



UCJCI UPDATE

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

THE UNITED CHURCH
IN JAMAICA AND THE
CAYMAN ISLANDS

*Congregational
Disciples of Christ
Presbyterian*

12 Carlton Crescent,
Kingston 10

Tel: 926-8734

E-mail: synod@ucjci.com

Website: www.ucjci.com

OUR VISION: "Touching
Lives, Nurturing Disciples,
Seeking Transformation
through Christ"

SYNODICAL THEME:
"Renewal and Transfor-
mation: Discipleship for
Life"

IN THIS ISSUE

**The Value of Unre-
lenting Faith** 1-2

UCJCI Officers 2

Leadership Corner 3

COVID-19 Feature 4

PRAY FOR:



Jamaica and Cayman, which have seen 529 and 111 confirmed cases, respectively, of the **coronavirus**; and against the further spread of the disease.

The local and world economies which are threatened by the spread of the coronavirus.

Volume 6: Issue 19

Wednesday, May 20, 2020

The Value of Unrelenting Faith

“In this most difficult time of living with, and surviving the impact of the coronavirus, we are left to wonder and to ponder: *“How do we give of our best in this time?” “How do I serve God, and in serving God, serve my fellow human beings?” “What is the most precious thing that I can offer to God and my fellow human beings at this time?”*

The answer, I believe, my friends, is summed up in our story today. This story is about a man, in John 9, who gave away the best thing he had - his faith.

To find out God's intent, we must take a very close look at this story. A family had a child and took great pleasure in the birth of the child. The child was born blind and would require great assistance throughout its life.

Society said that, because the child was born blind, somebody had sinned. Yet, when the child was old enough, Jesus came and

healed the child, and the child sang praises to God. It quickly contradicted the belief that illness came because of the parents or the child's sin.

The Jews had a belief that once a person was born with a disability, somebody had sinned. However, God used the situation to point out that disabilities and deformities are only biological. Such per-

mine what can become of us. God is looking at how our lives can be an inspiration to someone else.

The blind man, in being healed, caused the nation to suddenly realize that Yahweh, God, was acting through Jesus. God was present in their nation. He, God, had appeared, and was appearing before all, and

His action was there for all to see. God's functioning was new and different, and the same God is now working amongst people, touching people, and caring for people individually.

The blind man then walked with surer steps. He

was not being tentative in his walking. His hands were not outstretched, checking the space as he moved about. There was no stick-tapping to check the surface of the space in which he was. Instead, he walked with firm surety. Through this, my friends, God created a moment of glorification.

(Continued on Page 2)

**BOLD.
FAITH**
MATTHEW 21:21

sons should not be treated with scorn.

God uses the man's healing to point out that God acts in our lives and makes us overcomers. What is important is that, in this hour, we allow God to touch us and to shape us. God is opening our eyes to what is around us, for us to embrace change. We should not allow the negative ways we view ourselves to deter-

CELEBRATIONS!

70:

Rev. Raymond Coke**Rev. L. Christopher Mason****May 20****Rev. Lembe Sivile****May 22****UCJCI OFFICERS**

The Moderator presides over the Synod, declares the decisions of the court, preserves order, provides spiritual leadership for the Church, and represents the Church at both ecumenical and national occasions. In addition, the Moderator also provides pastoral care for ordained clergy, lay pastors, persons in training, and full-time commissioned/installed workers.

The General Secretary is responsible for the administrative functions of the Church in matters relating to communication, recruitment, training and conditions of service. He/She supervises and monitors the programmes of the regional mission councils, while also supervising the administrative staff.

The Regional Deputy General Secretaries manage the day-to-day affairs of the Regional Mission Councils, organizing, coordinating and enabling activities and the use of material resources, assisting in the co-ordination of Synod Committees and establishing and maintaining an efficient communication system.

