



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 31

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

Congregational
Disciples of Christ
Presbyterian

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

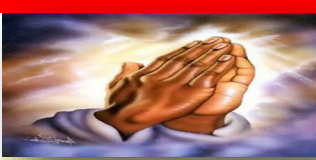
SYNODICAL THEME:
"Renewal and Transfor-
mation: Discipleship for
Life"

The Value of Giving

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PRAY FOR:



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

***Rev. Nevroy
Francis,** whose
grandmother, **Mrs.
Eva Cunningham-
Johnson,** has
passed on.

“For many people, giving represents an appeal to altruistic feelings. We give because it’s the human thing to do. If others are in need, our duty is to ‘help out’ where we can. But also, many see giving as a necessary outpouring of their excess. *“I have more than I need, so I should share.”*”

While those two motivations might be reasonable, the letter from Paul to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 8:1-15) speaks about giving in a way that challenges some commonly held assumptions.

On the one hand, for him, giving fundamentally challenges the concept of ownership, the right we have to possess ‘stuff’. It asserts that what we think is ours, is only ours on loan. We are not really owners, but rightly, managers. Giving, then, is an outworking of the responsibility of our management of those resources. We don’t lay claim to things in a way that ties us to them and them to us.

On the other hand, when Paul wrote in the way that

he did about the giving of the Macedonian Christians, he was challenging the Greco-Roman worldview that wealth was the result or sign of divine approval. That somehow, it is in having a lot of stuff that we demonstrate our strong connection to God or that God likes us. Both people who have a lot and people who have a little are blessed by God.

It seems then, that Paul is framing the discussion about ‘giving’ as essentially a matter of character. For him, our outlook on ‘giving’ or our disposition towards ‘giving’ speaks to who we know ourselves to be. It is an indication of our quality or our nature. You might have heard it said that, *“... when it comes to giving, some people stop at nothing.”* So, whether we take the minimalist approach or give sacrificially might have something to do with our understanding of who we are and the nature of the person that we have become.

Paul is unashamed in making a case for giving, and does so by appealing to the example of Macedonian Christians. He does three things in outlining his case:

Firstly, he examines their **motivation for giving.** *Why is it that we give?* Giving should come from an understanding of grace. In verse 1, he asserts that their outpouring of love came from the grace that God had given the Macedonian church.

The ability to give beyond getting back or building up ‘goodwill’ only happens because of the supernatural deposit of grace in a person’s life. It is an understanding of the unmerited and undeserved favour of God that we receive in Christ’s sacrificial giving of Himself on the cross. Giving then becomes a virtue, an act of grace that we offer without the promise of anything in return or the hope to ‘cash in our chips’ at a later date. This requires that we embrace grace, live into grace, and then offer grace.

(Continued on Page 2)



CELEBRATIONS!



70:

Rev. Millard Edwards

August 12

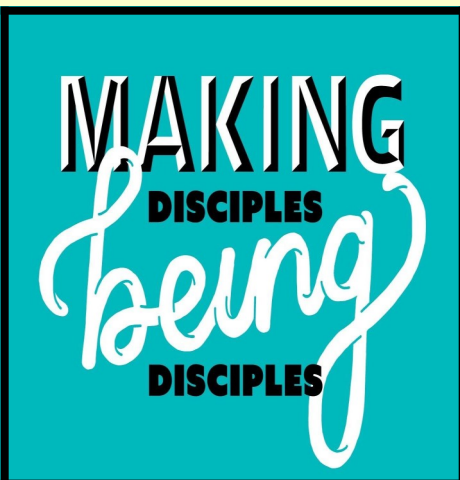
Rev. Euthman Wray

August 13

UCJCI VALUES

The UCJCI Value Statement

“The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands represents a people, called by God, to love and worship God as Creator, Jesus the Saviour, and the Holy Spirit the Comforter; to make a difference in people’s lives by actively loving and serving those around us; to bring the good news of the Gospel to all people; to nurture each other in faith; to pursue God’s justice and peace in all areas of life, so that ‘God’s kingdom may come on earth as it is in heaven’.”



The Value of Giving

(Continued from Page 1)

So, in verse 7, he exhorts them to “...see that you also excel in this grace of giving”.

He seems also to employ another ‘unlikely’ method of encouraging this kind of giving. He suggests that they do a comparison of their giving with the giving of others. But it is not the quantity of the giving with which he appears interested. Instead, he wants to “...test the sincerity of (their) love (against) the earnestness of others.” He wants them to give out of their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the grace they have received from Christ.

Secondly, he **expresses their maturity in giving**. He uses the takeaways from their demonstration and experience of giving in order to teach the principle that giving is an expression of the maturity of our faith. Their giving was not limited to, or restricted by, hardship. For it was “*in the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity*” (v.2).

They didn’t use their challenging circumstances or their meagre resources as an excuse to hoard or to refrain from reaching out to others. In the face of severe trials, their joy transformed their poverty into generosity. This maturity of faith inspired them to give, not only according to their ability, but also motivated them to sacrifice (to give beyond their apparent ability). They gave as able, yet even more than they were able. And this giving was not coerced, but was an outflowing from this depth of faith which provided the internal motivation for their act of service. They did it all “...entirely on their own...” (v.3), they “...pleaded for opportunity to give” (v.4) and gave of themselves “...first of all to the Lord, and then ... to (the apostles)” (v.5).

