



# UCJCI UPDATE

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

THE UNITED CHURCH  
IN JAMAICA AND THE  
CAYMAN ISLANDS

Volume 6: Issue 21

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Congregational  
Disciples of Christ  
Presbyterian

12 Carlton Crescent,  
Kingston 10

Tel: 926-8734

E-mail: [synod@ucjci.com](mailto:synod@ucjci.com)  
Website: [www.ucjci.com](http://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 Source of Our  
Security During the  
Storm 1-2

UCJCI Officers 2

Leadership Corner 3

COVID-19 Feature 4

## PRAY FOR:



Jamaica and Cayman, which have seen 590 and 151 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.

# The Source of Our Security During the Storm

“In the passage of scripture, **Mark 4:35-40**, we observe Jesus and His disciples who went into a boat with the intention of going to the other side of the lake, surrounded by hills.

It is said that winds blowing across the land intensify close to the sea, and often cause violent and unexpected storms. The disciples, who were with Jesus, were seasoned fishermen, who no doubt spent many years fishing in that lake. So with their vast fishing experience in these types of waters, one would think that, upon seeing the storm, the disciples would have been better able to handle it; but instead, when they saw that high waves were breaking into the boat, filling it with water, they became fearful and shouted to Jesus (who was sleeping) that they were going to drown.

Fear gripped the disciples and they started to panic. They must have forgotten who was in the boat with them. They must have

forgotten the many miracles they saw Jesus do.

Friends, the text tells us that Jesus got up and rebuked the wind, spoke to the waves, and the storm stopped. Everything became calm. Jesus then turned to His disciples and asked, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

My sisters and brothers, we are in a storm right now -



the COVID-19 storm - and many of us are very fearful, many of us are panicking as the disciples did. And just as Jesus was with the disciples, so is He with us in this storm, but He neither slumbers nor sleeps.

However, unlike the disciples, we need to remember who is with us. We need to remember that He is the Almighty, All Powerful God.

We need to never forget the many storms He has calmed in our lives, the many calamities He saved us from.

We need to remember that He rose from the dead, He conquered death, so this COVID-19 is no match for Him. Friends, Jesus, who is with us in this storm, is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think. We do not need to fear because God is faithful and He promises never to leave us nor forsake us. He will see us through this seemingly hopeless situation.

I know that the virus spread is escalating, but it is not out of control.

God is still in control and He will take us through this storm. We need to trust Him and not allow negative words and thoughts to overtake us. We are coming over and not going under. Friends, Jesus is alive, and because He lives, we can face tomorrow; we can face any situation.

(Continued on Page 2)

**CELEBRATIONS!****The Source of Our Security During the Storm**

70:

**Rev. Margaret Downer-  
Messias**

**June 5**

**Rev. Dr. Ralph Hoyte**

**June 6**

**Dr. Jane Dodman**

**June 8**

**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.

(Continued from Page 1)

I know that many persons are fearful and worried – some have lost their income, some small business owners have had to close their operations, while some are stuck with their produce. Some have been laid off from their jobs indefinitely, some persons are in a state of despondency and wondering what will happen to them and their families.

Friends, Jesus is reminding us that He takes care of the birds of the air, the fishes of the sea, the grass and the flowers that will be dried up soon, and so He will take care of us. He is the all-providing God who will supply all our needs. We do not need to worry, we do not need to fear. We only need to trust God and believe in Him.

Do not allow the intensity of this disease to cause your faith in God to waver. Stand on the promises of God, which are, *“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.”* (Isaiah 43:2)

Friends, Jesus is saying to us as He said to His disciples, *“Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?”* Let us stand on the promises of God as we go through this crisis, because the promises of God are “Yes” and “Amen”.

Sisters and brothers, Proverbs 18:10 says, *“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe”*. Let us look to the Lord, for He is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble. He is the source of our security during this storm.

So if you have not committed your life to the Lord or you are a backslider, may I implore you to commit your life to God, turn to God, before it is too late. He is the only one who can see us through this COVID-19 storm. Everything and everyone else can fail us. No riches, no fame, nothing, only God can help and sustain us.

