



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

February 09, 2022.

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 06

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

Rooted in Christ and Called to Flourish and Bear Fruit



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

Psalm 1

¹ Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither
— whatever they do prospers.
⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff
that the wind blows away.
⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

The reading from Psalm 1, is a powerful analogy and reminder of the need to be rooted and grounded in a fertile and well-watered place to flourish and bear fruit.

It is said that the Book of Psalms contains instruction and information for the whole of human life. The Psalmist clearly understood the complexities of human nature and the need for divine presence and the blessed assurance of grace and pardon. The Psalms provide the basic guidelines for our spiritual conduct, our relationship with God and others, our relationship with nature and they also provide solace and consolation for the darkest hours of human existence.

The Psalms, however, foremostly expose the marvelous works of God as Creator, Savior, Redeemer, and Friend. It should be noted that in the New Testament, the Psalms and the Book of Isaiah are the two most quoted books because they constitute the prophetic announcements that are fulfilled in the life of Christ.

The Psalm is a beatitude and standing as it does as the first of the one hundred and fifty Psalms, beckons reflection and

response to the blessing and the curse that can occur based on one's choice. Blessings are promised to those who allow the law of the Lord to be the hallmark for everything they do in life. Curses, it seems, are heaped on those who turn away from the precepts of God and follow a strange path.

By placing this Psalm at the beginning of the Book of Psalms, with the images of the tree and the river of water, the writer intends for readers to recall the book of Genesis where humanity in its purest form existed in the Garden of Eden.

Further, in the Garden of Eden, humanity faced the dilemma of making choices and the same is true in Psalm one.

Two choices confront readers: walking with the wicked, which means taking the pathway of sinners and mockers vis-à-vis delighting in the law of the Lord and meditating constantly on the law.

The Psalmist places emphasis on the call to righteous living by engaging in a life lived according to the precepts of God. To live righteously means a total embracing of the Law of the Lord as the constant marker and guide for all thought and activity.

All of us are familiar with the image of the flourishing tree and which yields fruit in the right season and abundantly. It is usually found in fertile soil and has deep roots. The branches and leaves are healthy, and it shoots blossoms and bear fruits according to their season.

Equally, we are familiar with the image of the dying or dead tree. There is nothing attractive or wholesome in such a tree. The time of growth and flourishing for such a tree is over and it often lies in isolation as it withers away. It is forgotten and its place remains unmarked following its demise.

It is difficult to imagine or to cast our lives as withering trees, blown away like chaff, forsaken and not being able to remain planted and to have our place in life forgotten.

The Psalmist reminds us of that when we place our hope and trust in God and when we delight in the law of the Lord that the following becomes the description for our lives:

“They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought, it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.”

The call then is for us to make the right choice.

What does a life rooted in Christ look like? Certainly, it means accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and living according to the expectations of being obedient, honest, truthful, forgiving, gracious and in so doing become a living testimony of Christ to others.

To so live, means that one is rooted in the Word, constantly in prayer, active in worship, faithful in giving, gentle in dealing with others and seeking always to present Christ in everything that is said and done.

Perhaps we can ponder these questions:

- In whom are you grounded?
- Where are you planted?
- What does it mean to be constantly nourished and not afraid of the challenges of life?
- Are you consistently bearing fruit even during trials?

If we are rooted in Christ, our faith should not be easily shaken and if we are fully grounded in Christ, our leaves and fruits will not wither and perish. Moreover, if we are in Christ, our lives will be a channel of blessing to others.



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, in collaboration with the International University of the Caribbean, held the first Lay Training Graduation Celebration on February 6, 2022, at Hope United Church and via livestream.



The service began with an Invocation by the Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary of the UCJCI, followed by a welcome from Mrs. Karen Frances, Coordinator of the Lay Leaders Certificate Course, acting on this special occasion as Master of Ceremonies. In her welcome Mrs. Frances pointed out that “training Lay Leaders is an effort by the UCJCI at enhancing the leadership potential in local Congregations by equipping the laity with the requisite leadership tools and skills needed to make an even greater contribution to the ministry and witness of the Church and in so doing, to build the Kingdom of God”.

To emphasize the importance of the training programme she quoted Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary of the UCJCI outlining the mission agenda of the United Church to potential

learners, saying, “What is the desired reality that we seek as a Church? To be a Church which is actively and unswervingly engaged in touching lives, nurturing disciples, and seeking transformation through Christ. The mission agenda is currently ‘Renewal and Transformation’ which has as its goal to create missional Congregations which are lifegiving and ‘needs-meeting’, ...[growing]... spiritually, numerically, and financially, exercising core functions of the Church.”

Mrs. Francis also drew upon the voice of the Rev. Dr. Norman Francis, former Coordinator of Training for Lay Leaders Programme of the UCJCI, who said, “Our modern world is yet to see the explosive growth that can be unleashed within our Churches when lay persons recover their rightful place in the life of the Church, as they discover and deploy their giftings for the work of ministry”.

This new, redesigned programme launched in November 2019 and officially began in January 2020, is standing on the shoulders of Lay Training that had been undertaken in the UCJCI for many years. In response to the suddenly emerged Covid-19 pandemic, the delivery of the Certificate Course was successfully shifted from in-person to simultaneous online training to all Regional Mission Councils in February 2021, offering fifteen (15) topics delivered by twelve (12) competent, ordained as well as lay leaders of the UCJCI. Although the training was quite demanding, one hundred and fifteen (116) participants completed the Certificate Course.

