Teaching Human Rights

A Curriculum for Religious Leaders

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING HUMAN RIGHTS: A CURRICULM FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS

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Public theology, tested ecumenical systems, global international organizations and individual rights are the ideas explored in the writing. Public theology, the act of bringing religious ideas and spirituality to the public square with the intention of changing the public. The ecumenical community, a community of varying Christian faiths has a history of working together for the common good. The United Nations, an intergovernmental organization, crafted to prevent a new World War is the home of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The project creates a curriculum for religious leaders become experts in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and equip those leaders to teach and preach these human rights in their contexts and hold their governments accountable when rights are violated.

Individual human rights extended to everyone, if respected by everyone can strengthen the community writ large. The tension between the individual nature of human rights and the collective nature of religious action are not in opposition to each other, but rather, work hand in hand, an empowered individual joining a community of faith to make life on earth better for all.

The development of curriculum for religious leaders establishes the expectations of outcomes as well as the framework for teaching the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights to the leaders of faith across the world. In this teaching, in the upholding of rights, we may get closer to heaven on earth.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all those who work for human rights, justice and peace in their communities. I especially thank my loving family, my parents, J. David and Sherrie Smith, my twin brother Eric Smith and my maternal grandparents who believed in me more than anyone, the late Clayton and Alma King.

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I also want to thank the consultation committee for their insistence on speakers in the curriculum. The reminder of the privileged place that I hold, serving as a connector between the United Nations system and leaders of faith, in the drafting, I did not shy away from recommending the leading people (their positions) in the world to help share knowledge with the participants of the curriculum. I am thankful to my committee for reminding me of the privilege and responsibility of my position.

This project is in development, and I have experienced immense support in drafting it. I anticipate that teaching the curriculum itself, however, can and will challenge some in the faith community. The persistent perception of the United Nations and its Human Rights system as a ‘leftist’ or ‘liberal’ ideology, and the insistence of particular approaches that interpret the Bible as confronting human rights, will be challenging to some. It is my hope, nevertheless, that with training and rumination, the

goodness of the rights will speak to the goodness of all the teachers and the good message they share every day.

Introduction

The Doctor of Ministry in Public Theology cohort at the Drew Theological Seminary has experienced a season unlike others. I imagine every cohort feels this way, but from the spring of 2019 to the beginning of 2021, these differences have seemed to be objectively noteworthy. We have watched as an American president actively engaged right-wing white supremacists. We have experienced the terror and sickness of a global pandemic and opined as each of our cohort members experienced it in different ways. We have also asked questions. How does the church function outside of the walls of the church? How do we respond to our political leaders sowing division and hate? How do we respond when fire destroys our beloved and exemplary Middle Collegiate Church? This project may not be able to answer all these questions, in part because a decades-old set of human rights continues to condition the world in which we live. This project will posit that perhaps, had people been able to implement these rights, they would have impacted the aforementioned challenges.

Last year, I watched news coverage of the final memorial and funeral service for George Floyd, another black man killed by police racism and brutality. As I write, there is news that Rikers Island found "no criminality" in the death of Layleen Polanco, a transgender woman with a seizure condition who died in solitary confinement. This year, a mob of right-wing white supremacists attacked our institutions in a failed effort to stop the legal process of certifying the 2020 election results.

In early 2020, Australia was on fire. The most tragic news story at the time focused on the decimation wreaked by these fires. Now, it seems as if the entire world is on fire. Our country's heteronormative white supremacist histories have continued to

dictate our customs, laws, and freedoms, or lack thereof, and they are crushing the world. People with different beliefs from mine have been speaking about end-times.

I do not believe we are facing the end of times, but I do believe we must change.

My cohort has joked with me about my Calvinist theology. In our ecumenical and interfaith setting, I have learned to grow and appreciate other theologies. I have also found solace in my grounding. Calvinist theology holds that the only perfection is God's. As I explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and as I seek to create a curriculum to teach those rights to religious leaders, I am not naïve enough to think that I, or we, will be able to do so perfectly; rather, I hope that with prayer and faith, my and our actions can bring us one step closer to the perfection we see and know in God.

As I began drafting this paper, I held the proclamations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights able to make the world a better place. Since then, world events have challenged my beliefs. Nevertheless, my journey has now returned me to the judgement that collective work on human rights would indeed improve our world. Lately, I have been reminded of Eric Garner so often that it seems like his last words before he was murdered by a police officer constantly ring in my ears: "I can't breathe." How many people around the world feel like they "can't breathe" because of violations of their human rights? Father Larry Snyder, former President of Catholic Charities USA, and a personal friend and mentor stated, "We are all on a journey toward God. May our actions together be grounded in the criteria upon which we ultimately will be judged, so that we may hear the words of the king: 'Come you that are blessed by the Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world' (Matt. 35:34)" (Snyder 2010). My theological frame posits the perfection of God and the imperfection of

humans, but it also allows us to turn to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as a means of guiding humanity closer to God's perfection.

Teaching religious leaders to teach human rights will better our world. Proper training of religious leaders is vital to the education of communities. The role of the religious community in shaping the public is vital, indeed, it is the very heart of public theology.

Chapter One: Public Theology and Framing

My working definition for public theology comes from Sebastian Kim and Katie Day: "Public theology refers to the church reflectively engaging with those within and outside its institutions on issues of common interest and for the common good" (Kim and Day 2017, 2). Kim and Day expand the definition with more detail and in a manner that draws me, for it refers to work inside and outside of the Institution of Church for the common interest of people. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights grants all people 'inalienable individual rights,' while public theology works calls for the 'common good.' These two positions are not in conflict in my belief system, but rather, unfathomably linked.

Previous graduate work in economics allows me to explain. In economics, a model is based on assumptions; an individual may create a model in which assumptions are fulfilled or not to assess an outcome. This project assumes the goodness of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. My theological reflection indeed wrestles with this assumption, but finally, I will grant that these rights are good. A second assumption, which is arguably untested, is that if individuals live fully by these rights, society and communities will become stronger, more peaceful, and just. This claim remains largely untested because to date, not one society or community has achieved perfection in living.

The imperfection is not ideal, but my own Calvinist theology allows me to live in it. The existential nature of human imperfection, however, does not mean that we should not work individually and collectively to come closer to perfection. It simply means, for me at least, that only God is perfect, and the best that we can do is strive each day to

access a measure of that perfection. This position is not an excuse for human mistakes. Rather, it defines a goal towards which we may strive.