Thirdly, he **encourages the adoption of their mindset in giving**. By Paul’s application of the Macedonians’ approach to giving, he is offering to the Christians in Corinth, as well as to us who read his ‘something of a’ blueprint for giving. In matters of giving, he seems to suggest that we must recognize that good intentions are good, but not good enough. There is a need to follow through. So, in verse 11, he admonishes them to “...finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your ability.”

...Our participation in ownership of any portion of it is but a trust from God. Humans are really empowered managers of the abundance of God's earth. Whatever amount we have in our care and keeping AND however we gain wealth, our stewardship has accountability. It is to utilize being fundamentally aware that it is God’s, and therefore should glorify God in all of its usage. And that awareness should propel us to sharing it – so that all of God’s creation are benefitted by God’s provision. Freely you have received of the grace of God, and freely, then, should you give out of that grace to others.

It has been said that there are three kinds of givers—the **flint**, the **sponge** and the **honeycomb**. To get anything out of a *flint* you must hammer it; and then you get only chips and sparks. To get water out of a *sponge* you must squeeze it; the more pressure, the more you will get. But the *honeycomb* just overflows with its own sweetness. *Which kind of giver are you?*”

- Contributed by: Rev. Donovan Myers, Minister of John Gray Memorial United Church

LEADERSHIP CORNER

The Leader's Daily Dozen (Part 2)

(This article continues from last week's Issue of the UCJCI Update.)

If you're willing to work at making your organization a place where leaders lead and do it well, you'll need to shift your focus from leading the people, finding leaders, developing leaders, empowering the leaders while they lead the organization, to *servicing* the leaders as they lead the organization.

If you're ready to revolutionize your organization, then start the process by adopting what I call the "Leader's Daily Dozen". Every morning when you get up and get ready to lead your organization, make a commitment to these power-unleashing activities.

PROVIDE YOUR PEOPLE WITH LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES. It is impossible to learn leadership without actually leading. After all, leadership is action. One of the places where many top leaders miss developmental opportunities comes in what we delegate. Our natural tendency is to give others tasks to perform rather than leadership functions to fulfil. But if we don't delegate leadership—with authority as well as accountability—our people will never gain the experience they need to lead well.

REWARD LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE. The best leaders are proactive. They make things happen. It's true that emerging leaders often want to take the lead before they are really ready to. But potential leaders can only become full-

fledged leaders if they are allowed to develop and use their initiative. So what's the solution? Good timing! If you rush the timing, you short-circuit the growth process. If you hold leaders back when they're ready to move, you stunt their growth.

PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE ASK QUESTIONS, SHARE IDEAS, AND TAKE RISKS. Garry Wills said, "Leaders have a say in what they are being led to. A leader who neglects that soon finds himself (herself) without followers." It takes secure leaders at the top to let the leaders working for them be full participants in the organization's leadership process. If leaders in the middle question them, they don't take it personally. When they share ideas, the top leaders cannot afford to feel threatened. When people lower than they are in the organization want to take risks, they need to be willing to give them room to succeed or fail.

Leadership by its very nature challenges. It challenges out-of-date ideas. It challenges old ways of doing things. It challenges the status quo. Never forget that what gets rewarded gets done. If you reward complacency, you will get complacency from your leaders in the middle. But if you remain secure and let them find new ways of doing things—ways that are better than yours—the organization will move forward more quickly.

GROW WITH YOUR PEOPLE.

PLE. When people in an organization see the top leader growing, it changes the culture of the organization. It immediately removes many barriers between the top leader and the rest of the people, putting you on the same level with them, which makes the top leader much more human and accessible. It also sends a clear message to everyone: make growth a priority.

DRAW PEOPLE WITH HIGH POTENTIAL INTO YOUR INNER CIRCLE. The best way to develop high-calibre leaders is to have them mentored by a high-calibre leader. If you lead your organization/department, you are probably the best (or at least one of the best) leader/s in the organization/department. If you are not already doing so, you need to handpick the people with the greatest potential, invite them into your inner circle, and mentor them. It doesn't matter if you do it with one or with a dozen, whether you work one-on-one or in a group setting. The main thing is that you need to be giving your best to your best people.

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

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)

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.



UCJCI FAMILY AD CORNER

Webster Memorial United Church invites you to join an online transformative worship experience

“Released from Lockdown”

Sunday, August 30, 2020
at 3:30pm

Pre-Event at 3pm
(Praise & Worship)



Host
Rev. Astor Carlyle

Dramatic production with Sophia Lewin as Script Writer, Fae Ellington as Director and Television Production - JNN
Plan your watch parties at home. Bring your praise for the ultimate family event. Appropriate physical distancing protocols required.



WEBSTER MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH



NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

AUGUST 15TH
2020
@12 NOON

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
&
ELECTIONS
2020
SUPPORT DE YUTES

FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT REGIONAL
EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

STREAMING ON: zoom

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