



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

May 5, 2022

EASTERTIDE

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 18

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

Resilient: Listening, knowing, and following the Shepherd's voice.

By Mrs. Brenda Dawkins

Sunday May 8, 2022 is the 4th in the liturgical Season of Easter, and we continue to celebrate the resurrected Lord, Our Great Shepherd - the Lamb of God.

It is also Mother's Day, and I wish for all mothers and those mothering the happiest and most blessed moments with your family. May your children grow up and call you blessed!

It is befitting that on this weekend we focus on the theme, RESILIENT: LISTENING, KNOWING AND FOLLOWING THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE. This is appropriate for two main reasons.

Firstly, listening, knowing, and following commands and directions are what mothers wish their children to do, not only once, but repeatedly. We hear parents saying, "you are not listening", "I need you to follow my instructions", "This does not happen in our house—you know who you belong to".

Amid all the expectations and beseeching of children, mothers must remain resilient, pliable, and adaptable (sometimes to the point of nagging---and I am not encouraging nagging). But today there are so many other voices reaching our children's ears, or should I say 'noises' in our society that are competing with us as parents for our children's attention. Despite our best efforts to repeatedly instruct, guide, or lead by example, our offspring don't seem to get it. Nevertheless, I wish to encourage us to be resilient, strong and persevere with a hope that one day they will KNOW, LISTEN AND FOLLOW our positive lead.

Secondly, this theme is of utmost importance because we continue to celebrate the Easter Season when we reflect on the resurrected Christ. He has given us a set of instructions to listen to and follow so that we can reach the point where one day He will say, 'I know you. Enter the joy of the kingdom'.

Like the children we are parenting, meeting these expectations are not easy. When we are bombarded with the dilemmas of the day, we sometimes hear the word, but we do not adhere to the will of our Shepherd. Psalm 23 reminds us, "The Lord is

my Shepherd, and I shall not want". Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we must not fear any evil for He is with us. Though there are turbulences around us whether in our homes, communities or on the global scene, if we follow the Good Shepherd and listen to His voice, we will be vindicated and we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Revelation 7:16- 17 remind us "Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

All of this require us to remain resilient in the face of all adversity... No matter what is happening out there. We are not only to listen but act and follow the command of the Good Shepherd.

In St. John 10:22-30, we read,

"Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

Even with Jesus responding in this way, the Jews were not listening as they had their own agenda. They were following Jesus but for their own gain. As a matter of fact, they could not comprehend because they were not following to learn from Jesus. Jesus was careful to point this out to them that His sheep listen to His voice and that He knows them, and they follow Him. If Jesus should walk in your neighborhood today, would He acknowledge that you are His sheep?

Listening and hearing are used interchangeably but they are different. Hearing refers to the act of receiving sounds and becoming aware of sounds through your ears but listening refers to making a conscious effort to perceive the sound. Thus, the main difference between listening and hearing lies in the conscious effort one makes to perceive sound. (Wikipedia)

The result requires us to take actions. We not only have to listen, but we need to follow the voice of Jesus. Be sure you are not

only hearing, but you are listening. And if you are listening then you will take action that is, follow in the Shepherd's lead.

We need to know the Shepherd's voice now more than ever. These are troubling times where there are many crises, but we need to hold on to the message of the Shepherd's Psalm.

As we celebrate Mother's Day, I want to encourage mothers and parents in general to persevere, even though your children seem to be hearing but not listening. Be the 'parent shepherd' who sticks with them because they need you now more than ever. As the song says, "Jesus now, more than ever, We need Jesus now more than ever".

Take some time out from the everyday activities and find a quiet place to commune with the Holy Spirit. Jesus expects us to listen to His voice and discern it differently from those of the imposters, the 'Noises' around us.

We must listen to Jesus because He is the Good Shepherd. We must hear Him. We must follow Him. As the song says "Follow, follow I will follow Jesus. Anywhere and everywhere, I will follow Him".