Day and Kim explain the importance of this project in the public theology discourse, citing, “creative public theology have contributed to the evolution of the movement in the last decades, moving us into new areas in answering the challenge, ‘Show us what theology looks like.’ Centers for public theology were being developed in institutions of higher education around the world to pursue the development of theologies that were meaningfully engaged with their public contexts.” (Day and Kim 2017, 9) In creating a curriculum to partner with an institution of higher education, this project seeks to continue this work of public theology.

Chapter Two: Human Rights

In June 1948, the General Assembly of the newly formed United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This Declaration explains in its preamble that "every individual and organ of society" shall uphold the 30 rights it names. The victors of World War II declared and adopted these universal rights, and they have held a place in society since then:

> Now, therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction. (United Nations, 1948)

As the faith community is an organ of society, it shares with the State the responsibility for teaching and maintaining these Universal Human Rights. This paper explores the relationship between faith and the secular human rights framework outlined in the UDHR.

At the risk of being too literal, it is essential to know the 30 articles of the Declaration. (When this essay refers to 'human rights,' it means either all 30 together or one individually. See appendix A for the UDHR.) People from across the globe came together to establish this essential list. Nevertheless, this essay challenges the Declaration by asking such questions as, 'Is it a Western document of its time and dominated by colonialist thinking?' 'Do the 30 articles overlook some individuals' rights, or simply,

just some rights?' 'Are these basic human rights consistent with faith traditions, or do they challenge those systems?'

While I was drafting this paper, a global pandemic hit the world. The number of sick and dying are increasing daily, although currently there are some improvement trends. Contemporaneously, many state and local government leaders have called on their communities to shelter in place, stay home, or social distance. Social distancing means different things for different people. The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention prescribe six feet of distance between people from various households to control COVID-19 spread. Six feet in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, where I grew up, is quite distinct from six feet in Manhattan, New York City, where I currently live. These same agencies encourage individuals to wash hands for twenty seconds with soap and water after coming into contact with the outside. Performing such a task is easier in my apartment in Manhattan than it would be in the village I once visited outside of Tanga, Tanzania. The list could go on and on. We see here how context matters, but truths remain true. Perhaps it is easier for some places to do thing A or thing B, but, like we see in the COVID-19 context, we know that sanitation, mask wearing and vaccination help to solve the problem. The same can be said for human rights, in places where human rights are less valued, the achievement of obtaining and protecting those rights is more difficult, it does not make those rights any less vital.

As we continue to experience this pandemic, human rights are under attack. Anti-Asian hate speech and actions are increasing in the United States, driven at least in part by the former President's rhetoric. Policy makers are scrambling to stop evictions and protect the right to housing from property owners who continue to be more interested in

profit than human life. The World Food Program has warned of a global shortage of food and increase in famine, while children in countries like Yemen experience full famine already.

There are also persons claiming rights that could injure others. White men and women are protesting in state capitals, many carrying guns with messages such as “I have a right to get a haircut,” or “I have a right to go out to eat.” We cannot and should not ignore the difference between human rights violations, where individuals may be forbidden haircuts because of skin color, compared to closures of non-essential businesses to protect human life. The UN human rights framework, though born out of the winners of World War II are aspirational, in that those rights are not intended for the downtrodden or the powerful, but rather, they are universal, expected for everyone.

The Declaration guarantees human rights to all, and at one time or another, governments from around the world have committed to enforcing them. These rights are intended to create a societal baseline that establishes fundamental entitlements. Since its adoption in 1948, however, there have been problems with enforcing the UDHR. This paper will outline some of the challenges in universality later.

So often in faith and public life conversations, people speak of their “rights.” Indeed, I have consulted with international church partners on whether certain countries’ actions were, in fact, violations of human rights. Violations are committed by governments who are responsible for upholding the rights, multinational corporations, and individuals. There is no doubt that human rights violations happen each and every day. The faith community has a responsibility to identify and work to correct these violations.

Covid 19 is causing the world to think and act anew. Italy shut down, nearly entirely quarantined, and towns in China and New York went into quarantine as well. In New York, the original infection began with a man requested to self-quarantine but who chose not to. He, instead, attended business functions and religious services. Such a situation leads to the question of what to do when the rights of the individual, protected as it might be by the UDHR, conflict with the rights, or the wellbeing, of the community. These are questions to explore. Likewise, is supporting the secular human rights framework consistent with faith values?

While some scholars may assert that religious behaviors and norms became established well before human rights and therefore precede them hierarchically, David Aune investigates human rights from a Christian perspective to argue that Christian scripture is such that it may adapt to the norms of personal rights of a given time:

> While some nineteenth-century historians, like Adolf von Harnack, confidently reconstructed the teachings of Jesus in a way that was friendly to modern human rights, emphasizing the universal fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the infinite worth of the individual, that reconstruction was an anachronistic illusion. By the mid-twentieth century, New Testament scholars were making serious efforts to acknowledge and correct the problems of subjectivism inherent in reconstructing the life and teaching of Jesus. While it is legitimate to inquire whether particular sayings or deeds of Jesus are historical or not, the Gospels have been read as realistic narratives throughout the history of the Church. It is primarily this commonsense reading that has influenced the Church throughout the centuries. (Aune 2010, 96)

Aune's own work may not stand the test of time, even if one were to ignore the gender-exclusive language. Freedom of speech and freedom of religion are both necessary for Aune's argument to work. Therefore, explaining the centuries of religions

that came before the UDHR rights is necessary when assessing the relationship between faith and human rights. Lauren Green McAffee and Brian McAffee note,

> It is in Christianity and, more specifically, in the Bible that we find the source of universal human rights. All humans are created in the image of God—this is the abolitionists' argument for the dissolution of slavery. All women are created in the image of God—this is the argument of women's rights advocates for equal pay and voting rights. Children are created in the image of God—this is the argument against child labor. For pro-life advocates, this truth extends even into the womb, as they argue that every fetus is a human being, an image bearer in utero, and therefore is deserving of freedom and life. (McAffee and McAffee 2019)

This argument of human rights as rooted in Christian scripture challenges some of the most secular arguments for human rights, for example, a woman's right to choose what to do with her own body and pregnancy. Without diluting the focus of the paper, the argument here still turns on the question of where life begins. Anti-abortion advocates answer that it begins in utero, while pro-choice advocates, that it begins at birth. McAffee and McAffee's biblical argument relies on the concept of *Imago Dei*—the likeness and image of God in all persons—remains relevant even in a debate on the inception of that likeness.

Imago Dei is an important concept in unpacking human rights from a Judeo-Christian perspective. Perceiving humankind as the likeness and image of God suggests that humankind must respect, honor, and cherish each other as they would respect, honor, and cherish God. We understand that sin separates us from God, but also that God is greater than sin. The likeness and image of God in the human form, whether as the incarnated Jesus Christ or the individual human being, in combination with God's presence on earth and how humankind treats humankind, suggest humanity's closeness to God.

