serving as the Reader.*

**Reader:** Miriam and Moses were made in the image of God.

**ALL:** **We are made in the image of God!**

**Reader:** Moses and Miriam were on a mission to free the Israelites from slavery.

**ALL:** **We are on a mission to bring God’s love and justice to the world.**

**Reader:** They were on a journey through the desert.

**ALL:** **We are on a journey through life.**

Leader: They kept on keeping on.

**ALL:** **We keep on keeping on.**

Leader: Everyone make a circle. Hold hands across the circle with someone as far away as you can reach. Now try to move clockwise. Imagine not being allowed to let go, not allowed to go home, not allowed to see your family again. You have been trapped and put into slavery with your whole youth group. Soon you will be put to work building walls, streets and buildings. You will have no more education the rest of your life. You have no more freedom.

*Leader pauses.*

Leader: Look around the circle. Say to each other, “You deserve to be free.”

*Leader allows time for this to happen.*

Leader: Let go of each other’s hands. Now take each other’s hands again, this time making a comfortable circle. Freedom is gained together. Let us remember that because the United States once had slavery, we are still overcoming racism. Let us sing the Civil Rights freedom song, “We Shall Overcome.”

## Song:

“We Shall Overcome”

No. 533, *The United Methodist Hymnal*

We shall overcome, we shall overcome,  
We shall overcome some day!  
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe  
we shall overcome some day!

Leader: Go forth!

# Session 2

## We're on a Mission from God

### Together with God

Leader: Oh my God!

**ALL: Oh my God!**

Leader: I can't believe it!

**ALL: What? What is it?**

Leader: Have you heard the latest?

**ALL: No. What? Tell me.**

Leader: Nahhhhh ... It's a secret.

**ALL: You have to tell us!**

Leader: Okay, but you have to promise you won't tell.

**ALL: Okay.**

Leader: God loves your singing.

**ALL: No way!**

Leader: Way!

**ALL: Awesome!**

Leader: Awesome!

### Song

"Our God is an Awesome God!"

No. #2040, *The Faith We Sing*

### Ancient Words for Today:

#### Psalm 33: A Song

Read Psalm 33:1-15 from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible as a choral reading. This has to be done with gusto. Divide the group into two groups. The groups will alternate verses with each group beginning in the middle of the previous group's sentence. Give one person in each group a gong or a cymbal – or a couple of pan lids – to crash together. At the beginning of her or his group's verse, have the person sound the gong or crash the cymbal.

Each group will have to concentrate on its verse. After the first line, there will be a chorus of the two groups speaking at the same time. Do this several times during the opening "Together with God" time or rehearse it in advance.

### Psalm 33:1-15

**Group 1:** Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.  
Praise befits the upright.

**Group 2:** Praise the Lord with the lyre;  
make melody to the Lord with the harp of ten strings.

**Group 1:** Sing to the Lord a new song;  
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

**Group 2:** For the word of the Lord is upright,  
and all the Lord's work is done in faithfulness.

**Group 1:** The Lord loves righteousness and justice;  
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

**Group 2:** By the word of the Lord the heavens  
were made,  
and all their host by the breath of the Lord's mouth.

**Group 1:** The Lord gathers the waters of the sea as in a  
bottle;  
The Lord put the deeps in storehouses.

**Group 2:** Let all the earth fear the Lord;  
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe  
of the Lord.

**Group 1:** For the Lord spoke, and it came to be;  
the Lord commanded, and it stood firm.

**Group 2:** The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to  
nothing;  
the Lord frustrates the plans of the peoples.

**Group 1:** The counsel of the Lord stands forever,  
the thoughts of the Lord's heart to all  
generations.

**Group 2:** Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord,  
the people the Lord has chosen as the Lord's  
heritage.

**Group 1:** The Lord looks down from heaven;  
the Lord sees all humankind;

**Group 2:** From where the Lord sits enthroned the Lord  
watches all the inhabitants of the earth –

**Group 1:** The Lord who fashions the hearts of them all,  
and observes all their deeds.

## Song

“Our God is an Awesome God!”  
No. 2040, *The Faith We Sing*

## Prayer

The group prays for the beautiful world God has created.

## Song

“Our God is an Awesome God!”  
No. 2040, *The Faith We Sing*

## Reality Game 1 Tunes in Ancient Times

*Leader:* Before class, photocopy the list of Scripture passages that follow on pages 7-8. If your group is large and you need more Scriptures, go to [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com) and do keyword searches on harp and sing, or look these words up in a concordance. Cut the list of Scripture passages apart with one passage per cut. Put them in a basket.

Divide participants into groups of three. Have each group take one passage from the basket. Ask each group to read its Scripture passage then discuss the kind of music referenced in the Scripture segment using the questions in Moves 1-5 that follow:

**Move 1:** Select one Scripture passage from the basket.

**Move 2:** Find the Scripture in the Bible.

**Move 3:** Read the passage noting what instruments are used.

**Move 4:** Determine the mood expressed in the passage.

**Move 5:** Discuss what else is interesting about the passage.

**Move 6:** Pick another Scripture passage and do the activity again.

## Read and Hear: On a Mission

“We’re on a mission from God!”

So goes a line from the movie, “The Blues Brothers.” The Blues Brothers are released from a federal prison and promise a nun they will save the orphanage where they grew up. They are determined to keep their promise, and try to do so through legal means as much as possible. Their efforts become a comedy of errors that land them back in prison playing “Jailhouse Rock.” This slapstick movie might seem a long way from how we understand our mission from God, but it can make us think about the idea of mission. Are you on a mission from God? How do you know? What is mission?

