



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

March 30, 2022

Season of Lent

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 13

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

Service of De-Linking, Linking and Induction of Minister of the Bodden Town – Savannah Charge

On Sunday, March 27, 2022, at 5:00 pm, members of the Webster Memorial, William Pouchie and Savannah United Churches gathered in Savannah, along with members of Council for a Service of De-Linking, Linking and Induction of Rev. Euthman Wray, Minister of the newly formed Bodden Town-Savannah Charge.



The Service, focusing on the theme, “Rooting with Resilience to Respond in Hope” began with the procession of the Bible and the Platform Party. Interim Minister, Rev. L. Christopher Mason acted as Liturgist of the Service. Mr. Harwell McCoy of the Webster Memorial United Church offered the Prayer of Adoration, Thanksgiving, and Confession. Members of the combined Savannah United and Webster Memorial Girls’ Brigade presented a special item.



Following the Welcome and Acknowledgement by Mrs. Suzette Stewart, Charge Secretary, Ms. Kay Watler (Webster Memorial) and Ms. Angela Martins (Savannah) presented a brief history of their Congregations.

Mr. Dale Ebanks (Savannah) and Mrs. Isabella Bodden (Webster Memorial) read the New Testament Scriptures.

Musical accompaniment and Special Items were provided by Mr. Noel Wallace, (Music Director), Mr. Everton G. Webster (Music Director), Mrs. Renee Barnes (keyboard), Mr. Fitzroy Robinson (bass guitar), Nathaniel Lindsay (drums), and the combined choir of the Bodden Town–Savannah Charge.

The message, based on Acts 2:44-47 and Ephesians 4:1-5, was brought by Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield, Regional Deputy General Secretary (RDGS) of the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council (CIRMC).



The Chair of Council, Rev. Rohan Forrester, officiated the Liturgy of De-Linking, Linking, and the Induction of Rev. Euthman Wray, Minister of the newly formed Bodden Town-Savannah Charge of the CIRMC. Prior to the Induction, Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield, RDGS, offered the Narrative.



Following the Induction, Rev. Forrester presented Rev. Wray with a Bible. After Rev. Wray’s Response and the Benediction, the Service ended at 7:25 pm. with the Recessional Hymn, “The Right Hand of God”.

Resilient: Honor Before Death

By Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

Please read John 12:1-11

On the fifth Sunday of Lent, the Johannine text invites us into the home of Martha, Lazarus, and Mary. It was a type of post-resurrection meal as Lazarus, whom Jesus recently raised from the dead, reclined at the table and shared in the fellowship.

This account of a meal in the home of Martha and her siblings differed from the account in Luke 10: 38-42 where Martha sought the intervention of Jesus because Mary neglected her hospitality duties to sit at His feet. During the previous visit, Mary showed her devotion to Jesus. She listened intently to His teaching and sought to understand the purpose of His call and ministry. Jesus indicated to Martha that Mary had chosen "what is better, and it will not be taken away from her".

This Johannine text on the anointing of Jesus' feet is also different from the other records of his anointment found in Luke 7, Matthew 16, and Mark 14. In the gospel of John, the anointing occurred six days before the Passover. In the other accounts, the timing of this event received no particular attention.

In the accounts found in Matthew and Mark, the event happened in the home of Simon the Leper, in the village of Bethany, where Jesus shared the table with a mixed crowd. Martha, Lazarus and Mary also lived in Bethany. Jesus visited Bethany on several occasions during His ministry, and according to Luke 24:50, Bethany was the final place where the Disciples saw Jesus as He ascended.

In the Luke passage, however, Jesus was invited to dinner by Simon the Pharisee. In John 12, the siblings gave a dinner in honour of Jesus, no doubt out of gratitude for raising Lazarus from the dead. In Matthew and Mark, however, Jesus ate in the home of Simon the Leper.

In the Synoptic gospels, the woman who anointed Jesus remained unnamed. Yet, in John 12:3, Mary was identified as the person who anointed Jesus.

Mary did the anointing without all the elaboration recorded in the Synoptic gospels. She worshipfully anointed Jesus with the expensive perfume and used her hair to wipe His feet.

The criticism from Judas pervades all the records of this event. The specifications of the equivalent of the cost of the perfume in monetary terms became a point emphasized by Judas. He seemed to understand the economy and social justice and attempted a credible plea on behalf of the poor. The sotto voce in the text, however, commented, *'He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.'*

If Mary had sold the perfume and given him the money, an additional amount to steal from would have been available.

When this opportunity failed, Judas became annoyed because of his greed and dishonesty. For Judas, this sacred act was economically foolish and unnecessary.

In all four recordings of this event, Jesus has already created havoc within the religious community. He did not enjoy the approval of the religious leaders. All four accounts suggested that there was a plot afoot to kill Jesus. One text commented that Jesus no longer walked publicly for fear of being killed.