Friends, in this turmoil, in this pandemic, I invite you to surrender all to Jesus and let His peace that surpasses all understanding guard your hearts and minds. Let the peace of God cover you. **Amen.**

**Let us pray:**

Gracious Lord God, we thank you that you are indeed Lord over our lives and our situations. Father, we place before you all who are sick from the COVID-19 disease and from other sicknesses. We pray that your healing hand will rest upon them.

We pray for those who are mourning, and ask that You comfort and surround them. We lift up to You all the frontline workers who are serving selflessly, and pray that You will strengthen and protect them. Grant wisdom to the leaders of this nation as they seek to guide us through these challenging times. Lord God, as we continue to trust You and wait upon You, may Your peace surround us, in Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

- Contributed by: Rev. Carlene Walford, Interim Minister of the Goshen Charge of United Churches. This reflection was first presented on the UCJCI's United in Faith Programme which aired on Radio Jamaica 94 FM at 6:30 a.m. on April 26, 2020.

## LEADERSHIP CORNER

### Be a Friend

**W**e often consider ourselves to be many things to the people who work alongside us—co-workers, teammates, contributors, competitors—but we often forget to be the one thing that every person wants: a friend.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “*The glory of friendship is not in the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is in the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when he (she) discovers that someone else believes in him (her) and is willing to trust him (her).*”

No matter how driven or competitive your co-workers appear to be, they will enjoy having a friend on the job. When a job is especially tough or unpleasant, having a friend is sometimes the only thing a person has to look forward to when going to work. And when the job is good, then having a friend is icing on the cake.

#### To Teamwork, Add Friendship

Why do I recommend that you work to develop friendships on the job?

**Friendship is the Foundation of Influence.** Abraham Lincoln said, “*If you would win a man (woman) to your cause, first convince him (her) that you are his (her) sincere friend.*” Good relationships make influence possible, and friendship is the most positive relationship you can develop on the job with your co-workers.

**Friendship is the Framework for**

**Success.** I believe long-term success is unachievable without good people skills. Theodore Roosevelt said, “*The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.*” Without it, most achievements are not possible, and even what we do achieve can feel hollow.

#### Friendship is the Shelter Against Sudden Storms.

If you’re having a bad day, who can make you feel better? A friend. When you have to face your fears, who would you rather do it with? A friend. When you fall on your face, who can help pick you up? A friend.

At work, you need to keep working at being a friend—even with people who don’t initially put any effort into being a friend back.

As you reach out to your co-workers, you may include the following steps in the approach you take:

#### LISTEN!

Ralph Nichols said, “*The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them.*” If you become a consistently good listener to your co-workers, they will want to spend time with you. They will begin to seek you out. And if they develop a rapport with you, they will probably also begin asking advice from you. That is the starting point for influence with them.

#### FIND COMMON GROUND NOT RELATED TO WORK.

What’s the solution if you don’t seem to share common ground with someone at work? Try to discover what you have in common outside of the job. If you look for connection points inside and outside of work, you have a good chance of finding common ground. And that is where friendships are built.

#### BE AVAILABLE BEYOND BUSINESS HOURS.

True friendship means being available. The moment you take your relationship with a co-worker outside of the work environment, it instantly begins to change. Think about the first time you had lunch with a co-worker off-site. Even if you talked about work the entire time, didn’t it change the way you saw that person from then on? Think about the first time you went to a co-worker’s house, and consider the personal connection you felt with that person afterward.

True friendship isn’t on the clock. When a friend is in need, real friends don’t say, “*It’s after five. Can you call me back tomorrow?*” Obviously you want to respect people’s privacy, and you don’t want to violate anybody’s personal boundaries. But leadership isn’t limited to nine to five, friendship can’t be either.

Source: “*The 360-Degree Leader*” by John C. Maxwell



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# 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.



*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

-JOHN 14:27

CrossCards

## WEAR A MASK PROPERLY

- 1 Always wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before putting on a mask.
- 2 Make sure the mask is completely covering your nose, mouth, and chin.
- 3 Don't touch the front of the mask while wearing it.
- 4 When removing the mask, hold ONLY the ear loops and lift away from your face.
- 5 Wash hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after disposing of used mask in a trash bin.

### EXTRA TIPS:

- 1 If you touch a used mask, wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately.
- 2 Dispose of your mask if it becomes soiled or wet.
- 3 Don't reuse single-use masks.



EVERY ONE COUNTS