Mission is not complicated. It is simply something you are determined to complete. When you take a test, you are on a mission to complete the exam as well as you can. When you try to follow the teachings of Jesus, you are on a mission from God.

## Scripture Passages with References to Harps and/or Song

Genesis 31:27: Why did you flee secretly and deceive me and not tell me? I would have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre.

1 Samuel 10:5: "After that you shall go to Gibeah-elohim, at the place where the Philistine garrison is; there, as you come to the town, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the shrine with harp, tambourine, flute and lyre playing in front of them; they will be in a prophetic frenzy."

1 Samuel 16:16: "Let our lord now command the servants who attend to you to look for someone who is skillful in playing the lyre; and when the evil spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will feel better."

1 Samuel 16:23: And whenever the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand, and Saul would be relieved and feel better, and the evil spirit would depart from him.

2 Samuel 6:5: David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

1 Chronicles 13:8: David and Israel were dancing before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets.

1 Chronicles 15:16: David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their kindred as the singers to play on musical instruments, on harps and lyres and cymbals, to raise loud sounds of joy.

1 Chronicles 15:28: So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres.

Job 21:12: They sing to the tambourine and the lyre; and rejoice to the sound of the pipe.

Job 30:31: My harp is tuned to mourning, and my pipe to the voice of those who weep.

Psalms 33:2: Praise the Lord with lyre; make melody to the Lord with the harp of ten strings.

Psalms 57:8: Awake, my soul! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.

Psalms 137:2: On the willows there we hung up our harps.

Isaiah 5:12: . . . whose feasts consist of lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine, but who do not regard the deeds of the Lord, or see the work of the Lord's hands.

Isaiah 14:11: Your pomp is brought down Sheol, and the sound of your harps; maggots are the bed beneath you and worms are your covering.

Isaiah 16:11: Therefore my heart throbs like a harp for Moab, and my very soul for Kir-heres.

Isaiah 23:16: Take a harp, go about the city, you forgotten prostitute! Make sweet melody, sing many songs, that you may be remembered.

Isaiah 24:8: The mirth of the timbrels is stilled, the noise of the jubilant has ceased, the mirth of the lyre is stilled.

Ezekiel 26:13: I will silence the music of your songs; and the sound of your lyres shall be heard no more.

Daniel 3:4b-5: "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, you are to fall down and worship the golden statute that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up."

Amos 5:23: Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

Amos 6:5: . . . who sing the idle songs to the sound of the harp, and like David improvise on instruments of music; . . .

1 Corinthians 14:7: It is the same way with the lifeless instruments that produce sound, such as the flute or the harp. If they do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is being played?

Revelation 5:8: When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Revelation 14:2: And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps.

Revelation 18:22: The music of harpists and minstrels and of flutists and trumpeters will be heard in you no more; . . .

Exodus 15:1: Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord: "I will sing to the Lord, for the Lord triumphed gloriously; the horse and its rider the Lord has thrown into the sea."

Numbers 21:17: Then Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! Sing about it!"

Deuteronomy 31:30: Then Moses recited the words of this song, to very end, in the hearing of the whole assembly of Israel: . . .

Judges 5:12: "Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, utter a song! Arise, Barak, lead away your captives, O son of Abinoam."

1 Samuel 18:6: As they were coming home, when David returned from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments.

Job 30:9: "And now they mock me in song; I am a byword to them."

Psalms 40:3: The Lord put a song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.

Proverbs 25:20: Like vinegar on a wound is one who sings songs to a heavy heart. . . .

Ecclesiastes 7:5: It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than to hear the song of fools.

Isaiah 5:1: Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning this vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

Isaiah 25:5: . . . the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled.

Lamentations 3:14: I have become the laughingstock of all my people, the object of their taunt-songs all day long.

Ezekiel 33:32: To them you are like a singer of love songs, one who has a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument; they hear what you say, but they will not do it.

Micah 2:4: On that day they shall take up a taunt song against you, and wail with bitter lamentation, . . .

Ephesians 5:19: . . . as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, . . .

Colossians 3:16: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

James 5:13: Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise.

Revelation 15:3: And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations."

During the 1800s, people across the United States flocked to revivals and camp meetings where they were inspired to be on a mission from God. Methodists were famous for their camp meetings. It was just a couple generations after the 1700s when John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, had rallied people in England and the colonies that would become the United States to start acting like Christians. He confronted slave traders and gin makers. One traded in flesh, the other in alcohol abuse by selling to poor miners – something like targeting youth with cigarette advertising.

John Wesley helped widows and orphans survive in a time when there was no Social Security or life insurance. He organized groups to visit prisoners and to take care of the sick. He organized schools for children who would never have received an education. John Wesley was on a mission from God.

So were United Methodist Women's foremothers. They gave their lives to God and God's people as they served freed African Americans, Native Americans, and immigrant women and girls.

## Reality Game 2 Singing in Prison

**Move 1:** Read Acts 16:16-31, a story of singing in prison.

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." The

crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here."

The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Do you know of prison ministries in your area? Use a cell phone to call a pastor to ask if she or he knows of prison ministries in your area.

*Leader: Bring a conference journal and cell phone with a speaker function on it, if possible, or bring information about a prison ministry and the name and number of someone your group can call at a scheduled time to learn about the ministry.*

John Wesley had a brother named Charles who was a singer-song writer, who wrote more than 6,000 hymns. Some weren't great, but with so many to choose from, he had quite a few hits. In fact, Methodists were called, "Those singin' Methodists."