Daniel Migliore explores the image of God, citing Douglas John Hall's *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship* to conclude,

> In agreement with numerous contemporary theologians, I would contend that the symbol "image of God" describes human life in relationship with God and with the other creatures. In the first story of creation in Genesis, the statement "God created humankind in his own image" is followed by "male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27). To be human is to live freely and gladly in relationships of mutual respect and love. The existence of human creatures in relationship—a paradigmatic form of which is the coexistence of male and female—reflects the life of God who eternally lives not in solitary existence but in communion. Thus, the image of God is not to be construed primarily as a set of human faculties, possessions, or endowments. It expresses self-transcending life in relationship with others—with the "wholly other" we call God, and with all those different "other" who need our help and whose help we also need in order to be the human creatures God intends us to be. (Migliore 2014, 145)

Here, Migliore indicates how we may interpret human rights from a theological or biblical perspective. The belief that God created people in His image serves us to best understand how, indeed, we should treat others. Would we exploit God purposely? Would we say God is less than? Indeed, I hope not.

The logic behind my argument, however, requires belief in God, but this paper is not focusing on how the agnostic or atheist justifies the relationship between faith and human constructions of fundamental rights, since this might well be moot for them. Moreover, humanist thought suggests a commitment to community and other persons. Boaventura de Sousa Santos's *If God were a Human Rights Activist* blends the political with the theological, but assesses human rights mainly from a theological lens:

> We live in a time in which the most appalling social injustices and unjust human sufferings no longer seem to generate the moral indignation and political will need both to combat them effectively and to create a more just and fair society. Under such circumstances, it seems evident that we cannot afford to waste any genuine social experience that we might resort

> to in order to strengthen the organization and the determination of all those who have not given up the struggle for a better society, and specifically those who have done so under the banner of human rights. Not to waste social experience means also to recycle and transform it in the light of the objectives at hand. (Santos 2015, XIII)

When the Judeo-Christian tradition then looks at the inherent, or what we would call 'God-given,' rights the UDHR identifies, we see in some ways a secular, government-driven call for us to be our best God-changed selves. In some ways, the *Imago Dei* protected by these human rights helps us to challenge the sin by which we fall short of God.

The *Imago Dei* often appears in the Judeo-Christian community; references to the passage in Genesis have provided some bedrock for exegetical thought and the development of organized religion. What, then, is the relationship between individual human rights, the *Imago Dei*, its wider implications, religious traditions, and anti-religious beliefs, and what does this relationship contribute to the foundations of the UDHR?

The *Imago Dei* therefore functions both as a defense of UDHR's individual freedoms as well as an indictment of them. On the one hand, the concept that a person is the image of God relies on the uniqueness of both the person and God and shows deference for the individual over the community. On the other hand, the concept's focus on the individual over the collective contravenes other passages in Genesis that emphasize that God created people in community with each other.

Governments negotiated the UDHR and their representatives passed it in the United Nations General Assembly. The Assembly is a collective that stands in for the individual. This collective body of governments represented an understood and shared

concept of humanity, and they sought to bolster it by ensuring respect for the rights of the individual.

The process of an individual to choose their faith, or even to believe that God or a higher being chooses them for faith, is deeply personal. The UDHR allows for individuals to follow any ideology of seeking meaning, higher power, and views about the afterlife.

Amartya Sen, currently the Thomas W. Lamont University Professor and Professor of Economics and Philosophy at Harvard University, has engaged in human rights in the context of their relationship with Westernism. He notes, "Is it right…that non-Western society should be encouraged and pressed to conform to 'Western values of liberty and freedom?'" (Sen 2004, 479). Sen argues that justifications of diminishing rights based on location, privilege, or lack thereof are unfounded. He asserts, "The recognition of diversity within different cultures is extremely important in the contemporary world, since we are constantly bombarded by oversimplified generalizations about 'Western civilization,'… 'Asian values,' 'African cultures,' and so on. These unfounded readings of history and civilization are not only intellectually shallow, but they also add to the divisiveness of the world in which we live. Boorishness begets violence" (Sen 2004, 479).

Madhavi Sunder writes in *Keeping Faith: Reconciling Women's Human Rights and Religion*:

> Thus far, I have discussed the importance of recognizing the Enlightenment values of freedom, equality, and dissent within the religious sphere. But what about the reverse phenomenon—the recognition of religion in the public sphere? In recent years, this issue has focused specifically on women and girls, with the flashpoint debate centering on Muslims wearing religious headscarves (*hijab)* of the more

> conspicuous, full-body covering *burqa* in public. Approaches to the issue are as wide-ranging as traditions of secularism. In the United States, where the free exercise of religion is guaranteed in the Constitution, there has been a wide latitude given to the wearing of religious garments, including headpieces and jewelry, in the public sphere. In Europe and elsewhere, there has been much greater furor over and objection to such practices. Partly this derives from strong traditions of *laïcité* in countries like France and Turkey, which understand secularism as the absence of religion in the public sphere. In both of these countries, however, concerns about gender equality also drive the debates about Muslim women's dress, which is seen as a symbol of inferior status and incompatible with women's equality guaranteed by secular law. Oppression, whereas the middle range of systems stretching from cooperationist through accommodationist to separationist regimes are most likely to optimize freedom of religion or belief. (Sunder 2012, 292)

Sunder here demonstrates her assumption that societies perceive religious dress as "inferior status" of women, but what about a woman's right to choose a faith with a tradition that requires a specific dress. When I visit the Western Wall in Jerusalem, I wear a kippah, not for religious reasons but as a sign of respect to the religion whose holy site I am visiting. Nevertheless, because of individual human rights, I can either visit the site or not, and when I visit, I can choose to wear the required dress or not.

People of faith must wonder about this philosophy, however, and one must look at the two-tiered system of whether the actions are giving rights or instead taking them away. An individual may fast for their faith and enter into that practice freely, but the action of fasting for a deeper relationship with the numinous is far different from the actions of a government imposing starvation upon an individual or a community due to creed. The agency to make autonomous decisions about faith or other subjects, as far as any decision may be autonomous, rests in the individualism that the UDHR promotes and protects.

