



# CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

## WEEKLY UPDATE

NOVEMBER: A Culture of Evangelism

November 17, 2021

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UCJCI 42<sup>nd</sup> SYNOD THEME 2021 – Rooted, Resilient: Responding in HOPE (Health, Opportunity, Peace, Evangelism)



This week's focus:  
**Jesus Will Come Again**

Jesus our majestic King will come again and be seen by all. God in Christ is the Beginning and the End. He is Almighty.

## Jesus is Coming Back, Share the Good News While You Can!

By Mr. Michael Bowerman

I have a boyhood memory of returning home one afternoon and not being able to find either of my parents. Now, I had been brought up in a Christian home, and one of the things I had learned was that one day, without warning, Jesus was going to come back and all Christians would be “raptured” – caught up with Jesus in the sky and taken to heaven, leaving the rest behind. I thought that was what had happened; my parents had been raptured and I hadn't because I hadn't received Jesus as my Saviour and Lord. It seriously frightened me to think such a thing might have happened and I hadn't been ready, and this was one of the factors that convinced me a little later, when I was about 12, to accept Him as my Saviour and Lord.

Let's go back some 2000 years earlier to a bunch of eleven men who had witnessed over six weeks the most extraordinary events. They had been in anguish as they saw their Master crucified, had suffered grief and a sense of being bereft as they watched Him die and then be placed in a tomb. They were profoundly disappointed; their hopes had been dashed that the kingdom they hoped Jesus would establish would happen, with the Romans driven out, Israel restored as the center of God's kingdom and Jesus Himself as king – and very much afraid something similar might happen to them as happened to Him.

Then, a few days later, some amazing – indeed, unbelievable – news from the graveside: “He is not here; He has risen.” More extraordinary than that, while hiding in an upstairs room, Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst and gently greeted them, “Peace be with you!” What a roller-coaster of emotions they had experienced!

Now, in the intervening weeks, hope had been restored. Jesus was back. He was instructing them again about the kingdom. They anticipated Jesus making a move any moment. They were listening to Him raptly one evening over dinner. Luke records the conversation and the events which immediately followed the meal, as they walk back across the Kidron Valley up the Hill of Olives towards Bethany. In Acts 1:6-11 we read:

*“The disciples gathered around him and asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ 7 He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ 9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.”*

Not only had Jesus not answered their question about the kingdom, but He also suddenly just upped and left! And the keyword is ‘upped’ for He rose into the sky before their startled eyes. They were left speechless. Luke continues,

*10 “They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.’”*

So, He's coming back! They believed the two men as all the crazy happenings of the past 40 days convinced them that He would do so. But when? Tomorrow? Next week? In a year's time? Then they remembered that He had clearly told them that they were not going to be told when but, in the meantime, they were to stay around in Jerusalem, charging them to tell others about Him until such time He did come back: “You are to be my witnesses,” He told them.

Witnesses? What did that entail? And because Scripture is relevant to us, what does that word ‘witness’ mean for us today? It might be helpful to answer this by asking four ‘W’ questions: Who? What? When? And where?

### 1. Who is to witness?

In the same way as those disciples who had been with Jesus had seen all He did and heard all He said, so all of us who have a personal relationship with Him are charged to tell others about our experience of Him. By definition, a witness has to be someone who has had a firsthand experience. If we are called by a court of law to provide evidence as a witness, we cannot provide hearsay; we cannot say, in effect, “I was told by someone” or “I heard from my friend.” No, the authenticity of our witness lies in our personal experience. And that is true of Christians in relation to their faith. They have had a personal experience of Christ. Every Christian is a witness; the truth is, they are either a good one or a poor one!

To be a witness for Christ is different from being an evangelist. The latter is a gift that God gives to some but not all. They are specially enabled by God to proclaim the gospel, whether in big gatherings or one to one. They often see people come to know Christ as they do so. A witness, on the other hand, is simply someone who by his/her life and conversations shows that he/she belongs to Jesus and in this way shares the good news about Him and their relationship with Him. It has to do with a lifestyle, one that is authentic and open. We need to be warned, however, against thinking that we don't need to say anything because, as some people claim, our witness is in our lives. There will be times when we must articulate our faith and say why we are Christians. We need to be ready to do this.

Every Christian must be concerned for the spiritual well-being of others. We have a responsibility as well as a directive to share the good news with others who don't know Jesus. Bishop Niles of Sri Lanka once said, “Witnessing is like one beggar telling another where to find bread.”

### 2. To what do we witness?

The disciples would have told people they met all about Jesus, their experiences with Him, the things they saw He did, and the things they heard Him say. But, most importantly, they would have told of His death and resurrection, with their new understanding of its enormous and life-changing significance.

That, of course, was the gospel (the good news) they proclaimed and shared wherever they went from that point on. It is what we have to share. If we are Christians, there was a point in time when we came, as it were, to the cross and asked for forgiveness for our sins. At that moment, we asked Jesus in faith to be our Saviour and Lord and came into a personal relationship with Him. It was, literally, a life-changing experience! This is what we need to share. Jesus. What He did on the cross for us. What difference it has made in our lives. How life is now directed by Him and can provide us what we need to deal with all the issues of life; His peace and protection, His guidance and provision. So, we witness to Jesus, and we witness to our faith – our ongoing relationship with him.