Charles Wesley's music became the soundtrack of the early Methodist movement. Ever since, we have been singing our mission as we do mission projects.

## Reality Game 3 So You Want to Be a Missionary

Look at the index of composers in *The United Methodist Hymnal* to see how many of Charles Wesley's hymns are part of today's soundtrack for mission. If time allows, have participants select one to sing. For example, No. 57 – the first hymn in the hymnal – is the well-known Wesley hymn, "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing."

During the U.S. revival and camp-meeting era, becoming a missionary became a fad, a trend, a movement that was huge. Hundreds of thousands of people got involved in missionary work. They were ready to be on a mission from God.

The YWCA and YMCA grew out of this missionary movement. Thousands of young people gave their lives to Christ and became missionaries or supporters of mission programs. It was in a time when women and minorities had few legal rights. Women and African Americans found mission an outlet for their involvement in the world when other avenues were closed. Women who studied medicine could say they were going into the mission field to make their pursuit more acceptable.

Initially Methodist women were only allowed to go into mission as wives of male missionaries. Then a few stalwart women formed a women's mission society to send women doctors and teachers to India and China. That was the beginning of the women's mission organization that today is United Methodist Women, which has close to 1 million members. Teen and young-adult women are joining through circles just for them, campus units and online: [www.UMWonline.org](http://www.UMWonline.org). They attend schools of Christian mission; United Methodist Women's Assembly, which draws 7,000 and more women once every four years; conference meetings; and local gatherings. Many are officers and some are directors of the Women's Division, the national policy-making body of United Methodist Women.

## Reality Game 4 Women in Mission

Call a conference United Methodist Women officer to ask her what programs your conference has for young women. *Leader: Arrange this call in advance. If time allows, ask a conference officer to speak to your group in person. Limit this to 10 minutes.*

When the mission movement started in the 19th century, missionaries from the United States went around the world to places like China, India, Africa and Latin America. Many went with the idea that Western dress and Western music were superior to the clothing and music of other cultures. As these people on a mission from God learned to live in other countries, they learned God uses many cultures to communicate love.

### Foreign Missionary Movement in the 19th and early 20th Centuries\*

by Daniel H. Bays\*\*

Christian-civic confidence was manifested in the dramatic growth of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, a quintessentially U.S. organization. First established in 1886 by the evangelist Dwight L. Moody, for the better part of the next four decades, under the leadership of the astute and well-connected John R. Mott, the movement successfully appealed to the United States' "best and brightest" to enter the foreign mission field.

In these decades more than 13,000 young Americans, most of them college graduates, sailed abroad as missionaries. Many were affiliated with the YWCA or YMCA, but they staffed dozens of different mission agencies. The nondenominational movement was singularly successful in promoting its vision, encapsulated by its watchword, "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation."

*\*Adapted from: <http://www.nbc.rtp.nc.us/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/fmmovement.htm>*

*\*\*Daniel H. Bays is Calvin College professor emeritus, University of Kansas.*

## Reality Game 5 Different Drummer: Take 2

Whereas early missionaries considered African and Korean drumming pagan music that shouldn't be incorporated into Christian worship, today, throughout the world, traditional forms of drumming and dancing, singing and chanting, praying and meditating, are being evaluated for their content and intent rather than by their difference from European-American music. We're breaking out.

**Move 1:** Call a Korean-American pastor in your conference or a Korean-American staff member of one of the General Church agencies. They may or may not support the use of drumming in celebrations or church gatherings. Listen and learn.

We continue learning. Each new wave of popular music has critics who are shocked by over-sexualized lyrics and beats. These critics claim such forms of music can't be music from God. Jitterbug tunes, blues, jazz, rock and roll, and hip hop, have all been called music of the devil. As people get used to new sounds, and new artists begin to use new styles to talk about Jesus, love, mercy and justice, Christians come around. They get excited that young people are hearing the Gospel in their own rhythms.

Every generation does this. I think it's why grownups put up with younger people's new ideas. It wasn't that long ago their elders were putting up with them.

There may be styles of mission music that seem old-fashioned to you, but now's your time to pay it forward. Listen and imagine how music from an earlier generation may have shocked people. Here's one that's really old. Just the writer's name may raise an eyebrow: Fanny Crosby. Fanny was a nickname for Frances. Ms. Crosby, who was blind, wrote more hymns than Charles Wesley.

Several of her hymns are in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Some are about personal salvation. In one old-time favorite, "Rescue the Perishing," No. 591 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*, it was clear she was reading the Bible. The missionary movement knew following Jesus included service to people in need as was asked of those who got up and went on their mission from God. Ms. Crosby's hymn reminds us we are called to "care for the dying."

## Fanny Crosby, Hymn Writer\*

Hymn writer and poet Fanny Crosby wrote more than 9,000 hymns. Many stories have been told about her. She entered what was then known as the New York Institution for the Blind at age 15. From 1847-1858, she taught English and history at the school.

As pupil and teacher, Ms. Crosby spent 35 years at the school. She was often asked to entertain visitors with her poems, and frequently met with presidents, generals and other dignitaries. She was asked to play at President Ulysses S. Grant's funeral. Her first book of poems, published in 1844, was called *The Blind Girl and Other Poems*.

After leaving the school, she dedicated her life to serving the poorest and those most in need. Supporting herself by her writing, she gained fame for her hymns. It is said publishers had so much of her work, they took to using it under pseudonyms. Her usual fee was \$2, which frequently went to her work with the poor. Her mission work is legendary as is her devotion to serving others above herself.