Jim Ife explores the tension between human rights, the Enlightenment, and morality as professed through faith:

> Discussing spirituality in relation to either human rights or community development presents special difficulties. The Enlightenment tradition, which has so affected ideas of both community and human rights, does not deal well with spirituality. Indeed, the Enlightenment arose in part as a reaction to the European religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and sought to remove religion and superstition from our understanding of the world and from our moral reasoning. Accordingly, spirituality does not occupy a central place in Enlightenment thinking. It is accepted as essentially a personal matter, not open to rational inquiry and not of great importance. (Ife 2009, 189-190)

One must wonder here—with the absence of spirituality and the emphasis on human rights during the Enlightenment—how one may recognize the goodness of all over the brokenness of all. If there is no higher power, or no God, as Enlightenment thinking encourages, are good and evil in each person in a constant struggle? The absence of spirituality in Enlightenment thinking is almost as hard to accept as the absence of reason from theological understanding.

Samuel Moyn stated, “It has been tempting for four decades to believe that human rights are the primary bulwark against barbarism. But an even more ambitious agenda is to provide the necessary alternative to the rising evils of our time” (Moyn 2018). For Moyn, the human rights agenda, advocacy, and work must all evolve within the political climate in which they exist.

Other writers are critical of the modern universal human rights framework. Some argue that the framework reflects European and North American ideals without leaving space for non-Christian, non-Western tradition to flourish. One wonders, are traditions or rights more valuable?

Stephen Kinzer is critical of the modern emphasis on human rights, which he terms “human rights imperialism”:

> When the global human rights movement emerged nearly half a century ago, no one could have imagined that it would one day be scorned as an enemy of human rights. Today, this movement desperately needs a period of reflection, deep self-examination, and renewal. The ever-insightful historian Barbara Tuchman had it exactly right when she wrote a sentence that could be the motto of a chastened and reformed Human Rights Watch: “Humanity may have common ground, but needs and aspirations vary according to circumstances. (Kinzer 2010)

Here, needs and aspirations are important parts of the discussion. The Human Rights framework, or rather, not-for-profit organizations who work from the basis of that framework, continue to try to expand human rights beyond those originally outlined in the UDHR. Indeed, one may argue that their selfish fundraising supersedes an adherence to the rights guaranteed through a United Nations General Assembly vote. If we are to teach the human rights framework, and to expect religious leaders from across the globe to adopt it, teach, and preach it in their own communities, we must recognize how it has been both good for humanity and exploited for fundraising goals of organizations.

Sohrab Ahmari addresses Kinzer’s critique directly:

> Kinzer is clearly aware of the fact he is treading on dangerous ground and playing with ideas with toxic pedigrees. Perhaps it is for this reason that he is compelled to attach the predicate “western” to every individual right. Yet one wonders how he accounts for the myriad indigenous movements from the heart of the “east” (whatever that means) calling for freedom of speech and assembly, gender equity, LGBT rights, and so on. Are Iran’s Green and Sudan’s Girifna movements human rights imperialists? And pro-democracy Bahraini bloggers and Tunisian cyberactivists too? Imagine what Kinzer’s proposals would mean in practical terms. Can human rights activists be expected to ignore the plight of a woman being stoned in Iran for adultery or a journalist tortured in Mubarak’s jails? (“Terribly sorry, but we wouldn’t want to judge your oppressors by the meter of our culturally determined, imperialistic standards—tough!”) (Ahmari 2011)

The dialogue between Ahmari and Kinzer reveals the stresses of the "rights" arguments. In some ways, both the critique and its response are wholly valid. This is the conundrum regarding individual rights and how to protect them. There will always be questions: who determines what those rights are; who is responsible for protecting those rights; why critique a system that provides more help than not, if it is at least partially working?

The human rights system is based on individual rights. The religious community is based on a collective or a whole. Mathew 28:19–20 (NRSV) contains 'the great commandment': "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age." This call to Christians is to spread the message of God around the world. The interpretation of this call has differed across sects and centuries. The call itself and its intentions are those of the Christian community. Does it not, therefore, make sense that this community is at the center of Christian (and non-Christian) houses of worship?

Nations have shut down borders and immigration and released prisoners and taken other actions due to the pandemic, and we see the inequity of the human condition in testing, treatment, and even prevention of diseases. Individual rights and the responsibility to protect our neighbor are testing communities of faith and traditional intergovernmental systems, including the United Nations and its treaty bodies like the Human Rights Council and High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Michele Bachelet, the current High Commissioner for Human Rights, former President of Chile, and former physician, considers how this pandemic is impacting both individual human rights and the collective good, now and in the future:

> What appears to be good for the social and economic welfare of the overall population may significantly increase the risks for some parts of that same population. There is, for example, already substantial data in some countries showing that the pandemic is having a disproportionate impact on racial and ethnic minorities, and on migrant workers. People with disabilities, and people with existing underlying health issues, are at heightened risk due to the prevalence of other risk factors. Some indigenous peoples face extreme risks. Plans to lift lockdowns should include specific measures to address groups such as these. Again, monitoring and reporting—using disaggregated data—will be key to identifying disproportionate impacts on particular groups. Other specific steps that need to be taken to safeguard at-risk groups include prioritized testing, and provision of easily accessible health care—and in some cases specialized care. Never before has it been so starkly clear that it is important for all of us that no one is left out of social protection schemes. And in some countries such schemes barely exist. (Bachelet 2020)

Now is a time for governments and people to come together. As I write, the annual conference of the World Health Organization is taking place digitally for the first time. Governments are looking at the global response to the pandemic. Indeed, we should question what we could have done better and what we need to respond best in the future. But we must also question the timing. As a former competitive swimmer, I trained hours a day and practiced racing until the one major swim meet of the year. That swim meet, that 59 seconds of swimming, came after hundreds of hours of preparation. My race was ultimately the end product of what my preparation and my body could do. Mental and physical capacity coming together. At the end of the race, sometimes days afterwards, my coach and I would learn from what went well and what we could improve for the future.

In many ways, the world is in the middle of its swimming race against this new virus called COVID 19. A system built in an era before the internet, with leaders raised and educated before the internet, are now responding to a pandemic. We are in the middle of a race. In swimming, if I took a bad stroke, I did not stop swimming. I corrected myself and finished the race. In many ways, the World Health Organization leader, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Secretary General of the United Nations are in the race of this pandemic right now. Yes, we/they made a bad stroke or more; yes, we/they will need to examine the situation in the future. For now, however, we must work together.

Chapter Three: Possible Ministry Applications

This section discusses what roles the above discussion may play in your ministry setting, with an emphasis on what theological and biblical resources might be most helpful. My ministry setting is unique for our cohort and a Doctor of Ministry program. In my ministry, emphasis on theological and biblical resources are only valuable in half of the work that I do. As part of my work, I represent the World Council of Churches, a fellowship of approximately 350 churches, with a membership of approximately 500 million Christians worldwide. I formerly also represented the concerns of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches, and their global membership in the United Nations system. In the more than ten years that I have been engaged in the work of representing the Church at the United Nations, rarely has someone asked me for a theological or biblical reflection to justify the call for action. The secular nature of the United Nations therefore seems like a strange place for the religious community to find itself. Still, most faith traditions—Bahai, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Unitarian, and many others—engage in witness and advocacy within the United Nations system.