In the home of these siblings, Jesus, however, availed Himself to be fed and anointed. He knew the time of His crucifixion was at hand. Martha was still busy preparing and serving the meal, Lazarus basked in his new life, but Mary, discerning the moment, esteemed Jesus by lavishing anointing His feet.

Rooted

Mary was rooted in her belief in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Her encounters with Jesus enabled her to develop faith and theology. Hence her understanding and appreciation for the moment at hand. She was deeply invested not just in the miracles and teachings of Jesus, but she recognized the Son of God and the mission He had on earth.

In the earlier meal in their home, found in Luke 10:38-44, whilst Martha showed hospitality, she also exhibited a spirit of busyness, anxiety, and exactitude. Although she was preparing a meal for Jesus, her actions were not charitable because her soul lacked peace.

This lack of peace in serving is also true for many of us in the church today. Whilst we serve, albeit in the name of Christ, we are busy and bothered by the need for recognition, honour, and, so often, we practice self-praise. We call much attention to our gifts and talents even as we offer them in service to Christ and the church.

Yet, Jesus, although He enjoyed the hospitality Martha offered, he took a moment to gently remind her of the importance of listening and learning to deepen the root of faith.

We also may need to pause and question the depth of our faith and the commitment we have to the cause of Christ. Amid our service and hospitality, are we contentious, do we prevent others from serving, do we close the door of opportunity for others to offer their service?

When faith is deeply rooted in Christ, our spirit and actions invite others to collaborate with us as joint-heirs with Jesus. The efforts bear much fruit in the community of faith and society.

Resilient

Not only was Mary rooted and invested in her belief in Jesus in this text, but she also showed her resilience. She was not concerned about the criticism Judas made, as she had already endured the criticism of her Sister, Martha, on the previous occasion.

Here, in her home, she breached all protocols of patriarchy and offered to Jesus what He needed most at this moment in His journey to the Cross. She discerned that this would have been the only opportunity to anoint Jesus as an act of worship, and she made the best use of the moment.

The fragrance of her perfume filled the home and caused others to pause from their meal and give attention to her act of worship. Jesus praised the discerning and gracious spirit Mary displayed. ***'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial.'***

Mary worked for one year to purchase this imported, expensive spikenard. The sole purpose was to anoint Jesus before His crucifixion. Mary gently and worshipfully anointed His feet and used her hair as a towel. This honour suggested that Mary knew her gift of the expensive and precious nard was insignificant to the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross.

Although in John 19: 38-42, we read of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wrapping the body of Jesus with strips of linen and seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloes, they did so in a routine manner, in keeping with the Jewish burial rites.

Further, by the time the other women went to the Tomb on Resurrection Day, their opportunity to anoint Jesus had passed. The action of Mary pre-empted the disappointment these women experienced when they found the empty Tomb.

Honouring Christ

Mary seized the opportunity to honour Jesus not only with her ointment, hair, and tears but with her spirit. She recognized that the religious rulers were hostile toward Jesus and were seeking His demise. Orders were given by the chief priests and Pharisees, that anyone who knew of the whereabouts of Jesus should report to them, as they wanted to arrest Jesus.

When people became aware that Jesus was in their home, the crowd came not only to see Jesus but to see Lazarus in his resurrected form. The people changed his designation from ***'the one whom Jesus loved'*** (John 11:3), to the ***'he whom Jesus had raised from the dead'*** (John 12:9).

The religious officials wanted to end Lazarus' life. His resurrection caused many people to desert their original faith and belief in Jesus.

Amid the confusion and threat of death to her brother, Mary craved the space to be a true worshipper. Jesus told the Woman at the Well, in John 4: 24, ***'God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.'***

During chaos and confusion, we need to honour Jesus with our praise and worship. Yet so often, we miss the opportunity to be true worshippers. Focusing on self or structures and systems diminishes the capacity to worship. We must seek to honour Jesus, not only with our words gifts but with the sincerity of our hearts and with the entirety of our lives.

After receiving precious worship and anointing from Mary, Jesus departed the home in Bethany, according to the Gospel of John, to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. (John 12: 12ff)

He was ready for the action to come, the significance of which would transform the entire world. Jesus left their home anointed, honoured and ready to face the cruelty of the crowd, the hypocrisy of religious leaders, the judgement of the world,

the crown of thorns, the beatings, and the pain, suffering and death on the Cross.

At the end of our worship, what can Jesus expect or anticipate as our testament of honour? It is sad that sometimes the persons we encounter after worship cannot tell that we have been with Jesus. Do our spirits wane? Are our hearts wracked with pain or sorrow when we leave the worship experience?

If so, let us draw near and experience the gracious presence of Christ.

Mary's anointing of Jesus not only strengthened Him but influenced those gathered in the home. As we worship, let us have that same mind, heart and spirit to worship, and honour Jesus with love and sincerity. Amen.



By Mrs. Yolanda Whitaker

Last year, in February 2021, a local team, Fusion Football Sports Club, approached me to pray with them for a little girl who was diagnosed with cancer. Instead of praying with just one team, I went and gathered all the other players and the spectators to come to join us in prayer on the field. Without hesitation, they joined hands in prayer for a little girl we didn't know but wanted to help.