Ms. Crosby continued her speaking tours and home mission work until entering her 90s, when she gradually stayed closer to home, which was then with a niece in Bridgeport, Conn. Even in those years, there was a steady stream of visitors wanting advice, autographs or glimpses of the fabled "Queen of the Gospel Song."

Ms. Crosby retained her sense of humor, often playing the piano in the parlor. She'd start with a classical number, then lapse into ragtime. From there, she "pepped things up" with a jazzed-up version of one of her hymns.

\*Adapted from: <http://www.nyise.org/fanny/> and <http://www.historywomen.com/womenoffaith/crosby.htm>

Scriptures tell us not to sit around thanking God we have a good life without suffering like other people. The parable of Lazarus found in Luke 16:19-31 is among these passages. When you find yourself saying the civic version of such an attitude – “Thank God I was born in the United States rather than in some other God-forsaken country” – it’s time for an attitude check.

Jesus’ ministry was with the poor and those who were rejected by the pious people of his day. Today, people throughout the world love their own countries and cultures. What they don’t like is not having enough to eat or clean water to drink when others have too much. Such disparity should shock everyone.

Our mission from God is to realize people don’t have to starve or die from poison water. Early missionaries who went out with an attitude of superiority often came back with an attitude of mutuality – understanding we have to work together. We have to make this world a place where Jesus would want to come again to see how we love each other and love the people of the world. Now that’s a mission from God. That will sing!

**Move 2:** Using a cell phone with a speaker function, call a pastor or lay person who regularly visits those who are ill. Tell her or him that the class is reading the old mission hymn, “Rescue the Perishing,” where it says, “care for the dying.” Ask the person about ministries where people are helped to live through serious illness. These ministries may be with those who are ill or dying or their families and friends. Ask the person what it means to “care for the dying.”

## Reality Game 6 So You Too Can Be a US-2

Have one participant report on each of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries young-adult mission-service programs including:

- The US-2 program,
- The Mission Intern program and
- Global Justice Volunteers.

Have a fourth person report on Volunteers-in-Mission opportunities available to youth and young adults. Find this information on the General Board of Global Ministries website: [www.gb-gm-umc.org](http://www.gb-gm-umc.org).

## Closing Mission Moment Song

“Oh Mary, Don’t You Weep”

(For music: <http://ibiblio.org>)

Oh Mary, don’t you weep, don’t you mourn.  
Oh Mary, don’t you weep, don’t you mourn.  
Pharaoh’s army got drowned.  
Oh Mary, don’t you weep.

## Ancient Words for Today: Luke 1:46-55

**Reader:** Mary was a young, unwed, pregnant woman carrying a special baby. Only she and God knew that, but her elderly cousin Elizabeth took her in without condemnation. Elizabeth, herself pregnant, believed the child in her womb and Mary’s child were going to change the world. In talking with Elizabeth, Mary sings a song in which she remembers Moses and Miriam’s song and the Israelites’ escape from slavery. This song is found in Luke 1:46-55.

**Leader:** Make a circle. Listen as I read one line of this revolutionary song at a time. It comes from Luke 1:46-55:

And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

*Pause.*

For the Lord has looked with favor on the lowliness of God’s servant.

*Pause.*

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

*Pause.*

For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is the Lord’s name.

*Pause.*

The Lord's mercy is for those who fear the Lord from generation to generation.

*Pause.*

The Lord has shown strength with the Lord's arm; the Lord has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

*Pause.*

The Lord has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

*Pause.*

The Lord has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

*Pause.*

The Lord has helped the Lord's servant Israel, in remembrance of the Lord's mercy,

*Pause.*

According to the promise the Lord made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to Abraham's descendents forever."

## Prayer in Unison

**Oh God, we sometimes get into trouble and you are the only way out. Teach us to sing a song of praise to you when things get tough. Help us remember you can change terrible situations into freedom. Even when the world judges us, you can make things better. We love you, and we know you love us. Amen.**

# Session 3

## Mission and Wisdom

### Know Yourself, Know Where You're Going

#### Together with God

**Reader:** Think about your life. Who are you?  
Where are you going?

**ALL:** **God is leading the way. Pay attention!**

**Reader:** Think about someone you cared about who has died and is with God.

**ALL:** **God is leading the way. Pay attention!**

**Reader:** Think about this world and all its problems.

**ALL:** **God is leading the way. Pay attention!**

#### Song

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

(For music: <http://library.timelesstruths.org/music>)

I have decided to follow Jesus.  
I have decided to follow Jesus.  
I have decided to follow Jesus.  
No turning back, no turning back.

#### Ancient Words for Today: Luke 22:60-62

Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

#### Commentary on Luke 22:60-62

One of the most devastating realities in life is betrayal. Friends betray each other. Spouses and partners betray each other. Businesses betray workers and clients. Parents betray children and children betray parents. Countries betray their people, other countries, even the world.

When you are close to someone, when you need someone or group to help you survive, you are risking betrayal. Everyone will experience betrayal in one form or another. Jesus did, and he learned how to forgive. Once he forgave, Peter needed to forgive himself.