This project is a program requirement, but I hope that it also serves as a springboard for future curricula development. When I began the Doctor of Ministry program, I was working for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches. In this role, I was a representative of a Church based in the United States with a global outreach mission. Recently, I have changed jobs and now represent the World Council of Churches at the United Nations. This project aims to teach about human rights. This goal was important in my previous role because the Presbyterian Church

(U.S.A.) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches do not have representation in Geneva, Switzerland at the United Nations Human Rights Council, or with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. My current position with the World Council of Churches has a far greater engagement with the United Nations system, having staff in Geneva that connect both to member churches as well as the United Nations system in Geneva.

At the start, my ministry lacked staffing and resources to help churches with human rights-related issues at the United Nations; this is not the case with my work with the World Council of Churches. As such, I hope to partner with our Geneva staff to make my curriculum a reality. If I had started the project knowing what my situation would become, I would have focused the curriculum on United Nations programs that relate to economic and social development as well as peace and security. The project as I originally conceived it remains useful to my organization and gives me a good foundation for future curricular development.

The United Nations system is almost aggressively non-religious. Still, UN programs, agencies, and entities have realized the importance of understanding the value of partnering with religious communities worldwide. Indeed, religious communities have been educating children, serving the needy, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the earth longer than the UN system itself has been alive. Indeed, we have been doing it for millennia.

The other side of my work is translating the United Nations community to the Church. The Church is often interested in UN engagement in the international arena. The old-fashioned work of sending missionaries to “save souls” has transitioned to

engagement with governments on international treaties and international law. Many people sitting in church pews on Sunday morning understand the need to feed the hungry and they give generously. Fewer understand the importance of fathoming the systems that keep people hungry, and the work and resources it takes to dismantle these systems.

My work translates the Church to the United Nations and the United Nations to the Church. In my ministry, I am working with entire systems. Moreover, at the UN, I often translate our theological and ethical work into the human rights language of the international community.

My work is to translate biblical and theological work to a secular audience and, vice versa, translating secular ideas for a faith community. Translating individual human rights to people of faith focused on the community as a whole is imperative. In recent days and due to the pandemic, we have seen the faith community alter worship practices to protect the whole. I remember Matthew 18:20 (NRSV): “When two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” As congregations begin to worship via the internet, where the community is digital rather than personal, how does one truly define community.

The question is perplexing. A person may virtually join a congregation that is one or thousands of miles from where they live, and perhaps in a different city, state, country. Public theologians profit from recognizing where and how change should occur. Is it in one’s neighborhood, city, county, state, or country, or is the change we are seeking global? The individual rights afforded to people under the UDHR allow for each individual to come to differing conclusions on this question.

This change has indeed affected the world. The diverse ways of doing good work has made enormous impacts on our society. Wangari Maathai planted trees in her community in Kenya. Malala Yousafzai tried to go to school and changed her future and that of her country. The local pastor comforted their congregation following the disaster.

The Rev. J. C. Austin, senior pastor at Bethlehem Presbyterian Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, offered the following reflection:

> Well, my decisions as a pastor during 9/11 didn't have life-or-death consequences. We never considered closing the building or suspending church activities after 9/11; on the contrary, we threw open our doors and launched a whole range of worship services and other gatherings and events, to the point that our congregation's board was startled by the increase in the electric bill at the end of the month from all the activity. We didn't worry that doing that might expose people to potentially life-threatening harm in the midst of caring for them. When people were crying, we could sit with them and hold their hand. When people were anxious or grieving or isolated or afraid, we could gather them together in worship and candlelight vigils. But right now, clergy and their congregations all over the country are trying to figure out whether gathering people in-person for worship is important because of how isolated and anxious people feel, or whether doing so would actually risk the lives of the very people we are called to serve, particularly the most vulnerable ones.

Austin points to the current dilemmas the Church has to solve. Often religious leaders and worshipers look at the building they go to worship in on Sunday as the Church. Yes, the building is a church, but really, the Church universal constitutes the congregation of all believers everywhere. Austin examines the collective, the Church, and the individual. One of the Universal Rights that everyone knows by heart is the right to life. Where and how do ecclesiology and the right to life co-exist absent of each other?

Allen Hertzke points to the relationship between rights and faith and his conclusions approach the hope of my DMin project: "What distinguishes a social movement from

other forms of political advocacy? Social movements seek broader goals than interest groups; they strive for fundamental change. And movements depend on grassroots mobilization to exploit political opportunities. But mobilization requires resources—energetic leaders, ardent followers, informational networks, credibility" (Hertzke 2004, 11).

Perhaps Article 30 of the UDHR—"nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein" (United Nations, 1948)—best establishes the basis for my DMin professional project. My Reformed tradition believes that all are flawed and fall short of the glory of God. It is in holding with this belief that I hope to develop a project that trains religious leaders on human rights and helps to achieve a world that is closer to heaven.

Ingvill Thorson Plesner argues for human rights, recognizing the stresses that each right imposes on the others. He concludes,

> Human rights are interrelated and interdependent; they support each other, and they also challenge and limit each other. This is true of the relation between freedom rights and welfare rights in general; it is also true of the relationship between rights to religion and belief and many other rights. The necessary interrelation, interdependency, and indivisibility of human rights implies that conflicts between rights should not be dealt with by arguing that one human right or one set of rights is, by definition, more important than the other. Instead, it requires a balancing of different rights claims with an eye to maximizing the rights of all. (Plesner 2012, 326)

Perhaps Plesner's conclusion helps us to understand the arguments both for and against human rights. He understands that taken individually, the rights can challenge one another. The "maximizing the rights of all," as Plesner argues, is perhaps the greatest gift that the UDHR and the extension of its rights can give us. If governments defend the

individual rights of their citizens, and citizens defend the rights of one another, then perhaps the image of God that Christians understand to be in each of us can become more just and welcoming.

There have been examples where leaders of faith have stood up to human injustices, from fighting the Nazis in Germany to liberation theology, walking for civil rights, and, more recently, standing with the LGBTQI+ community. In his letter to the Rev. Gradye Parsons, then Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu communicated, "For freedom Christ has set us free. In Christ we are not bound by old, narrow prejudice, but free to embrace the full humanity of our brothers and sisters in all our glorious differences. May God bless you as you live into this reality, and may you know that there are many Christians in the world who continue to stand by your side" (Furkin 2011).