Sports & Prayer can help knock walls down and build bridges to join our communities together for Christ and our Churches.

Each Sunday evening and during the week, the youth from the community come out to play football. Before each game, we pause to share a word and pray. I utilize the opportunity to pray with them and encourage them accordingly.

This is the power of Sports & Prayer, meeting the youth right where they're, on the field of play.



If we can't get them to Church, let's take the Church to them!

Farewell & Welcome!



On Saturday, March 26, 2022, members of the Webster Memorial United Church, Bodden Town gathered for a special event to express their gratitude to Rev. Rohan Forrester and his family for journeying with them in ministry over the last eleven years and to welcome their new Minister, the Rev. Euthman Wray.

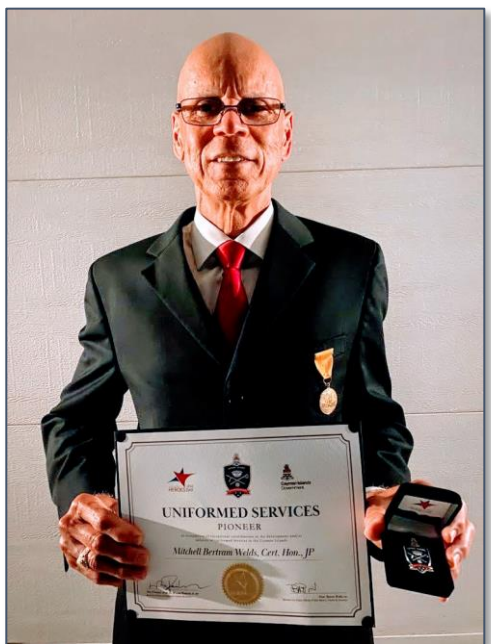
Cayman Keswick
2022
'All One In Christ'

All meeting Sunday evenings: 6:00—7:30 p.m.
Apr 3 @ First Baptist Church

Congratulations!

Heartfelt congratulations to **Mr. Mitchell Bertram Welds Cert. Hon. JP.** on the occasion of receiving his **Uniformed Services Pioneer Award** during the **2022 National heroes Day Celebrations** in recognition of exceptional contributions to the development and delivery of Uniformed Services in the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Welds is a member of the John Gray Memorial Church, West Bay.



East End Youth Gatherings Resume

On Saturday, March 26, 2022, regular youth gatherings resumed at the East End United Church. The topic of discussion was the Fruits of the Spirit followed by playtime and refreshments.



(Youth Worker Mrs. Itza Bodden and the children with a generous group of volunteers)

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 31. (Thursday)

Lay Leaders Certificate Course Training– 6:00pm-8:00pm via Zoom

April 03. (Sunday) 5th Sunday of Lent

April 02. (Saturday)

YLNE Sports Committee Meeting – 9:00am via Zoom

Service of De-Linking, Linking and Induction of Minister of the John Gray – South Sound Charge

The Service of De-Linking, Linking and Induction of Rev. Donovan Myers as the Minister of the newly formed John Gray – South Sound Charge will held on **Sunday, April 3, 2022, at 4:00 pm** at the John Gray Memorial United Church.



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

April 3, 2022
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

HELP

UKRAINE

Ukraine Crisis Appeal

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council (CIRMC) of the UCJCI is inviting all Congregations within its bounds to **Help the people of Ukraine** with their donations.

Donations will be collected until the end of May. Contributions can be made during the Sunday morning Worship Services or can be dropped off at the church offices during the week or made online (please call your Church Office or speak with the Minister for instructions).

Once all donations are collected from the Congregations, the **CIRMC** will make the transfer to the **Cayman Islands Red Cross** who, in turn will send it to the **Ukrainian Red Cross**.

Your donation
- no matter how small it may be –
counts!

Save the Dates - Upcoming SUC Easter Services

Easter Cantata - April 10, 9am
Maundy Thursday Supper - April 15, 7pm
Good Friday Service - April 15, 8am
(followed by Baptism at Spotts)
Easter Sunrise Service - April 17, 6am
Easter Sunday Service - April 17, 9am
Combined Easter Cantata - April 17, 11am
@ Websters Memorial



CENTER FOR THEOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING CTLT- CAYMAN ISLANDS

A Survey of the History of Israel

(Biblical Israel to the present-day Nation of Israel)

Five Saturdays, two hours each session 10am to 12pm

Starting from Saturday, April 9, 23, 30 and May 7 and 14, 2022
Via Zoom

Presenter: *Rt Rev Dr David Nichols* (Hebrew Scholar and Old Testament Professor, from UK.)

Cost \$150(one hundred fifty for all the five seminar)

For further information and registrations please contact:
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Heavenly Father, even when things seem hopeless, we know that through You we are never without hope. We beg Your intervention for a world in chaos. May Your peace rule in all lands. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen

