



# UCJCI UPDATE

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

THE UNITED CHURCH  
IN JAMAICA AND THE  
CAYMAN ISLANDS

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

SYNODICAL THEME:

"Renewal and Transfor-  
mation: Discipleship for  
Life"

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## PRAY FOR:



Jamaica and Cayman, which have seen 605 and 171 confirmed cases, respectively, of the **coronavirus**; and against the further spread of the disease.

Appropriate **infection prevention mechanisms** to be in place for the entry of tourists into Jamaica.

The people of the U.S.A. in their struggle against **racism**.

# CONTAGIOUS PRAISE!!

“We are living in the midst of a contagious virus—one which has impacted almost every facet of our lives and living.

Some things, like COVID-19, are contagious - the emotions of joy, laughter, fear, anger and disappointment.

The bible, through the book of the **Psalter**, identifies one contagious principle - *the principle of praise*. My question is: *Have you caught it?*

We often do a disservice to the principle, if not the reality, of praise. Our understanding, and therefore our expression of praise, tend to be limited to our focus on the methodology of praise.

Is it not true that we spend a lot of time on the *how* of praise - place, posture and benefits of praise - and we often express

this as a means to an end: **The Psalter** is basically *Praise is lively or spiritual?* five books: **Books 1-3** cover Psalms 1-89 and focus on the failure of the Davidic Covenant, evidenced through the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the Jews to Babylon. Exile meant that the Jews had lost their three most cherished religious institutions, namely, *the temple, their land and the monarchy*.

*Is praise really contagious in the modern church? Is it not true to say that there is no*



*more contentious issue in the traditional church today than the issue of praise?* Indeed, it could be said that significant disagreements about style and preference and expressions of praise in worship outrank many other major issues.

**Psalms 145** outlines a theological argument for the principle of praise as a contagious reality.

**Book 4** (Psalms 90-106) contains some royal and corporate lament on the crisis. **Book 5** (Psalm 107-150) contains some lament, but also a significant focus on praise.

Here, then, is a book which reflected on the crisis of the exile—physical and theological—and in response, challenged the people to lament and to praise.

(Continued on Page 2)

## UCJCI OVERSIGHT

## CONTAGIOUS PRAISE!!

The Synod*(Continued from Page 1)*

All Ordained and Commissioned Ministers in Councils and Delegates appointed by each Congregation, constitute the Synod, the highest decision-making group in the Church. It is responsible for setting Church policy and objectives, and the framework within which the membership functions.

**Psalm 145** offers the argument that the fever of praise is not limited to an expression or a method, but to praise is to live Godly lives guided by Godly principles - daily acknowledging our fundamental dependence on God. *Have you caught this fever?*

Consider with me, five aspects of the argument of **Psalm 145**:

It offers the *call* to praise – extol, exalt, bless and praise God (vs. 1-6).

It offers the *reason* for praise – God’s character – grace, mercy, love and compassion (vs. 7-9).

It offers *expressions* of thankful praise – profession and proclamation – make known, speak, tell of God’s deed, kingdom and authority (vs. 10-13).

It shares *results* of praise – we discover and rediscover God’s support, provision, justice, presence, deliverance, protection, accompaniment.

It suggests a *personal choice* (vs. 21) - I will praise God...

Two affirmations arise from the text:

**Praise is rooted in Godly lives...**

Living by God’s standards and principles despite exile.

Placing God’s priorities before our own values and ethical choices.

**Praise is a Godly lifestyle...**

Praise must become a contagious lifestyle: *“One generation will laud your works to another”* (vs. 4).

Praise is a lifestyle of those who are blessed, and a lifestyle of those who are righteous.

Praise, therefore, is always contagious - never contentious. *Have you caught it, and if so, are you spreading it?”*

- Contributed by Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. This reflection was first shared on the UCJCI’s United in Faith Programme on Radio Jamaica 94 FM on Sunday, June 7, 2020 at 6:30 a.m.

The Central Mission Council

The Central Mission Council (CMC) acts on behalf of the Synod in between Synod gatherings. Through the Regional Mission Councils and the Standing Committees of Synod, the CMC ensures that the Synod Agenda is carried out. It has been given authority by the Synod to implement decisions made, and receive reports from the Standing Committees, and be accountable to the Synod for all actions.

Regional Mission Councils

These are geographical groupings of congregations. Each is administered by a Council Executive comprising a Chairperson, Deputy, Secretary, Treasurer and other Officers. In addition, each congregation is represented at Council by delegates (2 representatives for the first 300 members of the congregation and 1 representative for each additional 100 or part thereof).