Moyn stated,

> If the movement itself should not squander the chance to reconsider how it is going to survive, the same is even truer of its audience—policymakers, politicians, and the rest of the elite. They must keep human rights in perspective: Human rights depend on majority support if they are to be taken seriously. A failure to back a broader politics of fairness is doubly risky. It leaves rights groups standing for principles they cannot see through. And it leaves majorities open to persuasion by troubling forces. (Moyn, 2018)

It is the role of the faith community to discern the will of God, and I believe that in discerning that will, the *Imago Dei*, individual people will value and protect the image of God in every human being. One wonders if the current global pandemic will bring a new life to international cooperation, and perhaps also a new life to the understanding of the community. Perhaps we will one day live into the greatest commandment, "You shall

love your neighbor as yourself" through honoring the UDHR.The UDHR was intended to protect the world from another World War. The rights are imperfect, but then, so are individuals.

Chapter Four: Why a Curriculum?

This project addresses pastors, church leaders, and church staff. The hope is that by educating it, church leadership will in turn educate the people that they serve. The individual rights outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights indeed apply to all, but many people do not know the rights that they are guaranteed.

By educating church leadership, this project aims to educate a section of society that has influence and may disseminate more widely information about the UDHR rights and how they are commensurate with Christian teachings. This work is profitable at any time, but especially in times of crisis likeWW2 or a global pandemic, as described above. Educating faith leaders is essential in changing the way people of faith interact with their community, and with hope, those faithful people can move their society to be more just. Loida I. Martell-Ottero observes,

> Education is the creation of sacred spaces that allow true dialogue to take place. It is the formation of *personas educadas.* Who learn the value of multilingual, multicultural dialogue. Such persons not only cultivate a *habitus* of critical dialogue that flourishes in difference but seek to expand their knowledge of the world in which we are embedded and of which we are a part. *Personas educadas* are keenly aware that through dialogue we learn about God, ourselves, the stranger, and the world. We are awakened to the injustice of the world as we occupy spaces and go to places beyond our borders of comfort, and we experience what it means to be a stranger in a strange land. It is in dialogue that we also learn to hear and respect the silences of the voiceless and the absent of the world. This comes about because, as we are exposed to more and more diverse voices, we become aware of the voices *not present,* the ones *not speaking*. (Martell-Otero 2015, 161)

By creating a curriculum, we use the Church as a place where such dialogues may begin. The UDHR in many ways asks people and their governments to commit to the "golden rule," i.e., to treat others as they would like to be treated. The Church has a

unique role to play in this endeavor, and it stems from the focus on helping the individual to reach salvation: as the individual moves forward, they and we must do so with an eye towards society as a whole. To love your neighbor as you love yourself is both the great commandment and the foundation upholding many of the UDHR rights.

Teresia Hinga looks at the role of teaching and the tensions of 'better than before but not yet good.' She asserts that "humans are in the process of becoming" (Hinga 2015, 141-142). If we agree with her, and my opinion is we should, then creating a rights-based curriculum for religious leaders can help us to guide adherents in the process of becoming better. Human Rights are individual rights and individual rights are communal. The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth must surely be communal.

This is a curriculum for church leaders. The modules' structures ensure that parish leadership does not have to leave the pulpit on a Sunday to participate in the program. Each module lasts three and a half days and there are X of them. Parish leaders may travel on a Monday and return home Thursday or Friday. The Covid crisis has also changed traditional formats of education and meetings, now allowing them to take place online. The curriculum does not necessitate travel or attending in person. Rather, it may function in both modalities, online or in-person, or perhaps even in various hybrid formats.

There has been much writing on the notion of human rights as a Western, hegemonic norm, unconcerned with the cultural and ethical differences of different societies. Much has also been written to debunk this idea, but it is important that in teaching, we not ignore the critiques. Alexandra Schultheis Moore and Elizabeth Swanson Golberg address this concern, citing work from Ahmed An-Na'im:

> By comparison, in *Human Rights in Cross-Cultural Perspectives,* Ahmed An-Na'im argues for a cross-cultural approach to human rights that draws on the "internal discourse" of the different cultures engaged (4). Rather than emphasize fixed cultural particularities, An-Na'im, while "sensitive to the needs of internal authenticity and legitimacy" (5), nonetheless seeks to identify shared conceptions of dignity and human nature across cultures that might form the basis for "universal cultural legitimacy" of human rights (433). For many, that goal is either unreachable or requires untenable compromises, yet we suggest that it may be helpful as a reading practice if reformulated as a contingent cultural legitimacy—in other words, a recognition of those instances in which human suffering and its amelioration become legible both within a cultural epistemology or ethical framework and within international human rights norms, albeit in different registers (what John Rawls referred to as an "overlapping consensus"). (Moore and Goldberg 2015, 55-56)

Moore and Goldberg give a lot to unpack from a variety of authors in this section. The salient point for this curriculum is the admission that cultural critiques of the modern human rights framework indeed do exist, but those critiques need not invalidate the gift of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Rather, Moore and Goldberg show that attention to that critique indeed gives the teacher an opportunity to teach human rights in a way that is not, or at least is less, Western and colonial in focus. Careful teaching can translate the human rights framework across cultures and locations to provide the religious leader with an effective framework for their objective.

Samuel Moyn sets the stage for why religious (and non-religious) leaders may profit from learning and teaching human rights:

> When people hear the phrase "human rights," they think of the highest moral precepts and political ideals. And they are right to do so. They have in mind a familiar set of indispensable liberal freedoms, and sometimes more expansive principles of social protection. But they also mean something more. The phrase implies an agenda for improving the world and bringing about a new one in which the dignity of each individual will enjoy secure international protection. It is a recognizable utopian program: for the political standards, it champions and for the emotional passion it inspires, this program draws on the image of a place that has not yet been

> called into being. It promises to penetrate the impregnability of state borders, slowly replacing them with the authority of international law. It prides itself on offering victims the world over the possibility of a better life. It pledges to do so by working in alliance with states when possible but naming and shaming them when they violate the most basic norms. Human rights in this sense have come to define the most elevated aspirations of both social movements and political entities- state and interstate. They evoke hope and provoke action. (Moyn 2010, 1)

Moyn sets out how human rights and Church teachings fit well together, especially the ideas of "improving the world and bringing out a new one," and "a place that has not yet been called into being." Here are Christian ideals of heaven on earth and the hope for eternal salvation. Human rights and Christian thought are complementary in this way, and perhaps human rights have been drawing on centuries of teaching and preaching from various faith traditions about rightful behavior and anticipating better worlds.