The Value of Unrelenting Faith*(Continued from Page 1)*

You see, his neighbours all noticed that a change had occurred. They realized that this former dependent person was no longer dependent. He was not in front of the crowd seeking alms. No. He was moving with the intent to do what he could not do before. God created the moment for him to tell the leaders and his community that God was there and acting among them. Yes, God sent Jesus into the world to act, and to act decisively, in God's favour.

Jesus, in putting mud on the man's eyes, created a moment for God's glory. The passage says, *"I went to the pool of Siloam and washed my eyes, and when I was finished, I could see."* What came next, my friends, is what God wants all to ask. *Where is He? Where is Jesus? Where can I find Jesus that I can get this kind of relationship with God?*

The questions, my friends, created the opportunity for the former blind man to re-tell the story. God was glorified. People had to acknowledge that Jesus is from God.

Some of us, during this Coronavirus pandemic, will have our moments to experience Jesus. We will be like the blind man and recover from COVID-19 or some other disease. Use it to cause someone to come to God and give God glory. Use it to cause someone to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Use it to cause someone to ask you, *"Where is He?"* Use it my friends, during this time, to enable someone to make a drastic change in their life, in the same way that God is making a drastic change in your life. Use it to give God glory. You can do so because of your unrelenting faith.

The blind man was placed in an awkward position to defend God in Jesus Christ based on one action. *"Jesus put mud on my eyes."* Having placed the mud, He walked off and told the man to go and wash. With this simple act, my friends, the man was healed. When the man came back, Jesus was not to be found, but he knew that it was Jesus who had healed him. From this action, he had to defend God in Jesus, as the Messiah. He had to show that, irrespective of what they said, he was going to keep his faith in Jesus.

In this time of COVID-19, we have to hold on to our faith, no matter what. We must hold on to it because it is the most precious thing we have. We must hold on to it because it is the only thing that we can give to our fellow human beings.

This great faith in God will cause us to do something to help our neighbor who is in need. This faith in God will cause us to break down any discrimination against those who have suffered from the disease, as well as healthcare workers. This great faith in God will cause us to endure whatever is being thrown at us in this time, and cause our fellow citizens to bear on as well.

Our unrelenting faith will cause everyone to realize that it is only in God that they can, and will, overcome COVID-19. It might be awkward at times. We might even seem downright foolish. People will question everything we do and wonder if we have lost all our marbles, but my friends, hold on to God anyway, and defend God and defend your faith in Him *with fervour*. Talk about all you are experiencing in God, anyway. Then watch God prove to the world that you have shared with them your most precious faith. **Amen.**

Contributed by Rev. Nigel Pusey, Minister of Boulevard/Pretoria Road Charge of United Churches. This reflection was offered on our United in Faith Programme on May 10, 2020.

Send comments and news about your congregation to: ucjiupdate@gmail.com

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Avoid Office Politics

A politician arrived late for a speaking engagement where he was scheduled as the keynote speaker. Usually he did his homework on the area and the organization, but because of his busy schedule, he had not been able to do it. He was rushed in as the attendees were finishing their dessert and taken immediately to the podium without having the chance to speak to anyone.

When he was introduced to the crowd, there was nothing he could do but dive in. With the bright lights shining in his eyes, he immediately launched into one of the main issues of the campaign and spoke at length. When he paused for a moment, the gentleman who had introduced him whispered that the group to whom he was speaking was on the opposite side of the issue.

Without missing a beat, the politician said, *"My friends. Now that I have explained the opposition's position in great detail, I will tell you the truth."* Some people seeking public office may be able to get away with such tactics—though usually it backfires on them—but people in a working environment where their peers know them, certainly cannot. Playing politics at work is a surefire way to alienate your peers.

I would define "playing politics" as changing who you appear to be or what you normally do to gain an advantage with whoever currently has power. Among those who run for public office, that often means changing their position on issues depending on which group they're speaking to. In work environments, it may mean sucking up to the boss, constantly changing positions to get on the winning side, or using people for person-

al gain, without regard for how it affects them. Political people are fickle and opportunistic, doing what's expedient in the moment to win, regardless of what's best for their peers, their employees, or the organization.