## LEADERSHIP CORNER

### Let the Best Idea Win

If you desire to become a great leader, then you need to resist the temptation to fight for your idea when it's not the best idea. Why? Because good ideas are too important to the organization.

Harvey Firestone said, *“Capital isn't so important in business. Experience isn't so important. You can get both of these. What is important is ideas. If you have ideas, you have the main asset you need, and there isn't any limit to what you can do with your organization and your life.”*

Great organizations possess leaders throughout the organization who produce great ideas. That is how they become great. The progress they make and the innovations they create don't come down from on high. Their creative sessions are not dominated by top-down leaders. Nor does every meeting become a kind of wrestling match to see who can dominate everyone else. People come together as teams, peers work together, and they make progress because they want the best ideas to win. Leaders who help to surface good ideas are creating what an organization needs most.

*To let the best idea win, you must first generate good ideas. And then you must work to make them even better. How do leaders help the team find the best ideas? I believe they follow this pattern:*

**GOOD LEADERS LISTEN TO ALL IDEAS.** Finding good ideas begins with an open-minded willingness to listen to all ideas. During the brainstorming process, shutting down any idea might prevent you from discovering the good ones.

Great thinking comes when good thoughts are shared in a collaborative environment where people contribute to them, shape them, and take them to the next level. Great leaders help to create such an environment.

#### **GOOD LEADERS LOOK IN UNUSUAL PLACES FOR IDEAS.**

Good leaders are attentive to ideas; they are always searching for them. And they cultivate that attentiveness and practice it as a regular discipline. As they read the newspaper, watch a movie, listen to their colleagues, or enjoy a leisure activity, they are always on the lookout for ideas or practices they can use to improve their work and their leadership. If you desire to find good ideas, you have to search for them. Rarely does a good idea come looking for you.

#### **GOOD LEADERS DON'T LET PERSONALITY OVERSHADOW PURPOSE.**

When someone you don't like or respect suggests something, what is your first reaction? Maybe to dismiss it. You've heard the phrase, *“Consider the source”*. That's not a bad thing to do, but if you're not careful, you may very likely throw out the good with the bad.

Don't let the personality of someone you work with cause you to lose sight of the greater purpose, which is to add value to the team and advance the organization. If that means listening to the ideas of people with whom you have no chemistry, or worse, a difficult history, so be it. Set aside your pride and listen.

#### **GOOD LEADERS PROTECT CREATIVE PEOPLE AND THEIR IDEAS.**

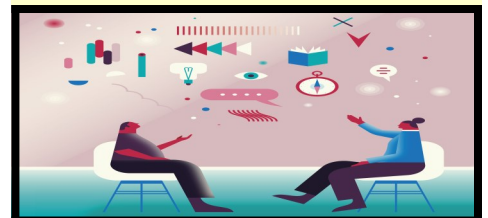
If you desire the best idea to win, then become a champion of creative people and their contributions to your organization. When you discover peers who are creative, promote them, encourage them, and protect them.

#### **GOOD LEADERS DON'T TAKE REJECTION PERSONALLY.**

When your ideas are not received well by others, do your best not to take it personally. When someone in a meeting does that, it can kill the creative process, because at that point, the discussion is no longer about the ideas or helping the organization; it becomes about the person whose feelings are hurt. In those moments if you can stop competing and focus your energy on creating, you will open the way for the people around you to take their creativity to the next level.

Being a leader is not about getting your own way. It's not about winning at all costs. It's about winning respect and influence with your peers so that you can help the whole team win. Never forget that having a collaborative spirit helps the organization. When you think in terms of *our* idea instead of *my* idea or *her* idea, you're probably on track to helping the team win. That should be your motivation.

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



# 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.

## HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS



WET HANDS



APPLY SOAP



RUB HANDS  
PALM TO PALM



LATHER THE BACKS  
OF YOUR HANDS



SCRUB  
BETWEEN YOUR FINGERS



RUB THE BACKS  
OF FINGERS ON  
THE OPPOSING PALMS



CLEAN THUMBS



WASH FINGERNAILS  
AND FINGERTIPS



RINSE HANDS



DRY WITH  
A SINGLE USE TOWEL



USE THE TOWEL  
TO TURN OFF THE FAUCET



YOUR HANDS ARE CLEAN

MAY THE GOD OF HOPE FILL  
YOU WITH ALL JOY AND  
PEACE AS YOU TRUST IN HIM,  
SO THAT YOU MAY OVERFLOW  
WITH HOPE BY THE POWER OF  
THE HOLY SPIRIT.

ROMANS 15:13

