



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

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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:



*The family of the **Hon. Rev. Ashley Smith, OJ, CD, JP**, who has passed on.

***Revds. Harry Bodden and Lloyd Reid, Pastor Joel Cameron, Ms. Ronique Hewitt** (daughter of **Rev. Ranford Hewitt**), **Mona Cowan** (daughter of **Rev. Dr. Collin Cowan**) who are ill.

Volume 6: Issue 28

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Reaping What We Sow

“We reap what we sow.”

Most of us have heard this saying from ‘our eyes were at our knees,’ from our parents, guardians, teachers and the like when we deviated or not from the acceptable path outlined by the bible. Yet, given our knowledge and experiences since then, can we truly say that the saying holds for all people? Is it a truism for this life or the life to come? What have we sown to produce the COVID-19 pandemic?

That the saying originates from the bible is well established, specifically in Galatians 6:7, and that it is a biblical principle is equally well known. Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity (Prov. 22:8); sow for yourself righteousness, reap steadfast love (Hosea 10:12); the one who sows sparingly will reap sparingly/bountifully... (2 Cor. 9:6-8).

Maybe the reason we do not see this sowing and

reaping principle holding true in life for all, is that we have not understood the context and the meaning of the saying, and as such are misguided in our expectations.

Maybe if we were to write God a letter, as Paul did to the mission in Galatia, about life and faith as we are expe-



riencing it, we, like Paul, would pen an angry letter.

This letter is composed differently from most of Paul’s letters. It contains no thanksgiving in the opening and no greetings at the closing. The evidence suggests that relations were strained, and they were.

Remember, Paul had founded the churches in Galatia and they not only embraced the gospel, but were experiencing tremendous growth among both Jews and Gen-

tile. Subsequently, some Jewish missionaries (Christians of the faith with Judaism leanings) arrived and started to offer a different version of the gospel, with an emphasis on the legal side of the faith rooted in the Jewish law.

Paul felt that this post-Jesus teaching ignored the concept and reality of Grace, the sufficiency of the Spirit to guide Christian living, the sufficiency of the cross and true reconciliation among Jews and Gentiles. He wrote an angry letter reminding them of their faith, which offered them both their identity and their responsibility as a faith community.

The critical centerpiece of this text is not the ‘you reap what you sow’ piece in verse 7 - indeed we will get to it and properly locate and interpret it - but rather verse one, **you who are spiritual**, although both are inextricably linked as we shall see.

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CELEBRATIONS!



70:

Rev. Astor Carlyle

July 23

Rev. Selvin Gray

July 25

Rev. Hyacinth Edwards

July 26

STANDING COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS OF SYNOD

The ministry and mission of the **United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands** is undertaken through the work of **Synodical Committees**. These committees are made up of representatives from each Area Council, as well as individuals with experience and expertise in particular areas. Committees meet to carry out the plans approved by the Synod, and to make reports on the progress of their work.

There are **5 Standing Committees: Constitution and Doctrine, Church and Ministry, Finance, Property, and Strategic Planning for Mission.**

The **Children's and Youth Commissions** give focused attention to discerning the times and determining the UCJCI's Children's and Youth Ministry direction, in response to the need to be contextually-relevant and impactful. They provide direction to the setting of goals in the Church's ministries to persons between 0 and 12 years (Children's Ministry), and 13 to 25 (Youth Ministry).

The **Education Commission** is responsible for the management of our schools, and ensuring that the polity and ethos of the UCJCI are reflected in our schools.

Reaping What we Sow

(Continued from Page 1)

By this one statement, *you who are spiritual*, Paul not only reminds them of their identity as people of the faith, but equally, as we shall see, of their stewardship responsibility as people of the faith. Those of us who are God's people are to locate, understand and offer an identity that affirms the truism of, *you who are spiritual*. In plain speaking, our identity as a community of faith ought to be that of spiritual people. **We reap what we sow...** *What then are the signs of being spiritual? How do we measure spiritually among the people of God?* The text suggests that there are four engagements a person makes which reinforce their identity of being spiritual. I wish to term them, **The Four I's**.

Firstly, a spiritual person engages in **Intervention**.

Paul asserts that we are called as spiritual people to help and support one another. We intervene to help those who are struggling to bear and carry the load. We counsel those who need 'a pep in their step' - whether it be a spiritual, physical, emotional or material step. When one hurts we all hurt, that sort of thing. The context of the letter, however, suggests that the members of the community of faith were not in one accord and some had gone out of step, so Paul says in addition to the easier task of bearing one another's load, *you who are spiritual* must admonish, correct and set straight those who have gone astray.

You who are spiritual have the task of calling a spade a spade - of identifying those things which are out of alignment with God's will - whether in the church community or outside of it. It is a relationship of interdependence; one of a spiritual relationship characterized by a loving and mutually accountable relationship. It is such a relationship that fulfills the law of Christ. **We reap what we sow...**

Secondly, a spiritual person engages in **Introspection**.

