



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

ADVENT: The Centrality of Christ in the Season

November 24, 2021

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 47

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

The Season of Advent

The beginning of the Advent season signals the coming of Christmas and so our preparations begin. There are gifts to buy, cards to send, menus to plan for, people to see. The four Sundays – and weeks - of Advent remind us of the importance of the spiritual aspect of this preparation, the readying of our hearts and minds, not only for the celebration of Jesus' birth (1st coming) but also for His future return in glory (2nd coming) when He will set up His kingdom, judge His enemies, and reward the faithful, both living and dead.

Advent is full of symbolism and meaning, which is also reflected by the themes of the four Sundays/weeks.

- 1st Sunday - HOPE
- 2nd Sunday - PEACE
- 3rd Sunday - JOY
- 4th Sunday - LOVE



Advent 1 – The Sunday of HOPE

On the 1st Sunday in Advent we light the candle of Hope in our churches as a reminder that as followers of Jesus Christ we are the people of hope who can boldly approach God's throne of grace with our needs (Heb. 4:16), who can overcome great obstacles (1 John 5:4) and who – because of God's promises - can look into the future with complete confidence.

“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).



ADVENT THEME: THE CENTRALITY OF CHRIST IN THE SEASON

The festivity, objects and commercial facets which seem to define and characterize the Advent period and Christmas, have slowly become an impediment to the voice and character of Jesus the Christ. We have the responsibility as Christians to bring back Jesus the Christ at the center of the Advent Season. The duty to defend the gospel, being and validity of Christ in the Season, should not be taken lightly by all of us. We have an obligation to make the message of Jesus clear in the midst of all the noise and excitement which comes with this Season. God is depending on and inviting all of us to be the voice of change in the current dynamics of the Season, this we must do with boldness and a sense of clarity.

This week's focus: Watch What Weighs Down Your Heart

The heart is an integral part of our lives and speaks to life and death. Jesus in our text warns his audience to be “careful, or their hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life” are these not things which seem to take the center of our advent today? It's all about who can spend big, and those who cannot end up getting stressed. This has been a threat for many years to family unity and stability.

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: 5ZPSI

POPULAR REPORT

CAYMAN REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council (CIRMC) gathered for a Special Meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, November 16, 2021. The meeting was quorate with all Charges represented.

The Members of Council received a proposal document from the Council Executive Committee presenting the issues related to the casting of the 2022 budget for the Council.

The document stated in part; “In the process of developing the 2022 draft budget, the reality of the financial position of the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council (CIRMC) has become a serious concern. This concern should however be viewed as an opportunity rather than as a crisis. The truth is that the financial sustainability of the Council has been in our conversation for several years but at each juncture, the Council was able to diminish the harsher decisions that needed to be taken.

In the recent conversations with the Cayman United Church Corporation (CUCC) it has become evident that at this point in the journey, a new path has to be discerned. There has to be the continuous desire to faithfully respond to the mission and ministry needs in this Council knowing full well that changes may and will occur and that many familiar paths may change. The Council must however remain faithful to its core beliefs and values and must be missional in its intention. We must ensure that persons receive the care and compassion exhibited in the life and ministry of Christ for which the United Church is well known.

Undoubtedly, the Covid-19 pandemic is a factor to be considered in this pivotal space and time and there is a beckoning for careful prayer and thoughtful action as the Council forges ahead. It must not be understated that the psyche of many persons has been impacted by the pandemic. The Church however needs to remain rooted in Christ, resilient and available to minister to the needs of the members, adherents, and persons in the wider community.”

Further, “The main challenge for the CIRMC will be the maintenance of the ministry and mission, whilst ensuring that the resources under the stewardship of the Council and the CUCC are best utilized to bring glory to God and keep faith with the vision for the UCJCI, ‘Touching Lives, Nurturing Disciples, seeking Transformation in Christ,’ thereby becoming a needs-meeting church.”

At the 42nd Synod of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, held April 11-18, 2021, eight(8) Mission Priorities and nine(9) Resolutions were adopted. They have been captured in the matrix of how the Church will worship, witness, work and evangelize.

It was clearly stated, that “The intention is to inspire the missional urgency through the work of the Committees and Commissions, so that the priorities may find resonance and relevance at the congregational level, supported by the Regional

Mission Councils, as together we seek to offer flesh and bones to our vision for the UCJCI, ‘Touching Lives, Nurturing Disciples, seeking Transformation in Christ,’ thereby becoming a needs-meeting church.”

In response to the proposal, the Members of Council voted unanimously to explore the following actions with Congregational Boards and Congregations and report their response to Council at the next meeting scheduled for January 22, 2022.

Proposed action #1 Central Fund contributions from Congregations and the Cayman United Church Corporation (CUCC) – Revert to the principle of giving 30% of income introduced by the Synod in 2009

In preparation for the 2022 Budget of the Council, two key elements needed special attention, 1. the reduction of expenses in some areas and 2. the increased contributions of some congregations.

The following Congregations, based on the 30% contribution, would be required to give an increased amount to Council: Elmslie Memorial United Church, John Gray Memorial United Church, Savannah United Church, South Sound United Church, and Gun Bay United Church.

The following Congregations would be required to give reduced amounts based on the 30% formula; Webster Memorial United Church, Robert Young Memorial United Church, East End United Church and William Pouchie Memorial United Church.

The Cayman United Church Corporation (CUCC) would be asked to also contribute at the 30% threshold from their revenue stream.