There seems to be two main paths for people to get ahead in organizations. *One way is to try to get ahead by doing the work. The other is to try to get ahead by working an angle.* It's the difference between production and politics. Some working environments seem to draw people toward behaviour that will ultimately damage peer-to-peer relationships. To avoid such difficulties, do the following:

Avoid Gossip. It's been said that great people talk about ideas, average people talk about themselves, and small people talk about others. That's what gossip does. It makes people small. There really is no upside to gossip. It diminishes the person being talked about. It diminishes the person who is saying unkind things about others, and it even diminishes the listener. That's why you should avoid not only spreading gossip, but also being a recipient of it.

Stay Away from Petty Arguments. In most places where people work, there are past grudges, ongoing feuds, and petty arguments that run like currents through the organization. Wise leaders in the middle of an organization avoid getting sucked into these easily, even if they think they can resolve them. As the saying goes, a bulldog can beat a skunk in a fight anytime, but he knows it's just not worth it. It's a sign of maturity when someone

knows what's petty and what's not—when to jump in, and when to sit back and listen.

Stand Up for What's Right, Not Just for What's Popular. Leaders must stand for what's right, even when such a stand will be unpopular. *How do you do that? How do you know when to stand up and when not to, especially in a culture where many people see truth as subjective?* My answer is that you use the Golden Rule: *in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.* When someone is being treated in a way that you would not want to be treated, then it's time to stand up.

Say What you Mean, and Mean What You Say. Leadership is about building trust with people. If you want to develop trust with others, you must be more than competent. You must also be credible and consistent. The way to achieve those qualities is to make sure that what you *say*, what you *do*, and what you *say you do* all match. If you do that, the people who work with you will know they can depend on you.

Become a statesman or stateswoman for your organization. If you continually keep the big picture in mind, remain unselfish in your efforts, and try to be a diplomat with your peers, you will distinguish yourself, gain credibility, and improve effectiveness and that of the team. And you will also increase your influence.

Source: *"The 360-Degree leader"* by John C. Maxwell

INTEGRITY
CHOOSING YOUR THOUGHTS
AND ACTIONS BASED ON
VALUES RATHER THAN PERSONAL GAIN

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS FEATURE

UCJCI'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Individual Prayer:
Every Wednesday
from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

(2 Timothy 1:7)

POINTS FOR PRAYER

- * A stop to the spread of the disease.
- * Healing for those who are infected with the disease.
- * Strength, comfort and peace for the loved ones of persons who have died from the disease.
- * Encouragement for the children who are confused and fearful during this time.
- * That persons will draw closer to God, and families draw closer to each other, during this time.
- * That all persons will take this matter seriously, and responsibly take the necessary precautions.
- * Support for our healthcare systems and workers who are on the frontlines.
- * Safety of all elderly persons and those with co-morbidities.
- * Provision for the needy and those who have lost, or will lose, their jobs.
- * Our local and world economies.

MANAGING & COPING WITH CHANGE

TOOLS FOR COPING & SURVIVING DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS



*Cast all your anxiety
on him because he
cares for you.*

1 Peter 5:7 NIV84

A WEBINAR
FOR MICRO,
SMALL &
MEDIUM-
SIZED
ENTERPRISE
LEADERS



Limited
Spaces
Available

FACILITATORS:
DR. NSOMBI JAJA, CMC, PMP,
SMC, SAMC

MR. COURTNEY CAMPBELL,
PRESIDENT & CEO, VM GROUP

MAY 25, 2020

1 P.M. TO 2:30 P.M.

ON THE ZOOM PLATFORM

ADMISSION: FREE!!!

**Standing on
God's
Promises**

- ✓ INTERACTIVE AND INSPIRING
- ✓ NAVIGATE FROM FRAGILE TO AGILE
- ✓ MESSAGE OF HOPE & RESILIENCE
- ✓ INSPIRED TO FACE UNCERTAINTY
- ✓ LEAVE HOPEFUL AND POSITIVE

Register at: administrator@ucjci.com by May 21, 2020