The *you who are spiritual* identity has one potential pitfall. While this identity sets apart those who are considered spiritual, it also has the potential to allow the same people to believe and behave as if they have suddenly become little gods who lord it over others. Your spiritual gift or giftings are never meant to be used to suppress or dominate others, but rather to be used to lift and enable others. So Paul says, watch yourself, test your own motives and actions when you relate to others. Make sure that your intentions are right and honourable. Make sure that they help to build up rather than tear down your sister or brother. Make sure that your motive is not to please or promote yourself, but to act in the best interest of the community of faith. **We reap what we sow...**

Thirdly, a spiritual person reflects **Integrity**."

(To be continued in next week's Issue of the UCJCI Update.)

- Contributed by Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary, UCJCI

HOUSE WORSHIP LITURGY THEME FOR JULY 26, 2020

God Keeps His Promise to Provide for Us (When & Where We Least Expect)

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

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Know When to Push and When to Back Off

Timing is critically important to leadership. To be successful, you have to know when to push and when to back off. It's wise to wait for the right moment to speak up. A great idea at the wrong time will be received just the same as a bad idea. Of course, there are times when you must speak up, even if the timing doesn't seem ideal. The trick is knowing which is which.

Here are four questions you can ask to help determine if it is time to push:

Do I Know Something My Boss Doesn't but Needs To? There are times when you may know something your boss doesn't, but you need to communicate it to him or her because it could hurt the organization or them.

Is Time Running Out? There's an old saying, "Better one word in time than two afterward." If waiting will make it impossible for your organization to seize an opportunity, take a risk and move forward. Your leader can always choose not to take your advice, but no leader wants to hear, "You know, I thought that might happen" after it's too late. Give your leader the chance to decide.

Are My Responsibilities at Risk? When your leader entrusts you with tasks, you have a responsibility to follow through and get them done. If you are having difficulty with that, most leaders I know would rather know about it and have an opportunity to help you accomplish them than see you work all by yourself but fail.

Can I Help My Boss Win? Successful leaders make the right move at the right moment with the right motive. There will be times when you recognize opportunities for your leader to win that he or she doesn't see. When that is the case, it's time to push forward. *How do you know what your boss considers a win?* Go back to what you learned when you discovered your leader's heartbeat and priorities. If you see a way for him or her to accomplish something related to one of those, you can be sure your leader will consider it a win.

WHEN SHOULD I BACK OFF?

Knowing when to push is important, since you want to initiate to create wins or avoid losses. *Possibly more important is knowing when to back off.* Leaders may not always be aware of a missed opportunity because you failed to push, but they will definitely notice if you ought to back off but don't.

If you're not sure whether it's time to back off, ask these questions:

Am I Promoting My Own Personal Agenda? Good leaders back off if they realize that they are beginning to promote their own agenda instead of what's good for the organization. Not only that, but they are willing to sacrifice their own resources for the greater good of the organization when necessary.

Have I Already Made My Point? Whenever you're dealing with your leader, you need to pay attention to the flow of the stream. It is

very important to communicate your point of view clearly to your leader. But it's one thing to communicate and another to coerce your leader. The choice your leader makes is not your responsibility. Besides, if you have made your point clearly, you are unlikely to help your cause by continuing to hammer away at it with your leader.

Does the Atmosphere Say "No"?

Effective leaders are like weather forecasters. They are able to read the atmosphere of their workplaces—and especially of their bosses. It is really important that you read what's going on around you and pay attention to your boss' mood. Don't let a great idea get rained on because you picked the wrong day to introduce it.

Does My Request Exceed Our Relationship?

Consider the story of Esther in the bible. If she had approached Xerxes to ask him to spare her countrymen when he didn't wish to see her, he could have ordered her to be executed. Her relationship with Xerxes was tenuous, and she knew it. If her request exceeded that relationship, she would have been doomed.

In the end, with faith and courage, Esther approached the king, her request was granted, and the Jews were spared. It was a great challenge for this leader in the middle, but she was successful.

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

how can I help?

UCJCI FAMILY AD CORNER

UCJCI CAMP MINISTRY PRESENTS
A VIRTUAL SUMMER LINK UP FOR
OUR CHILDREN, TEENS AND YOUTHS!

Connected

TO EACH OTHER
Follow Me!

TO THE MISSION (PART 1)
Access Granted!

TO THE MISSION (PART 2)
Gwaan wld til!

TO THE WORD
Download di Message!

TO GOD
Plug in and Charge Up!

Save The Date!
AUGUST 09 - 13, 2020

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

OVERCOMERS

...For such a TIME as THIS

Prizes and Surprises!

REGISTER AT:

<http://ucjci campform.manageyourchurch.com/>

VIRTUAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2020

Monday, July 27 – Friday, July 31, 2020

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)

UCJCI'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

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, those with co-morbidities and our tourism workers.
- * Provision for the needy and those who have lost, or will lose, their jobs.
- * Our local and world economies.