### 3. When should we witness?

The answer is simple, all the time! It is a lifestyle. Yes, there will be special opportunities to reach out to people. It might be in a time of their special need, a tragedy, or a crisis. It might happen during a conversation when matters of social concern or worldwide challenges – as with this COVID pandemic – come up in conversation and we are asked to give an opinion. It provides us the opportunity to give a biblical response.

Further, as we look again at verse 8, we note that Jesus told His disciples to await the giving of the Holy Spirit by which they would receive power to effectively witness. So, in order to be good witnesses, we need to recognize that God has given us the Holy Spirit who lives in every Christian. When we recognize this, we come to understand how our witness can impact others for good and, indeed, bring about the change we have experienced as we look to Him. So, all witnessing must be done trusting in God's Spirit to do what we cannot do by ourselves. And we do so until the end, whether it's our death or when Jesus fulfills His promise to return.

### 4. Finally, where do we witness?

On several occasions, I have taught or preached on this subject using the title, “Sharing the Good News in Our World”. The disciples, according to the passage were to be “witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Where were they to start? Right where they were living, in Jerusalem. Yes, they were going to move on from there in the course of time but meanwhile, their witness was to be in their ‘world’ – right where they were.

Our witness starts right where we are, in our homes, in our places of work, among our friends and in our Cayman society. Our first place of witness will be among people we know. Later, we might travel or move somewhere else, even to the “ends of the earth”; maybe because we relocate, or our job has taken us there, or because we were called to serve God in some other country. Because witnessing is a lifestyle, it doesn't so much matter where you are as to who you are. You are who you are because you have a personal relationship with Jesus, and He wants you to take every opportunity to share that with others.

The British Evangelist “Gypsy” Smith once said, “There are five gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John – and you. Most people will never read the first four.” The disciples looked for a kingdom with Jesus reigning. We have the responsibility to witness to that kingdom to help bring it about.

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# Sharing Jesus

*this is life*

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# Christ the King Sunday

This coming Sunday is called 'Christ the King Sunday' and with it we arrive at the end of the Church's Liturgical Year. It is the conclusion of the Churches' annual liturgical journey which takes us through the life of Jesus Christ and the message of the Gospel, marking the most significant steps along the way.

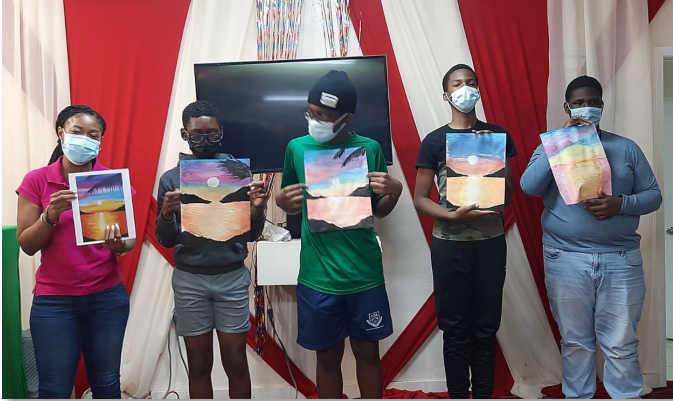
The name, 'Christ the King Sunday' reminds us of the eschatological dimension of our faith, namely, that at the end of time our Lord will return to set in motion the unfolding of God's kingdom, as it will be established in all its fullness to the ends of the earth. In our reformed tradition, it is customary to incorporate in our worship services hymns like "Crown Him with Many Crowns" and "Rejoice, the Lord Is King" to mark this special occasion. On the following Sunday, which is the 1st Sunday in Advent, we begin our twelve-month liturgical/spiritual journey once again as we look forward to the future with hope and expectation.

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## Mental Health, Creative Expression



On Friday November 12, 2021, the Teens' Youth Group of the Savannah United Church were engaged in a lively discussion with Ms. Ginnel Nelson from the Department of Education Services who shared on the benefits of healthy mental habits, especially during the COVID pandemic. She then guided both teens and leaders in an art expression activity that was very relaxing and fun for all participants. *(by Ms. Camile Watt)*



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## UPCOMING EVENTS


- November 21. (Sunday) Christ the King Sunday
- November 28. (Sunday)\_1st Sunday of Advent (HOPE)



on Radio Cayman 89.9  
every Sunday at 7:45 am  
**November 21, 2021**  
Mr. Michael Bowerman

**CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING (CTLT) CAYMAN ISLANDS**  
NON-DENOMINATIONAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME PROVIDER

**A CHRISTMAS SPECIAL SEMINAR ON "THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS IN THE CONTEXT OF PLURALISM"**



WELCOME: **REV. DR. PJ LAWRENCE**, DIRECTOR, CTLT -CAYMAN ISLANDS  
MODERATOR: **MS. SANDRA LEE SAMUEL**  
GUEST SPEAKER: **REV. DR. STEVEN JENNINGS**, PASTOR, JAMAICA BAPTIST UNION, KINGSTON, JAMAICA.  
RESPONDER: **REV. DR. GARY GARDNER**, SENIOR LECTURES, CTLT CAYMAN  
DATE: SATURDAY 4 DECEMBER 2021  
TIME: 10 AM TO 11:30 AM  
VIA ZOOM  
MEETING ID: 2485559547  
PASSCODE: 55ZPSI

**UCJCI CHURCH SCHOOL TRAINING**



**SATURDAY, November 20, 2021**  
**@10 am - 2pm**

**VIA ZOOM**  
Meeting ID: 891 2335 1434  
Passcode: 806898

Registration Forms are available from the CIRMC Office.

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