#### Prayer in Unison

**Dear God, we want to be true to you. We hate feeling betrayed or feeling like we are betraying you. It's so bad when friends or family betray us or when we betray them. We are sorry and ask for your forgiveness. You know what else? We forgive those who have betrayed us. Most of all, we forgive ourselves for not always doing the right thing. If Peter can do it, we can do it. Amen.**

#### Song

“Here I Am, Lord”

No. 593, *The United Methodist Hymnal*

## Read and Hear: Soundtrack to War

Read Exodus 16:19-21:

And Moses said to them, "Let no one leave any of it over until morning." But they did not listen to Moses; some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul. And Moses was very angry with them. Morning by morning they gathered it, as much as each needed; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

Music has many kinds of power. It can inspire, move you to tears, make you laugh, put you to sleep. Military tanks in Iraq are wired for sound. Some soldiers blast music from the group Drowning Pool. The group's song, "Let the Bodies Hit the Floor," makes a powerful statement about armed power:

Let the bodies hit the floor ...  
Push me again  
This is the end ...  
Skin against skin, blood and bone  
You're all by yourself but you're not alone  
You wanted in, now you're here  
Driven by hate, consumed by fear  
Let the bodies hit the floor ...

"Soundtrack to War," a TV documentary, shows how the war in Iraq has gone where no war has gone before. Tank warfare is like playing video games with the devastating difference that real bodies are blown up. Downtime for the soldiers includes music that runs the gamut from folk to rock to rap to religious, but when the tanks roll, it's rock and roll, heavy metal and rap driving the message of power home to teens fighting the war in Iraq.

Music accompanying war is as old as drums, bugles, bagpipes and piccolos.

In a study on music and mission, why talk about war as a theme for music? War has been a central metaphor for Christians in mission since Paul told Christians to put on the full armor of God. Ephesians 6:10-17 says:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the Lord's power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against

the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Christian mission began way back in Jesus' time. Jesus selected 12 disciples, then according to Luke 9, sent them into the world to heal and perform miracles. They returned with stories of God's power. The final command in Matthew is to go and tell the world about the Gospel, baptizing and sharing Jesus' teachings. Christians are people on a mission to share what Jesus did and to teach what he taught.

Today's mission programs emerged close to 150 years ago. Major Christian denominations had missionary programs that peaked in the 20th century, framed by the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Check out photos of early missionaries:

<http://www.nhc.rtp.nc.us/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/fm-movement.htm>

Too many wars have been brought on by religious passions. In the Middle Ages, Crusaders were on a mission to reclaim the lands where Jesus walked. They killed Arabs, Jews and Christians. Christians still live in the Holy Land in Palestine. As Arab Christians, they are among Palestinians whose lives are controlled by walls, checkpoints, curfews, home demolitions and other restrictions of the Israeli government.

Puritans, escaping religious persecution in Europe, thought they were God's chosen people when they came to the colonies that became the United States. They had a mission they thought was from God. They treated Native Americans like Canaanites. Europeans came to the

colonies and the United States in wave after wave driving out Indigenous Peoples. Today, Native- American populations are growing but Indigenous Peoples in the United States still live in poverty without access to adequate health care.

When we sing songs about mission, we have to know what our mission is and ask, “Is this God’s mission?” Not that many decades after the Crusades, Europeans began to enslave Africans. Colonizing the Americas led to the conquest of Indigenous Peoples and then to growing enslavement of Africans. A familiar song, “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” No. 717 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*, was set to a tune composed for revivals in the South. It became a northern camp song for soldiers who praised John Brown’s rebellion against slavery.

Julia Ward Howe, and her husband, Samuel, were abolitionists – opponents of slavery. President Abraham Lincoln invited them to tour the Union army camp. When they heard the soldiers singing the rousing John Brown’s body song, Ms. Howe thought it needed new lyrics. She wrote “Battle Hymn of the Republic” as we sing it in churches today. The United Methodist Church’s mission still includes opposition to slavery and work to eradicate racism.

Darfur, Sudan, is in the throes of mass killings based on race and religion. Many people throughout the world are on a mission to stop the violence. Some say armed enforcement is the only way to do so.

## Reality Game 1 Battle Hymn of the Republic

Take a look at the lyrics of “Battle Hymn of the Republic.” Do the lyrics fit Paul’s idea of putting on the whole armor of God found in Ephesians 6:10-17? Do they fit with war situations today? If so, where? This hymn – except for the third verse – appears in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Why do you think this verse was left out of the hymnal?

## Battle Hymn of the Republic

by Julia Ward Howe, 1862

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;  
he is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath  
are stored;  
he hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift  
sword;  
his truth is marching on.

*Chorus:*

Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah!  
Glory, glory, hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

I have seen him in the watchfires of a hundred circling  
camps,  
they have builded him an altar in the evening dews and  
damps;  
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring  
lamps;  
his day is marching on.

*Chorus*

I have read a fiery Gospel writ in burnished rows of steel;  
“As ye deal with My contemners, so with you My grace  
shall deal”;  
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with  
His heel,  
Since God is marching on.

*Chorus*

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never  
call retreat;  
he is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment  
seat;  
Oh be swift, my soul, to answer him; be jubilant, my feet!  
Our God is marching on.

*Chorus*

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,  
with a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me;  
as he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,  
while God is marching on.

*Chorus*

He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,  
he is wisdom to the mighty, he is honor to the brave;  
so the world shall be his footstool, and the soul of wrong  
his slave.  
Our God is marching on.

*Chorus*

## Reality Game 2 Angel of Rap

Read the interview with the recording artist DMC that follows. Then think about the following questions:

- Do you know people in your life who have gone through hard times and come through it?
- How did DMC break out of his “box” – assigned role in life – to live more fully?
- What is your assigned “box”?
- Do you need break out to grow?
- What do you know about yourself so far in life?

Discuss these questions in small groups then share in the full group.

