



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

Jesus, the Source of Complete Joy

December 29, 2021

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 52



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

In Everything...with Thanksgiving

By Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield (RDGS-CIRMC)



In a few days, the curtain will close on 2021 and the dawn of the new year will begin. Although the challenges during 2021 were many and varied, because of God's divine providence we were resilient and persisted in accomplishing all the undertakings. We can therefore enter 2022

with a deep sense of gratitude because of all that God allowed us to achieve by God's grace in 2021.

However, we need to take note of the fact that in our personal lives, in the community and the Church, the start of a new year is always an opportune time for reflection and recommitment. Despite God's faithfulness and our faith, some persons will enter 2022 being particularly and completely worn out by the grueling nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially with the realities of the last four months in the Cayman Islands. With the upsurge in the COVID-19 positive cases, the deaths that have occurred, the new Omicron variant and the seeming never end in sight to the vicissitudes of the pandemic, some persons are challenged to remain hopeful.

As such, let us be reminded of Paul's encouragement to the Church in Philippi *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."* (Philippians 4:6)

As a Church Family, we continue to hold in prayer persons who have contracted the disease, those who are in isolation, those who have been hospitalized and the families of those who have unfortunately succumbed to this disease.

But let us know with certainty, that God remains faithful, and that God's promises are sure. God will never leave us nor forsake us!

In 2022, the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands will focus on the 2021-2023 Synodical Theme, 'Rooted and Resilient; Responding in HOPE'. Emphasis will be placed on the spiritual nurture and development of the children and youth in our midst. How can the ministry and mission with children and youth be strengthened? How can we ensure that the Gospel of Christ transforms all the obstacles created by the pandemic into evangelistic and discipleship opportunities for the children and youth?

In addition to the emphasis on children and youth, there is the recognition of the urgent need to ensure that pastoral care is available not only for the sick and housebound but to the persons who have become disaffected and disillusioned in their faith. Many persons are crying out for the Church to truly become the body of Christ where the needs of all persons are taken seriously. People are hurting and some are drifting, and this is true not only for new converts but for some persons who are seasoned in the faith.

The Synod and the Council will also offer more pastoral care and support to the Servants in the field as the ministry responsibilities and accountabilities will increase especially in this Council in the coming year.

There is also the recognition that ways will need to be found to foster deeper discipleship and fellowship as the Church tries to exist as both scattered and gathered community of faith. Living out faith as the body of Christ requires a healthy understanding of what it means to be in a community with each other even when separated by the challenges of the pandemic and the other socio-economic realities.

We acknowledge that as followers of Christ and as a community of faith, we share not only a particular set of religious beliefs, but we are expected to be committed to Christ and each other. In any faith community, there are varying levels of commitment but as we strengthen the relationship we have with Christ; we will increase our commitment to being at one with our fellow travelers along the path of faith. We must bear in mind that the best way to test the strength of our faith is perhaps how we conduct our lives amid the community.

As the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands reflect on this powerful Synodical theme in 2022, let us remain rooted in Christ, knowing that we can find comfort, become and remain resilient and truly live as a people of hope.

The call to remain rooted in Christ is urgent as we continue to live in a most uncertain time. The vicissitudes that exist because of the Covid-19 pandemic tend to affect every aspect of life and can, by extension, have a profound impact on our spiritual well-being. In the emerging culture of masks, social distancing, separation and isolation, persons have found that if fear is fostered, that faith, can easily vacillate and that there can be a trembling in our souls. It can become easy to give in to fear and doubt if we are not firmly rooted in Christ. Being rooted in Christ provides the grounding for our hope and as such, we can be relentless through the trials of life.

Our rootedness in Christ speaks to God’s grace and mercy exhibited in God’s readiness to forgive, to work in new ways, and God’s readiness for solidarity, compassion, faithfulness and loyalty towards us.

Nature has taught us that the roots of a plant absorb water and nutrients from the soil. In addition, roots serve to secure the plant firmly, provide the storage for food and nutrients and roots transport water and minerals to the plant. If we are rooted spiritually in Christ, then we must find our resources in Him. We must allow Christ to feed and nourish our hungry and thirsty souls and as such, we will thrive because of Him. Our growth must reflect that we are in Him and that He supplies our every need. Our flourishing and fruit-bearing will be indicative of being rooted in Christ and we will bring others into the kingdom and bring glory to Christ.

