



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

HOLY WEEK

April 13, 2022

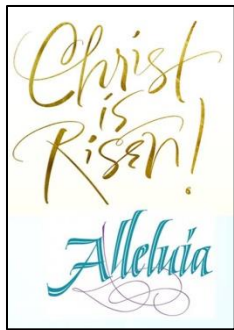
VOLUME 7 ISSUE 15

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

Resilient: In the Face of Unbelief

By Rev. Donovan Myers

Please read John 20:19-30



At last, we are at the threshold of Resurrection Sunday. Finally, after all the waiting of Lent, what we hoped for is almost here. What could top the news of resurrection? Certainly, everyone should be ecstatic. Yet, John's gospel reveals that when Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away, rather than being excited, she stood weeping - locked in her grief, unable to recognize

Jesus. Her tears blurred her vision; it was as if she never expected to see Him again. Later when she tells the disciples, **"I have seen the Lord!"** they retreat, huddled behind locked doors. They are locked in! When the mood should be festive and joyous, they are fearful and restrained by their doubts.

Have you ever met anyone who is locked in? It might be someone trapped in an addiction, or someone stifled by a job situation that they can't overcome, or someone who - although they work hard - never feels it's enough - always needing more; maybe it's someone filled with guilt and self-loathing over some past [or ongoing] failure. It could be someone pressed down by poverty, joblessness, or ill health, or maybe someone feeling discriminated against because things that are open to others aren't available to them. Maybe it's a person who is being/has been abused by her partner. Or a man who has not achieved the expectations he set for himself, or those others have set for him. Or even a child who finds success unattainable, or who excels but never fits in, or maybe has stopped trying because it doesn't seem to work, or matter anyway.

People can be locked in by grief, anxiety, rejection, and fear. Have you ever been locked in? *"Fear causes us to live in a perpetual state of anxiety. Fear is exhausting and depressing. Generally, the calamities I expect do not come to pass. So, I replace them with new ones. Time and energy that could be used constructively, for prayer, dishwashing, learning to quilt, I sacrifice to cultivate apprehension."* (Any Day a Beautiful Change, Katherine Pershey).

Sometimes we have more faith in our fears than in God [or in the Risen Christ]. When someone or something is locked in, someone else has to be locked out. There are no walls thick enough to block the entry of the Risen Christ into the inner sanctum, the safe room the disciples had created at the center of their fears. He has come into our locked rooms, bearing gifts that can heal a hurting, hostile heart, and world.

Firstly, the Risen Christ gives the gift of peace.

In John 14:27 Jesus promised to give peace, and now, as Risen Lord, honors His promise. Three times in this passage, He says to the huddled followers, **"Peace be with you."** At the same time, it is both an ordinary and extraordinary greeting! The resurrected Jesus, who can pass through locked doors, offers the greeting and blessing "Peace be with you."

This was significant as it indicated what His desire for them and their relationships was. He wanted them to live in the space of forgiveness, as that is where true peace resides. Jesus had taught His disciples that if they forgive sins, they would also be forgiven, and if they withhold forgiveness then they would not enjoy it either. The commission to forgive sins is a continuation of Jesus' ministry. On many occasions, He granted forgiveness to the people encountered. Jesus' desire for His followers is that we enjoy the peace that comes from the forgiveness of our sins and, then in turn offer it to others.

Secondly, the Risen Christ offers the gift of purpose.

"Christ's...gives the disciples a...gift, a mission. Believers now become apostles ... because Christ sends ... them into the world. God's sending Christ is the pattern for Christ's sending the disciples. They are sent out of God's love for the world and for the world's redemption." (Robert Kysar in "Preaching John").

In showing Himself and allowing His disciples to inspect Him, Jesus demonstrated that He was resurrected [not merely resuscitated] so that He might give the disciples a commission. He tells them, that even as the Father sent Him, so He sends them. That is a Johannine idea shared in Jesus' prayer (John 17). The disciples are connected to God through Jesus. God sends, Jesus gathers, and then Jesus sends. The mission of the disciples is the continuation of the mission of Jesus. *"Their mission is to continue the Son's mission; and this requires that the Son must be present to them during this mission, just as the Father had to be present to the Son during his mission."* [Raymond Brown, "Anchor Bible: Gospel According to John"] The disciples demonstrate to the world the presence of Jesus...even as Jesus in life demonstrated the presence of the Father. A great antidote to fear is purpose!