Conclusion

The Christian community traces its education of religious leaders back through centuries. The interpretations of the proverbs, the letters of the early church leaders, and academia's Religions departments, to name but some, have challenged the scholarship of the Church, and in response, it has had to evolve and grow into empowerment over the years. The freedom of womanist theology of white feminism; the breaking of the bonds of patriarchy in feminist thought; the advent of queer theology; the theology of welcome...all of these have come from trained religious leaders pushing the Christian community forward.

Kim and Day show that this project is constructive public theology, "The process of constructing public theology is socially interactive; it is discourse within and toward both the faith community and with various publics. This reflects what is the third genre of public theology identified by Brietenberg, constructive public theology." (Day and Kim 2017, 5)

Training church leadership gives congregations, church councils and governing bodies, and various denominations the opportunity to engage in a public theology based on existing geo-political structures. One such structure is the United Nations human rights processes. It also gives leaders an opportunity to integrate and change the localities in which they live. In the process of creating the curriculum, I hope to deepen my own understanding of the UDHR as well as engage in ways in which faith may interpret or support the secular governmental system.

--- End

Curriculum for Church Leaders

When the human rights are included in session form, they are taken directly from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948. They can be accessed here: https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/.

Working with the ecumenical community, different faith traditions understand their role in the public sphere and their commitments to secular human rights differently. The curriculum is designed for the religious leaders to hear from secular experts related to human rights with small group work time built in for the religious leaders to explore how those rights work within their theology and faith tradition. With differing theological groundings and commitments, some faith leaders may not find that every human right is consistent with their tradition.

For leaders who learn of human rights, they may begin their work back "home" within their own faith community. Others may choose specific rights within their context to highlight while not addressing other human rights.

In our public theology work, we cannot and should not expect radical change overnight. The work builds upon work already completed and will continue to shape communities and generations after the work we complete today is in the history books.

Therefore, this curriculum is intended to educate and begin and/or continue the Church's commitment to human rights. Small group space will allow the faith leaders to explore the opportunities and challenges in their context.

Session 1:

Desired Results:

1) In this session, expectations for the program are established.
2) Biblical grounding and grounding in context.
3) Overview of human rights.
4) Overview of political and public theology.

Reading List:

- Human Rights from Below, Jim Ife
- The Global Face of Public Faith, Hollenbach
- Kim, Sebastian, and Katie Day. 2017. *A Companion to Public Theology*

What is your context?

What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

How does the faith community engage in public and political theology?

Learning Experiences and Outcomes:

Day 1:

1 hour	Introductions and ice breaking
1 hour, 15 minutes	Biblical grounding, introduction to political and public theology- explore public and political theology. Ground students in the role of faith in public life and the role of religious leaders in teaching human rights.
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 15 minutes	Introduction to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations system
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- Which rights are most relevant in your country, what does your country do well, what is it worst at? What is your goal for joining this work? Make sure to include references to political and public theology. How is the faith community working for the good of the community?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 2:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Role of Church in society
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Role of civil government
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- How does government and church work together in your context? What does the Church do that the government doesn't. What does the government do that the church doesn't? What is the relationship between Church and State in your context? Explain how public theology is present in your context or how you plan to incorporate it.
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 3:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Human Rights and Peace- Hear speaker(s) from peace church traditions- Mennonite and Quaker traditions
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Human Rights and Development- Speaker: Act Alliance, 1 regional, 1 ACT Alliance Secretariat
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- In what ways is the Church working for peace and development in your community. What do you dream of the Church accomplishing in the future. Create a recommendation to share with the whole group.
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 4:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Review learnings
1 hour	Wrap up and moving forward

Assignment: Write a 5-7 page paper that describes your context, goals you have and which of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is most important in your context.

Session 2 Freedom, UNDHR 1-5:

Desired Results:

1) In this session, detailed information about human rights are provided.
2) Exploration of rights within one's context.
3) Imago Dei and rights.

Reading List:

- Religion and Human Rights, Witte and Green
- Christianity and Human Rights

What is your context?

What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

How does the faith community engage in public and political theology?

Learning Experiences and Outcomes: Students will learn Articles 11-15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, be grounded in public theology and begin their work connecting this to their local community.

Article 1.
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2.
Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3.
Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4.
No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5.
No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Day 1:

1 hour	Devotion, Review, Group Rules setting
1 hour, 15 minutes	Imago Dei and Human Rights, Speaker Javier (Jay) Alanis, Executive Director at Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 15 minutes	Article 1: Speaker, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	How does our understanding of Imago Dei work with Human Rights? Is Article 1 a secular understanding of Imago Dei? Why or why not?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 2:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 2, Speaker: Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 3, Speaker: Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- How does government and church work together in your context? What does the Church do that the government doesn't? What does the government do that the church doesn't? What is the relationship between Church and State in your context? Where is the right to life in your context?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 3:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 4: Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 5 with guest speaker: Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- Hearing from the Special Rapporteurs, examine these articles in your context. How is your faith community working on these rights? Where is your government on these protections?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 4:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Review learnings
1 hour	Wrap up and moving forward

Assignment: Over the next two months, write 11-12 page paper including 2 pages per article about what you see in your context. What is going well? What needs to change? What ways is the Church helping, where is the Church getting in the way?

Session 3 Personhood:

Desired Results:

1) Law and human rights will be explored.
2) Faith and public order.

Reading List:

- Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World, Samuel Moyn
- Where Human Rights & Biblical Justice Meet, Steve Bradbury, editor

What is your context?

How does faith and law come together?

How does the faith community engage in public and political theology?

Learning Experiences and Outcomes: Students will learn Articles 6-10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 6.
Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7.
All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8.
Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9.
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10.
Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Day 1:

1 hour	Devotion, Review, Group Rules setting
1 hour, 15 minutes	Setting the stage for human rights: the role of religion in progressing human rights
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 15 minutes	Article 6: Speaker: International Law Association- how is personhood made real in international law
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: Outline a theology/sermon of personhood and civil engagement. How does the person relate to the political?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 2:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 7: Speaker- Member of Congressional Black Caucus, USA
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 8: Guest Speaker, Global Policy Forum- International Tribunals- what are the strengths and weaknesses of these mechanisms?
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- In looking at civil and political rights in your context, describe a place where a tribunal would or wouldn't be effective. What would that tribunal look like? If not a tribunal, how would you address inequality?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 3:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 9: Speaker: Working Group on Arbitrary Detention
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 10: Speaker: Right to Fair Trial, Council of Europe; European Court of Human Rights
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: Develop a Sunday school class where church members discuss judicial norms. Is there a lawyer or judge in your community that you can bring in to educate church members?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 4:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Review learnings
1 hour	Wrap up and moving forward

Assignment: Write a 5-6 page paper about the justice system in your community. Are there pieces that need to be strengthened with what you have learned in this session?