Being rooted in Christ means we have a strong desire to know Him, to have faith in Him even when it's difficult to understand and to spend time in His presence daily to grow stronger in our faith. It means we can submit to Christ and trust in Him with every facet of our lives. Being rooted in Christ keeps us grounded and settled and as such we will exhibit Christ-like qualities.

We pray that in 2022 and beyond our lives will be filled and overflowing with the power of Christ’s love so that we can make a difference in this world, the community and in our families. May we be equipped by the Spirit to face each day with the power of Christ’s love, forgiveness, and grace.

A Happy and Blessed New Year to you and your loved ones.

East End United Church

On Sunday, December 26, 2021, the Children and Youth Ministry of the East End United Church presented “The Christmas Story” during the Morning Worship Service.



World Council of Churches

WCC (oikoumene.org)

In a special Christmas message, World Council of Churches (WCC) Acting General Secretary Rev. Prof. Dr. Ioan Sauca challenges all to communicate and manifest the hope and joy of Christmas in our ‘broken’ World.

“...you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” — 2 Corinthians 8:9

“The Christmas story fascinates, intrigues and challenges. It is a fascinating story, among other reasons, because the revelation of what God has graciously done in Christ for the renewal of the whole creation comes to us through narratives in which the main actors are not the powerful living in palaces, but the humble living in the margins.

Think of the Christmas stories from the gospels of Matthew and Luke. What comes to mind? A modest couple facing difficulties; a vulnerable child threatened by the cruelty of a king; a pregnant woman who does not find a hotel room to give birth; anonymous shepherds who receive good news from a crowd of angels; a young family pushed to migration.

All of them are on the underside of history. All of them are the bearers of the divine promise about the final destination of history.

What Mary celebrated in the spirit of the Hebrew prophets, by singing that her Saviour had “brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly,” the apostle Paul formulates in terms of the self-emptying of the Son of God, who became poor “for us and for our salvation,” as expressed later in the words of the Nicene Creed.

The Christmas story and its fascinating paradox invite us to meditate about Christian life in today’s world. Preaching in Constantinople about the second letter to the Corinthians, Saint John Chrysostom spoke of two altars in Christian life, which are inseparable from each other: the altar of Holy Communion and the altar of compassion. We cannot receive the Heavenly Bread without engaging in active solidarity, in “the liturgy after the liturgy”, with those who cannot receive the earthly bread.

Ours are times in which the pandemic has catalyzed the risks of the climate emergency, the systemic inequalities between rich and poor, and widespread gender-based violence.

As we prepare ourselves to welcome the One who manifested the God of the widow, the foreigner and the orphan, let not our minds conform to the spirit of greed of our times. Let us repent and convert to new ways of living that express our care for future generations. Let Christ’s love move the world to reconciliation and unity.

May your Christmas be blessed and its message of joy and hope overwhelm your lives. Christ is born, let us glorify him!”

The WCC is a fellowship of 350 member churches in more than 110 countries and territories throughout the world, representing over 500 million Christians and including most of the world's Orthodox churches, scores of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed churches, as well as many United and Independent churches.

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 31. (Friday) Watch Night

- 10:30 pm - Elmslie Memorial (Joined Charge service)
- 10:30 pm - Savannah United (Joined Charge service)
- 11:00 pm - John Gray Memorial
- 11:00 pm - Webster Memorial
- 11:00 pm - William Pouchie Memorial
- 11:00 pm - East End United (Joined Charge service)

January 02. (Sunday) 2nd Sunday in Christmas

January 03. (Monday)

Public Holiday for New Year’s Day

UCJCI Lay Training Institute



TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS 2022

Offered in collaboration with The International University of the Caribbean



Get Ready to Serve!

**MODULE 1
BEGINS
FEBRUARY
12, 2022**

TRAINING
FEATURES

- Weekend and Weekday classes
Saturdays 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Thursdays 6 - 8 p.m.
(2nd and 4th Saturdays and Thursday in the immediate week following)
- Combination of Learning in Virtual Classrooms via Zoom and in Learners' own time

ORIENTATION
JANUARY 29,
2022

REGISTER NOW
through your Regional
Mission Council office

For more information :

nermc@ucjci.com; cirmc.info@gmail.com; wrmc01@yahoo.com; srmc@ucjci.com

Enjoy a safe Christmas...



Hands Face Space



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

January 2, 2021
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