### Music Can Save Your Life! Checks, Thugs and Rock 'N' Roll: A Chat with DMC

*by Will Harris*

After the untimely passing of Jam Master Jay, the other two-thirds of Run-DMC took an understandably extended break to figure out their place in the rap world. ... DMC has his debut solo album scheduled for release in March 2006, as well as a documentary on VH-1 in late February. He discussed these topics with Bullz-Eye, as well as ... how an unlikely musical artist changed his mindset from suicidal to philosophical ...

DMC: So, yeah, I had a little help from my friends on the record.

BE: Nothin' wrong with that.

DMC: People that are more than just celebrities ... these guys are big names, but they're serious about what I do. I really needed musicians, because the album is really all about the music for me, and I wanted to make the best music I could, so I wanted some real cats I could get down with, if you know what I'm sayin'.

BE: I saw Sarah McLachlan is on the album, which is a name that could shock people the most or surprise people the most, anyway.

DMC: Actually, she's my favorite artist of all time. ... Her music really inspired me and, actually, that song “Angel” that she did? That was the record that saved my life.

BE: How so?

DMC: ... it was, like, 1997, and I was kind of going through a depression, and I was suicidal. And I was asking myself, am I here just to be DMC? There's got to be more to life than this. I know it sounds crazy, but it was, like, because I did this and I did that. Aerosmith, “My Adidas,” “Walk This Way,” first to go gold, first to go platinum, I grew up in Queens, I went to the best schools ... but with all this success, there was something missing. There was a void in me, but I didn't know what it was. And I told myself ... there's something missing. Something ain't right! I was having suicidal thoughts.

And it wasn't that I wasn't grateful or didn't have gratitude about what I did, but it was more, like, if this is all that life is about for me, then I want to move on to the next plane of existence, 'cause there's gotta be something missing, but I can't put my finger on it. ... so I had made a decision that I'm gonna commit suicide, and one day I got in the car ... and Sarah McLachlan's “Angel” was on the radio. And that record ... not fortune, not fame, not my wife and kids, not being DMC, not all of those great accomplishments ... that record, “Angel,” made me say that day, “It is good to be alive!” ... So for one whole year, I wasn't listening to anything but Sarah McLachlan, over and over and over ...

So at the end of the year, I go to the Grammys and the big Grammy party in L.A., Clive Davis' Grammy party that everybody wants to be at. Who do I see there? It's that lady! 'Cause she was “that lady” to me then. I gotta tell her what her record did for me. So I walked on over to her, and she seen me, and the first thing she said to me was, “DMC of Run-DMC! I love you guys! You guys are so cool!”

And I'm, like, really? Wow, she likes me! But I'm, like, Miss McLachlan, I love you to death, I was suicidal and so depressed, but your record saved my life. The name of the

record's "Angel," they say you're an angel, you sing like an angel, but you're not an angel to me; you're a God to me, because you saved my life!

And she looks at me like, (uncertainly) "Oooooookay! I just wanted to say 'hi!'" But then she looks at me, and she says, "That's what music is supposed to do. Thank you for telling me that, Daryl." And she shakes my hand, and she walks away.

And that was another defining moment in my life, because before then, in the midst of all the suicidal thoughts, I'm, like, okay, I'm DMC, I'm 40 years old, how does a B-boy grow up to be a B-man? What do I do? What am I gonna rap about? 'Cause I still want to do this hip-hop thing, but I ain't here to talk about what I did when I was 18 or 25, ... I was in kind of a creative limbo. ...

After three years go by, I found out that I was adopted, when I was at the age of 35. ... it was at that point when I went, "That's the void that was missing!" ... When I found out that I was adopted, it was another defining moment that made everything make sense. ... After I found out I was adopted, I was afraid I was gonna get a little bit upset and depressed about the abandonment issue, like, oh, shoot, my momma gave me away, why she didn't want me? Wasn't I good enough? What was the matter with me?

But then I said, no, no, no! A light came on in my head, and I thought, what do I talk about at this point in my career? How am I gonna keep going in this hip-hop thing that I love so much, especially when people are saying that hip-hop is a young person's music ... then I thought of somethin'. I said, "Oh! My story's bigger than just being DMC ... My story's a story of purpose and destiny!"

If I was never given up for adoption by my birth mother, my adopted mother never woulda come and got me, I never woulda moved to Hollis, I would've never met Run, there would be no DMC, and rap wouldn't have jumped off the way it did when it did. ... So instead of getting depressed about this, I could write a song about this!

... So I decided I'm gonna write this record that's gonna help that little foster kid or that little adopted kid or, even more so, that grownup! Adoption is just my situation; I'm living proof that, whatever situation you in, whatever

predicament you're in, wherever you are in life, you have a reason. Look at me!

And then another light went on in my head, everything started to make sense! I'm gonna go get that lady, whose record helped my life make sense three years earlier, to help me do a record to help some other people!

... so I called Sarah McLachlan, and said, "Yo, Sarah!" I got her on the phone and said, "Remember when I seen you three years ago, and you told me that's what music is supposed to do 'cause I told you what your music did for me ... ? Well, I just found out that I'm adopted, and I'm gonna do a Harry Chapin remix of 'Cats in the Cradle,' and I'm gonna make it so it can help some people, and I was wondering if you could do the record with me." And she said, "Yes, I'll do the record with you."

BE: That's awesome.

DMC: ... she looked at me and said, "Daryl, I was adopted, too." I did not know that. That's the power of music. I found out what I have to do. I have to write songs. ... once you get the responsibility of being that person that people look up to as a musical artist, you have a responsibility to talk about the issues that's going on ... and not just the things in the hip-hop world. There's wars going on, the schools are messed up ... you know what I'm sayin'?