Thirdly, the Risen Christ offers the gift of power.

In John, Jesus gives the Holy Spirit by breathing on them, while in the book of Acts the Holy Spirit comes accompanied by speaking in tongues.

Although John and Luke experienced the same events, they tell it from different perspectives. Essentially: Jesus, though absent in body, remains present with us by the Holy Spirit, and from there, those who are filled with the Holy Spirit, are sent into the world. While Luke and Acts separate Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, John brings them together.

The empowerment for mission comes when Jesus breathes on the disciples and tells them to **“receive the Holy Spirit.”** The reference to breath is important. The words for Spirit: Ruach (Hebrew) and pneuma (Greek) have the connotation of breath. Breath is needed for life – as demonstrated in the Genesis 2 account of Creation and the Ezekiel story of the new creation (Ezekiel 37:3-5).

So here, in the post-resurrection story, there is a symbolic representation of the “life breath” that God provided at the first creation and in the recreation of God’s people.

Now once again, God is enlivening a new creation -- a new community. The result of this breath of life is eternal life. This is the gift that Jesus had provided those who believe. That breath is life and power. That is the gift that Jesus gives the disciples. They have received the call to go, and they know they don’t go alone. Yet this power is not a sledgehammer that forces and coerces or a push button that provides a magical solution, but it is the Gospel with a message that transforms.

When does Jesus come with this peace, purpose, and power? When people are locked in grief, like Mary; locked in fear, like the disciples; and locked in darkness, like the world in which we live. Yet we are called to leave the rooms we've locked ourselves in! This is made possible by the knowledge that we have the peace, purpose, and power of the one with the scars and who can pass through any walls that lock us in or out. Come out! Let Jesus in!

Ukraine Crisis Appeal

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council (CIRMC) of the UCJCI is still collecting donations in support of the people of Ukraine 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).

The CIRMC will transfer all the donations 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!



On April 10, 2022, Mrs Janilee Clifford celebrated her 90th birthday. The Robert Young Memorial Church, of which she is a foundation member, recognized her birthday along with her and members of her family during the worship service. Her two eldest daughters, Cathy Gomez and Carol Braggs sang a duet and read a poem. The RGDS and Deputy Chair of the Cayman Prep and High School Board of Governors, Mrs Sheena Thompson also accorded appreciation to her for her services to the Robert Young Memorial Church and the Cayman Prep and High School. A Bouquet of flowers was presented to Ms Janilee on behalf of the Congregation by Mrs Jannette Hoilett. Mrs Hoilett reflected on Ms Janilee's dedication as a teacher and mentor to many at the Cayman Prep and High School. The Congregation sang Happy Birthday for Ms Janilee, and Rev L. Christopher Mason offered special prayers for her.

Ms Janilee shared her experience of being among the first worshippers to enter the newly constructed sanctuary in 1952. The architect for the building was Mr Rayal Bodden, and Mr Eddison Jackson, Ms Janilee's father supervised the carpenter and mason, Mr Harold Whittaker, and Mr Ross Coe respectively. She also expressed gratitude to Capt. Macpherson Thompson, who donated the land and provided some of the funding for the sanctuary. The residents of Crewe Road who during those years were attending worship services at the Prospect Chapel (the current Council Office), were delighted that the new sanctuary was built closer to their home and many of them attended regularly over the years.



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

April 17, 2022
Rev. Donovan Myers

Easter Sunrise Services

SUNDAY APRIL 17TH AT 6:00 AM

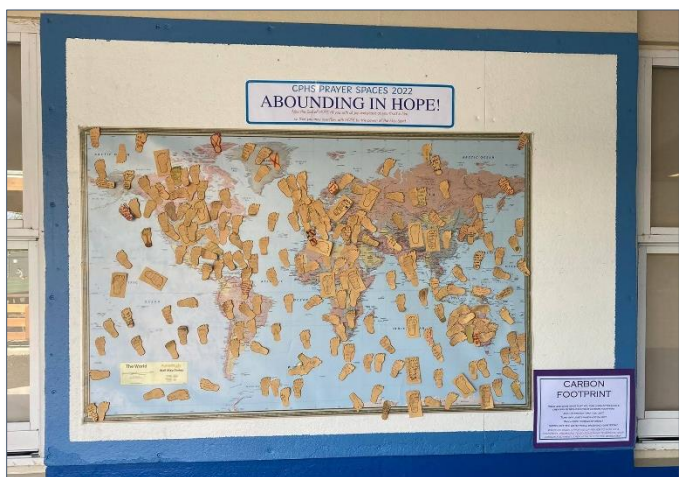
Location:

- GEORGE TOWN - SPOTTS DOCK
- WEST BAY - SEVEN MILE BEACH
- EASTERN DISTRICTS - THE BEACH ACROSS FROM THE EAST END UNITED CHURCH



CPHS 2022 Prayer Space

By Mrs. Bertranne Abrams-Menko
Year 6 Teacher, RE/PSHE Subject Leader



In this the 7th year of holding Prayer Spaces in CPHS Primary (April 4th - 8th), COVID-19 restrictions forced us to very literally, think outside the box. Our Prayer Spaces this year moved from the confines of the Library and its adjoining rooms to be spread out across the school.



Each corridor hosted a Prayer Spaces Board for two year groups to interact with. These boards allowed students to offer prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession, and petition. Other boards around the school allowed students to think about questions they wanted to ask God, their impact on the environment, and to reflect on the fact that God knows each of us by name! A bubble-blowing outdoor activity saw students reflecting on their hopes and dreams and then symbolically blowing them up to God.

In these difficult and stressful times, both for us and the children we care for, it seemed most fitting to focus in the lead-up to Easter on 'HOPE'. Our theme this year was Abounding in Hope, with our theme verse taken from Romans 15:13 "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."



CONGRATULATIONS!

The Cayman Prep & High School Easter Award Ceremony was held on Friday, April 8, 2022, at the High School Hall recognizing the achievements of the students during the second term of the 2022 academic year. Awards were given in the following categories:

Progress, Effort and Attainment Awards - For each subject and year group, students are awarded for their progress (making the most progress), effort (best attitude to learning and participation), and attainment (highest grade) for each subject based on the teacher's assessment.

Great Learners Award - presented to students in each year group who have displayed a great attitude to learning overall and show dedication in classes.

Principal's Award - awarded to students with the highest attainment in all subjects combined.

CAS Award (Community Action Service) - is given to one student per year group who has consistently displayed dedication to serving in their community (church, volunteering, Key Club, etc.)

Awardees from the Webster Memorial United Church (Bodden Town) are

- Peyton Robinson – awards in Science, English, Spanish, Great Learner, and the Principal's award which is awarded to the top 5 students in the year group. Peyton was also Mathematician of Note for her year group for the term.
- Reaganne Forrester – awards in Art and Music.
- Russell Forrester - awards for Religious Education, PE, and Marine Science.
- Shayla Foster – awards for Computer Science and Spanish.

Awardees from the Savannah United Church are

- Gabrielle Campbell - Religious Education Award
- Chesskamea Daniels - Year 12 Spanish Award

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council wishes to extend heartfelt congratulations to those recognized and wish God's continued blessings on all students and staff members of the CPHS.

News from Savannah United Church

By Ms. Camile Watt – Youth Minister

Savannah United Church Youth Discipleship Pantry Distribution



On Saturday, March 26, 2022, The Savannah United Church Youth Discipleship Group had their quarterly pantry distribution with the support of the Young Adults Group, who assisted in packing six (6) Grocery Baskets for distribution within the Savannah Community.



Youth Leaders Retreat & Social

On Saturday, April 2, 2021, The Youth Leaders of the Savannah United Church had their Annual Spiritual Retreat at Grape Tree Cottage in Northside. They were led in a reflective devotional by Rev. Euthman Wray, followed by a time of solitude and personal reflection. The evening ended with food, fellowship, and fun-filled games.





Rev. Euthman Wray celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Communion on Palm Sunday at the Webster Memorial United Church (Bodden Town)

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 15 (Friday) GOOD FRIDAY – also Public Holiday

April 17. (Sunday) Easter Sunday

April 18. (Monday) Easter Monday – Public Holiday

Published by the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
292 Prospect Point Road
P.O. Box 1700 Grand Cayman KY1-1109 CAYMAN ISLANDS
Tel: 1 345 947-1963 Email: rdgs@ciucici.com or cirmcinfo@gmail.com
Website: unitedchurch.org.ky