Jesus knows His sheep by the fact that they listen to His voice, and they follow Him. If you have been listening to the wrong voices, pause and rethink what you need to do differently. Take the time to listen to the Shepherd's voice and know when He is speaking.

We want to listen to Jesus because of who He is. He is our Good Shepherd and so we hear Him, and we listen to Him, and we follow/obey what we hear Jesus say to us.

Who are you listening to, knowing, and following?

Happy Mother's Day!

Mothers' Day (and Fathers' Day)
TWO DAYS
in the calendar year
are but reminders of God's Command,
"Honor your father and mother" -
EVERY DAY

East End – Gun Bay United Picnic

By Mrs. Itza Bodden

The East End and Gun Bay United Churches brought back the "good old days" picnic fellowship on Saturday, April 30, 2022, at Wardley's beach, hosted by Wardley Conolly and Rhonda Miller. Some called it an 'old-fashioned picnic' to revive the fellowship between both congregations.

It was an enjoyable day for everyone, seniors, and children alike, with lots of food and games such as Egg Hunt, Tug-a-War, and Red Light. Our Minister, Rev. Rohan Forrester, and Lay Pastor Mr. Ormond Williams showed off their strength to win the Tug-a-War. There were also some great domino players among the woman and men.

Mr. Denham Bodden provided the entertainment, bringing music, reflections, and much joy to our hearts with his songs. Ms. Carmen & Ms. Gwelda also delighted our gathering with some old-time songs.



Elmslie Charge Pantry Ministry

By Elmslie Memorial Charge Family News

In early 2021, Mrs. Harriet Vassell took over responsibility for the Pantry Ministry. She says, "Each week, there were about 40-45 people in attendance last year, with different speakers coming for the praise and worship time. In June we had a birthday party sponsored by Elitia Vassell which was enjoyed and appreciated by all. On 21st and 28th July, we were visited by the Children and Teen Camp students who entertained us and helped serve the soup."

In August, the ministry took a summer break but were then interrupted by the outbreak of Covid in September. "So, we decided to distribute bags and soup every two weeks outside the church hall," she continued. "South Sound United sponsored a Christmas bag which contained some practical gifts as well as a copy of Our Daily Bread which we handed out on Wednesday, 1st December, just before the Christmas break."



Since March this year, they have been meeting in the hall every two weeks, just for an hour, with the attendance rising to 60-65. "We have a speaker each time and we distribute a bowl of soup and a bag of non-perishables which they take with them." Harriet adds, "The purpose of the Pantry Ministry is to give assistance to the less fortunate. I spoke at the South Sound United Church back in June, thanking those there who had contributed. I also want to express my appreciation to our helpers Francilla, Shovourne, Ann Marie, Mr. Martin, the custodian, and Roy for their continuous help each week."

CIRMC 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).

New Members at John Gray Memorial

On May 1, 2022, John Gray Memorial Church received into membership the following persons.



L-R Brendell Rivers, Naoki Montoya, Raishel Montoya, Beverly Simpson and Maxine Everson (on transfer from Savannah)

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 7 (Saturday)

Men's Fellowship Breakfast – 7:30 am Elmslie Hall

Camp Leaders' Training and Planning Meeting – 10:00 am Council Office

May 8. (Sunday) 4th Sunday of Easter - **MOTHERS' DAY**

Save the Date!

ALL ARE INVITED
Cost: FREE



The United Church Women's Fellowship
Cayman Council Presents:

Retreat 2022

Venue: Elmslie Memorial United Church - George Town
June 11, 2022
9:00am - 1:00pm

Theme: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS
Topics:

- Empowering Youths - Focusing on Mental Health
- Cultivating Spiritual Growth - Focusing on the Soul
- Wellness A - Focusing on Women's Health
- Wellness B - Focusing on Stress









on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

May 8, 2022
Mrs. Brenda Dawkins

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