*From: <http://www.bullz-eye.com/music/interviews/2006/dmc.htm>  
03/01/2005*

## Reality Game 3 Song of Life

**Move 1:** Think about the war songs played by the tank gunners. They give them the drive to complete their mission to kill the enemy. The music could even be said to save their lives. You may or may not agree with the war, but in the end, we all want peace and for people to live their lives without fear.

**Move 2:** Think about DMC and the crossover musical experience he says probably saved his life. Write one or two lines on a piece of paper that you would say to help a friend keep on living.

**Move 3:** As a full group, organize everyone's lines in an order that begins to make sense. Don't worry if there is a bit of a mix. Just let it flow. You can put everyone's lines on a table or floor or stick them on a wall or bulletin board.

**Move 4:** As a group, see if you can read them in a rhythmic way that begins to create a song of life.

## Assignment for Next Session

Listen to music or search for lyrics online for a popular song that has changed the world or has potential to change the world. Write down one verse and the chorus as an example to share with others in the group at the next session.

## Closing Mission Moment

### Prayer

Come together in a circle and pray silently for the people of the world who live in war, in refugee camps, in places of fear.

### Song

"Kumbaya"

(For music: <http://tsc.kidsmusic.com>)

Kumbaya, my Lord, kumbaya!  
Kumbaya, my Lord, kumbaya.  
Kumbaya, my Lord, kumbaya.  
O Lord, kumbaya.

Someone's crying, Lord, kumbaya.  
Someone's crying, Lord, kumbaya.  
Someone's crying, Lord, kumbaya.  
O Lord, kumbaya.

Someone's dying, Lord, kumbaya.  
Someone's dying, Lord, kumbaya.  
Someone's dying, Lord, kumbaya.  
O Lord, kumbaya.

Someone's living, Lord, kumbaya.  
Someone's living, Lord, kumbaya.  
Someone's living, Lord, kumbaya.  
O Lord, kumbaya.

## Session 4

# Changing the World, Changing the Rhythm, Changing the Words, Changing Us

## Together with God

### Song

“Siyahamba”

No. 2235, *The Faith We Sing*

## Ancient Words for Today: Luke 9:51-56

*Leader: The following scene from Luke 9:51-56 can be acted out in then-and-now scenes. Take time at the beginning of class or before class to prepare.*

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village.

## Commentary on Luke 9:51-56

The biblical Samaritans we know best are the Good Samaritan who stopped and helped the man who was mugged and the Samaritan woman who engaged Jesus in

theological conversation at the well and then convinced people in her town that Jesus was the Messiah. In Luke 9:51-56, we hear about Samaritans who were not interested in Jesus when they heard he was going to Jerusalem.

You might not know that Samaritans were not welcome in Jerusalem because they were scorned by most Jews of that day. They had intermarried with other tribes and believed Moses met God on Mount Horeb instead of Mount Sinai. Samaritans and Jews were two peoples from the same ancient roots who rejected each other’s beliefs, a bit like Jews, Christians and Muslims today. The disciples asked Jesus if they should destroy the Samaritans because they were uncooperative. Jesus rebuked the disciples for their thinking.

What was wrong with their thinking? Have we changed since then? We can march along thinking we are in the light of God but do the wrong thing. How do we tell the difference? We need guidance. Let’s sing boldly a prayer for guidance.

### Song

“Guide My Feet”

No. 2208, *The Faith We Sing*

## Reality Game 1 Change the Music

**Move 1:** Look at the hymn, “As a Fire Meant for Burning,” No. 2237 in *The Faith We Sing*.

Ruth Duck wrote the words to this hymn. The tune is an oldie, now in public domain so you don’t have to worry about copyright laws. It is pretty easy to sing so multiple hymn writers have used it.

**Move 2:** Look at the tune name in the bottom right corner of the page. It’s called “Beach Spring.” Look in the back of *The United Methodist Hymnal* to see how many times that tune is used.

**Move 3:** Now look at “Sent Out in Jesus’ Name,” No. 2184 in *The Faith We Sing*. Look at who wrote the words and music in the bottom left corner of the hymn. This song is a traditional Cuban song. No one knows who wrote it. Jorge Maldonado translated the chorus into English and his words are copyrighted, but you can write your own verses for this tune.

Remember Charles Wesley? He borrowed tunes from Johann Sebastian Bach, Martin Luther and, some say, from local pubs.

**Move 4:** Work in groups of two to write a verse to the tune of either “Sent Out in Jesus’ Name” or “Beach Spring.” Say something about the needs of the world and what Christians should do to be of service to others. Write a verse of protest to God about your calling or use the prophetic style of condemning evil doers – no names, please. Or you can write a love verse for God and all humanity.

**Move 5:** Once you have a few lines – rhyming is optional – share them with another duo, then post them on a wall or bulletin board. Try singing some of the songs. Select three or four to create a whole new song. Create a name for your music company like Wall Song Collective. Decide where your company’s proceeds will go. How about to mission?

*If a small group wants to follow up on this, have members of that group collect the verses and refine them.*

## Read and Hear: Mission, Colonization and Imperialism

As we discussed in an earlier session, when the first missionaries went from the United States to other countries, they assumed their customs and beliefs were superior to those they would encounter elsewhere. As a result, in places like Korea and Africa, Christians know many of the older U.S. hymns because for many years all they sang were translated Western hymns. Today, Christians in countries around the world are writing hymns with tonalities and rhythms that are indigenous to local cultures.