Session 4 Law and Citizenship:

Desired Results:

1) Law and Citizenship, secular and faith will be explored.
2) How do we treat the "other?"

Reading List:

- Church, State and Civil Society, David Fergusson

What is your context?

How does faith and citizenship come together?

How does the faith community engage in public and political theology?

Learning Experiences and Outcomes: Students will learn Articles 11-15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 11.
(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.
(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12.
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13.
(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14.
(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15.
(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.
(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Day 1:

1 hour	Devotion, Review, Group Rules setting
1 hour, 15 minutes	Large Group Discussion: In what ways does citizenship help or harm people in your context? What is the process to obtain citizenship? Do non-citizens have less rights than citizens?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 15 minutes	Article 11: Speaker: The Innocence Project, USA
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: Discuss the trial and conviction of Jesus. Would this stand up to today's legal standards? What can we learn of Jesus' trial and conviction that we can apply to our current context?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 2:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 12: Speaker- Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 13: Speaker, International Organisation of Migration
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- Choose either privacy or migration. Create an exercise for your congregation to learn about the topic? What key aspects are important in your context.
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 3:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 14: Speaker: Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 15: International Catholic Migration Commission
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: Describe the refugee and asylum work of your context. How might your congregation support migrants? Describe existing programs or outline a project proposal.
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 4:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Review learnings
1 hour	Wrap up and moving forward

Assignment: Meet with local law enforcement or judicial representatives. Have a conversation about the ways in which the faith community can serve as a means to ensure these rights. Right a 2-3 page reflection on your conversation.

Session 5: Race, speech and property

Desired Results:

1) The rights of identity and expression will be explored.
2) Faith and public order.

Reading List:

- If God Were a Human Rights Activist, Boavenutra De Sousa Santos

What is your context?

How does faith and identity come together?

How does the faith community engage in public and political theology?

Learning Experiences and Outcomes: Students will learn Articles 11-15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 16.
(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17.
(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18.
Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19.
Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20.
(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Day 1:

1 hour	Devotion, Review, Group Rules setting
1 hour, 15 minutes	Large Group sharing: Which of the rights in this session is most abused in your setting? Which of these rights works well in your setting?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 15 minutes	Article 16: Speaker: Equality and Human Rights Commission
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: How does your church bless marriages? Are there restrictions in your church for whom you can perform a marriage ceremony? How are those restrictions expressed?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 2:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 17: Speaker: UN Habitat and UNHCR
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 18: Speaker: Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- two groups are convened. One group looks at the right to property/housing, the other group focuses on freedom of religion or belief. In what ways does your church partner with the government to ensure these rights? Are there limitations of these rights in your setting?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 3:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 19: Speaker: Amnesty International
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 20: Speaker: Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: Draft a program for your community on how freedom of expression and freedom of assembly can be expressed in your community. Can your congregation serve as a setting for these meetings to take place?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 4:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Review learnings
1 hour	Wrap up and moving forward

Assignment: Identify a time where your faith community challenged these rights. Write a reflection on the identification of the issue and how the faith community resolved wrongs committed.

Session 6: Participation in Society

Desired Results:

1) Rights and responsibilities of engagement in society and elections will be explored
2) How can faith encourage active civic engagement?

Reading List:

- The Global Face of Public Faith: Politics, Human Rights and Christian Ethics, David Hollenback, S.J.

What is your context?

How can your faith community encourage civic engagement?

How does the faith community engage in public and political theology?

Learning Experiences and Outcomes: Students will learn Articles 21-25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 21.
(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22.
Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23.
(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24.
Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25.
(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Day 1:

1 hour	Devotion, Review, Group Rules setting
1 hour, 15 minutes	Large Group sharing: Which of the rights in this session is most abused in your setting? Which of these rights works well in your setting?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 15 minutes	Article 21: Speaker: UN Office on Political and Peacebuilding Affairs-Election Monitoring
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: What is your theological engagement on public theology and the right to vote? How is this expressed in your teaching and preaching?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 2:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 22: Speaker: United Nations Development Programme- social protection systems and human rights
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 23: Speaker: UN Women: Examination of the Convention concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- Draft a jobs/employment program in your context. How might your congregation serve the community?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 3:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 24: Speaker: International Labour Organisation- Right to rest and leisure
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 25: Speaker: World Food Programme
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Rest and leisure time built into the schedule
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Reflections on the Day- was there benefit to the rest and leisure time?

Day 4:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Review learnings
1 hour	Wrap up and moving forward

Assignment: Work with members of your community and/or parish and draft a letter to the editor of the local newspaper outlining your faith position on one of the rights explored in this session.

Session 7:

Desired Results:

1) Overall human rights and practice by the faith community
2) Understanding of UN processes.
3) Final Product: Universal Periodic Review of personal context.

Reading List:

- The Sacredness of the Person: A New Genealogy of Human Rights, Hans Joas

What is your context?

How does faith and rights come together?

How does the faith community engage in public and political theology?

Learning Experiences and Outcomes: Students will learn Articles 6-10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 26.
(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27.
(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28.
Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29.

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30.
Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

Day 1:

1 hour	Devotion, Review, Group Rules setting
1 hour, 15 minutes	Large Group: United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda: UN Sustainable Development Goals and their relation to the human rights agenda.
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 15 minutes	Article 26& 27: Speaker: UNESCO- Global Education and UN Sustainable Development Goal 4
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small Group Work: How does your church support education? Educational support extends beyond the creation of schools. What creative ways can your congregation support education in your community?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 2:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 28: Speaker United Nations Human Rights Council
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 29: Speaker Michael J. Perry, University of San Diego: Morality and Human Rights
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Small group work- Define your church's moral beliefs with an eye towards a human rights framework.
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from small groups and review from the day

Day 3:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Article 30: UNHCHR Representative- Review of Rights processes and responsibilities
15 minutes	Break
1 hour, 30 minutes	UNHCHR and/or Human Rights Council: Universal Periodic Review Process
1 hour, 30 minutes	Lunch
1 hour, 30 minutes	Individual Work Time: Outline the most salient issues for human rights in your context. What do you want to dig deeper into when you return home?
15 minutes	Break
1 hour	Sharing from individual work and review from the day

Day 4:

30 minutes	Gather and devotion
1 hour, 30 minutes	Review learnings
1 hour	Wrap up and moving forward

Assignment: Draft a Universal Periodic Review with input from your church community and outside constituencies.

Appendix

Below is a list of the Universal Rights (Assembly, Universal Declaration of Human

Rights 1948):

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence. (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national

or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14. (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections

which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

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Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society. (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

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