Concerning the 2022 budget of the CIRMC, it was indicated that if the 30% contribution by each congregation can’t materialize, drastic cuts will need to be introduced in other areas of expenditure to reduce expenses and balance the proposed budget.

Proposed action #2 Reduction of Charges from five to four

To provide optimal ministerial coverage the following realignments are proposed:

1. John Gray Memorial United Church and South Sound United Church
 2. Elmslie Memorial United Church and Robert Young Memorial United Church
 3. Savannah United Church and Webster Memorial United Church
 4. William Pouchie Memorial United Church, East End United Church, Gun Bay United Church
- (These congregations will retain the support of a Lay Pastor.

There were no objections raised to the realignment of the Charges. A proposed detailed timeline for the methodology and implementation of the above-mentioned changes, as well as the areas needing consideration was presented, such as

- Consultations with Board of Elders, Congregations, protocols of de-and re-linking, logistics, Call of Ministers, time of worship, etc.
- Sharing of staff
- Cost sharing in newly created Charges
- Usage of Manse if unoccupied
- Usage of the East End-Gun Bay Charge motor vehicle

Between November 17, 2021, and December 3, 2021, the RDGS will visit all Congregational Boards to explain the proposed actions and respond to the concerns the Elders might raise. Once the process is completed, -which includes the approval of the proposed changes by the Church and Ministry Committee of Synod and the Central Mission Council-, the expectation is that the proposals will come into effect on March 1, 2022.

ORGAN DEDICATION CEREMONY



On a sunny Sunday afternoon, November 21, 2021, members, friends, and benefactors of the Gun Bay United Church, -along with visitors and dignitaries of the CIRM- gathered for an Organ Dedication Ceremony.

The Congregation has been waiting for a long time to see this notable project come to fulfillment. It has been a truly collective effort of visioning, praying, giving, and many hours of relentless work on the part of many who were determined to see their shared dream come true. Among the many, special thanks were offered to Mr. Trevor Watler, Mr. Olivaire Watler, Mrs. Vernie Watler-Harris. The installation, requiring one-of-a-kind expertise and experience was carried out by a well-known specialist, Mr. Errol Stephens, who has a decades-long history working in organ installation, restoration, and maintenance, both locally and overseas.

Being the most advanced electronic organ ever built, the Allen Organ GX125 is a masterpiece of musical engineering and craftsmanship, representing the pinnacle of digital technology applied to exacting musical tasks. This magnificent instrument with 34 stops and a multi-function Piston Sequencer for nine

voicing suites provides authentic, digitally sampled voices with remarkably advanced tone quality and performance.



The Allen Organ GX125

The sounds and features of the new instrument were showcased through classical and ecclesiastical pieces by musicians from various CIRM congregations, including Mr. Denver Bloomfield, Mr. Olivaire Watler, Mr. Chris Bowring, Mr. Everton Webster, Mr. Noel Wallace and Mr. Michael Stephens. Special guest performance was rendered by Mrs. Heidi Nyack from the Seventh Day Adventist Church and Mr. Rudy Myles.

Youth Group Celebration Party

On Friday November 19, 2021, The Savannah United Church had a final Open Air Celebration Party on the Basketball Court for the teens group and a Craft Activity with the primary group. The night was filled with games, prizes, giveaways with food and fellowship. The Youth Group will break for the remainder of the year while the children participate in preparations for the annual Youth Christmas Cantata.





In recognition of Sunday School Month, the Savannah United Church celebrated its Sunday School Teachers on Sunday, November 21, 2021.

Twenty-five (25) dedicated Teachers were honored with framed Certificates of Appreciation from Nursery Teachers to Senior High Teachers who have served for several years within their Youth Ministry.

Special recognition was given to Mr. Herman Wilson (Adult Sunday School Teacher) and Mrs. Marisa Crawford (Sunday School Superintendent) who have both served in this capacity for over a decade. They were presented with a special award for their many years of service by Regional Deputy General Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield.





December 6, 2021

Cayman Thanksgiving is a weekend-long national celebration honoring Caymanian heritage, culture, way of life and everything Caymanian. It is also an opportunity to stop and express gratitude, marking the end of hurricane season. Cayman Thanksgiving is observed annually on the first Sunday in December.

- 1 God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble...
- 10 He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
- 11 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Psalm 46:1.10-11

THE ADVENT JOURNEY:

HOPE BECOMES PEACE
PEACE BECOMES JOY
JOY BECOMES LOVE

LOVE BECOMES CHRIST

R. Schuller

"I trust that as you read this book of prayers, you will find it a blessing to you and your families and trust that you will pass from simply reading these prayers to praying." –
Herbert Crawford

Available by the end of November early December. Further details to follow. (Hardcover and digital).

366 PRAYERS
FOR
ALL SEASONS



HERBERT CRAWFORD



The **John Gray Memorial United Church (West Bay)** is seeking to fill the position of Youth Minister and invites dynamic, highly motivated and qualified candidates to tender their applications.

If you are sensing a call to this ministry, we invite you to submit your letter of application, curriculum vitae and a brief statement of your faith journey to jgmcminister@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 28. (Sunday) 1st Sunday of Advent (HOPE)

December 04. (Saturday)

Men's Fell. Breakfast – 7:30am – Elmslie church hall

December 05. (Sunday) 2nd Sunday of Advent (PEACE)

Also **Union Sunday** and **Cayman Thanksgiving**



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

November 28, 2021
Rev. Louis Herard-Sully

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