In his greeting, the Moderator of the UCJCI, the Right Rev. Gary Harriott, expressed a sense of excitement and hope generated by the successful completion of Module 1, 2021, and encouraged the graduates to become active upon their return to their local context; to become fully engaged in the work and mission of the Church, locally, regionally and at the Synodical level.

IUC President Professor Rev. Dr. Roderick Hewitt remarked that our world is in trouble because leaders, in general, are offered a very low moral order which impacts every facet of our existence. In his view, this certificate Course is a way of “...putting up resistance...” by training leaders who are competent, compassionate, consistent, and considerate, who are seeking to make a difference. He also issued a challenge to the participants to continue their training and lifelong learning to maximize their skills for the glory of God.

Dr. Yvonne Lays-Dawkins, Associate Vice President of the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean and keynote speaker of the event reminded the graduates, that they are expected to actively participate in the leadership core of their local context. She encouraged them to exercise leadership mindfully, - as ‘self-leaders’ -, and sensitively, - as ‘relational leaders.’

The Lay Leaders Certificate Course is delivered through the UCJCI Lay Training Institute in collaboration with the International University of the Caribbean to equip individuals with the requisite tools for effective ministry as Elders (Module 1), Leaders in specialized areas of Ministry (Module 2) and as Lay Pastors (Module 3).

From our Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council (CIRMC), fifteen (15) participants completed successfully the 2021 Module 1 of the Lay Leaders Certificate Course. They are,

Savannah United: Yolanda Whitaker, Dale Ebanks, Gaynel Callender, Grace Bryant-Scott, Kimia Cunningham-Hemmings, Olga Gourzong, Winsome Radcliffe



Elmslie Memorial: Dr. Elizabeth McLaughlin, Dr. Nigel Boothe



John Gray Memorial: Gerry Robinson, Cora Grant-James, Anika Conolly, Rose Aneita Welds, Mitchell Welds Cert. Hon. JP



East End: Georgia Swaby-Segree



Congratulations to our CIRMC 2021 Module 1 Cohort and to all the other participants!

ATTENTION!

The topics of the **UCJCI Training for Lay Leaders Certificate Course 2022 Module 1** can be audited on request. Please contact the Council Office for further information.

Telephone: 947-1963 or Email: cirmc.info@gmail.com or rdgs@cicucjci.com

IN OTHER NEWS

Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II is the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee marking the 70th anniversary of her accession to the throne on 6 February 1952. In honor of this momentous occasion, on February 6, 2022, the East End United Church observed 70 seconds of silence, followed by the toll of the church bell for 70 seconds.



UPCOMING EVENTS

February 12. (Saturday)
Training for Lay Leaders Module 1 begins (Topic 1-2) – 9:00 am - 2:00pm - via zoom (*see more details below*)

February 13. (Sunday) 6th Sunday after Epiphany

February 17. (Thursday)
Training for Lay Leaders Module 1 (Topic 3)– 6:00pm – 8:00 pm (*see more details below*)

UCJCI Lay Training Institute



TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS 2022

Offered in collaboration with The International University of the Caribbean

Module 1 - 2022

Training Day 1 – Sat. Feb. 1., 2022 – 9:00am

- Spiritual gifts and the discernment of God's call
- The role of lay leader in congregational life

Training Day 2 – Thu. Feb. 17, 2022 – 6:00 pm

- The spirituality of the leader

For more information, please contact cirmc.info@gmail.com

Fellowship Breakfast



February 26, 2022

at 8 AM

Morritt's Resort

Queen's Highway, East End

Theme: An Ordered Life

Guest Speaker

Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

Deputy General Secretary
The United Church in Jamaica and the
Cayman Islands

Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council

Cost : \$25.00

All are invited



Cayman Council Women's Fellowship

CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL



Ash Wednesday Virtual Gathering

March 2, 2022

9:00 am

Guest speaker: Rev. Norbert Stephens
Tune in to Elmslie Church YouTube channel

Rooted, Resilient: Responding in HOPE
In the Spirit of Transition



BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

HAVE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW LOST A LOVED ONE TO SUICIDE?

The APF's Bereavement Support Group provides free, private, and confidential grief support, in a safe place for adults to heal from their loss and to be equipped with the tools for moving forward.

JOIN THE APF'S BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP
24 FEB - 31 MAR | BETHESDA COUNSELLING CENTRE

Location: Bethesda Counselling Centre, Unit 4, 68 Mary St, George Town

Time: 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Frequency: Every Thursday for 6 weeks

Dates Active: Thursday, 24 February - Thursday, 31 March

Contact: edu@alexpantonfoundation.ky



About the Facilitator:

April Lewis is a licensed Mental Health Counsellor with over 20 years of experience in therapy and counselling. Ms Lewis holds a Master of Arts degree in Christian Counselling and a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. She has worked with the Cayman Islands Government as a Counsellor, for the Employee Assistance Program as Director, and installed one of the first online therapy programmes in the Cayman Islands.



Cayman Keswick

2 0 2 2
'All One In Christ'

All meeting Sunday evenings: 6:00—7:30 p.m.

- Feb 6 @ Cayman Islands Baptist Church
- Mar 6 @ First Baptist Church
- Apr 3 @ First Baptist Church
- May 1 @ Cayman Islands Baptist Church
- Jun 5 @ Church of God Chapel GT



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

February 13, 2022
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

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