Copyright laws are in need of evaluation. Who owns choruses that come out of the life of a people? Can someone from one country come in, hear a song and copyright it so they make money on it? Is that a rip-off?

Let’s look at an example. South Africa is known for its history of apartheid – racial segregation enforced by torture, military force and intensive surveillance of Blacks. Funerals were the only place where it was legal for people to gather. So black South Africans sang freedom songs at funerals. Many of the dead were victims of torture and violence by the South African police.

**Move 1:** Look at the song, “Freedom Is Coming,” No. 2192 in *The Faith We Sing*. Look at the bottom left corner of the page. It is a traditional freedom song from South Africa. It has been copyrighted by Utryck, which is administered by Walton Music Corp. Utryck is owned by Anders Nyberg of Sweden. He has a contract with Walton, a U.S. music company to manage copyright payments. They took a popular chorus, copyrighted it and are making money off the use of the song.

### Apartheid in the Movies

To understand apartheid, rent two movies: “Catch a Fire” with Tim Robbins, 2006, and “Cry Freedom” with Denzel Washington and Kevin Klein, 1987. It’s important to know what happens when human rights are suspended for any group and the government decides fear and torture are tools of the state.

Paul Simon was criticized for using the group “Ladysmith Black Mambazo” as a backup group on one of his albums. People thought he was ripping off Black South African singing. “Ladysmith Black Mambazo” is now famous, earning money and acclaim.

**Move 2:** In groups of three, discuss the pros and cons to using music from poorer countries and peoples. Then discuss this in the full group.

The United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries has produced a series of Global Praise song books with songs of faith from around the world. The songs are exciting and passionate. Once we get the feel for the various styles, these songs can enliven worship. The diverse styles can change us. Through these books, Christian composers from around the world are getting published and paid for their songs.

## Reality Game 2 Sing (Write) a New Song

**Move 1:** Look at the lyrics you wrote to the tune “Beach Spring” or “Sent Out in Jesus’ Name.” Put a copyright symbol on your lyrics. You can either put your individual names on your lines or use your group’s name. You can copyright your lyrics either way.

**Move 2:** There are hymns that have authors of single verses. Look at No. 437 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Jean Sibilus wrote two verses in 1899 and Georgia Harkness one in 1939. Georgia Harkness was one of the first women theologians in the Methodist Church. She wrote more than 40 books and also wrote the hymn, “Hope of the World,” No. 178 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

## Reality Game 3 Change the World: Extreme Makeover

Did you know music can change the world? Remember the “Battle Hymn of the Republic”? It was important to freeing African Americans from slavery.

Art can change the world.

How about U2 and Bono? Bono wants to eliminate extreme poverty in this generation. Check out the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) 2004 interview with Bono that comes near the end of this session.

Bono and U2 have taken on the issue of environmental racism. Environmental racism is when communities of color get the garbage dumps, the incinerators, the radiation waste and chemical runoff in their neighborhoods and communities. U2 discusses environmental racism in its CD, “How to Dismantle a Nuclear Bomb,” in the song, “Crumbs from Your Table.”

Where you live should not decide  
Whether you live or whether you die  
Three to a bed  
Sister Ann, she said  
Dignity passes by

And you speak of signs and wonders  
But I need something other  
I would believe if I was able  
I'm waiting on the crumbs from your table

**Move 1:** Share the verses and choruses from the songs you identified as having changed the world or having the potential to do so. If your group is large, work in small groups. Then select one verse and chorus from each group to share in the full group.

Do you have passion to change the world? Are you on a mission from God?

**Move 2:** Spend a minute or two and write on a large sticky note how you want to change the world. Think big. If Bono can try to eliminate extreme poverty, what can you imagine doing?

**Move 3:** Put a globe or world map on a table or wall. Post your passions about how the world could be on the globe or map. Train your mind to think on God who called this world “Good.” Train your heart to feel, heal and face the real. Train your feet to keep on keeping on until the world is a better place. Train yourself for the job that will allow you to change the world.

## Closing Mission Moment

To close, stand in a circle and share what has moved you during the study on music and mission.

### Song

“Sent Out In Jesus’ Name”

No. 2184, *The Faith We Sing*

#### Bono's Pledge

Rock singer Bono has pledged to spend the rest of his life trying to help the impoverished around the world.

The U2 frontman told BBC One's “Friday Night” with Jonathan Ross he wanted the current generation to be “remembered for something other than the Internet.”

It should be “the first generation to eradicate extreme poverty,” he said.

“I want to spend the rest of my life doing that.”

His bandmates complained but supported his causes he said, adding it still felt great to be in U2.

Bono has been a high-profile campaigner on issues including Third World debt and AIDS, and has close relationships with some of the world's most important politicians.

He said 1985's Live Aid concert, raising money for the starving in Africa, made him see what could be achieved.

“That day changed my life and started me on this incredible adventure,” he said.

Bono has been one of world's biggest rock stars since U2 rose to superstar status in the early 1980s.

From: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/4068573.stm>

J. Ann Craig served 20 years in national church leadership of the United Methodist Church in both National and Women's Divisions of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. She produced 17 United Methodist Women's spiritual-growth studies and was a regular contributor to *Response*, United Methodist Women's magazine.

A graduate of Nebraska Wesleyan University and Yale Divinity School, her publications include *Traditional Beliefs of United Methodists*, *Retreats Manual* and *Families: Drawing the Circle Wide*.

Ms. Craig is currently director of religion, faith and values for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), which is committed to ensuring fair, accurate and inclusive representations of LGBT people in the media.



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