



## **Resilient: Love One Another**

*By Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield*

Please read John 13:31-35

The text from John 13: 31-35, invites us not only to consider but to enter the kind of love relationship which Christ commanded. Christ gave this commandment at the Last Supper with the Disciples after Judas left the table to do what he had purposed in his heart.

During the table fellowship and discourse, Jesus indicated that one of the twelve would betray Him. The Disciple whom Jesus loved, was tasked by Peter to ascertain from Jesus who would betray Him. Jesus identified His betrayer by giving him bread that was dipped in the bowl.

Deep within, Judas had decided to betray Jesus and to receive financial gain for his act of unrighteousness. Judas was a close friend and confidant of Jesus and had served as the financial officer for the Disciples. He knew all the details and enjoyed the fellowship at the table. Yet, within himself, he harbored thoughts of fear, malice, and envy. He allowed dark thoughts to deprive him of clarity, generosity, love, and commitment.

The juxtaposition of the Disciple whom Jesus loved with the Disciple who betrayed Jesus in John 13, enables a reflection on the nature and condition of the human heart. Although both were selected and embraced by Jesus, included among the Disciples, and exposed to the teachings and miracles, they both differed in their regard and love for Jesus.

One Disciple treasured this relationship with Jesus and remained faithful to the end of his life on the Isle of Patmos. The other Disciple wasted his capacity to have such a relationship. He allowed the impurities of the human heart to cloud and corrupt that which was entrusted to him. Judas failed to allow God's peace and presence to guard his heart and his mind.

It can be assumed that the Beloved Disciple is John, to whom Jesus entrusted His Mother while they were at the foot of the Cross. It is the same John who wrote the Gospel of John, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, and Revelation. It is clear from the Johannine literature that the writer understands the depth of the nature of divine love and by extension the requirement for us as human beings to love one another.

After Judas left the table fellowship, Jesus, with a heavy sigh and deep compassion, gave the remaining Disciples the new commandment. Jesus was conscious that the in-group rivalry among the Disciples could prevent true fraternity. Further, the competitive nature of the Disciples coupled with the need for power and recognition would not augur well for kingdom building.

Jesus, therefore, gave the commandment to love knowing their past behavior and the future doubt and uncertainty that would envelop the Disciples. He knew Peter would deny knowing Him and that the others would abandon Him in the crucial moments of His death. Yet, Jesus called them to a new understanding of the requirements to love.

Did Judas hear this commandment before he died? Did he ever understand the complexity of love and the loyalty required when love is the applied emotion? Judas, in his attempt at restoration after his act of betrayal, thought that inner peace would come if he returned the money. One can only imagine the unsettled nature of his soul which eventually led to his ultimate choice. I have often wondered how Judas would have behaved if he had heard this commandment to love.

Jesus knew that the preservation of the group after losing both He, Jesus, and Judas, would depend on a new commandment to love. The loss of two from the group and the imminent threat of the movement being destroyed by the religious and political leaders, made Jesus pre-emptively implore a new commandment to love.

We can note three critical callings from Jesus in this commandment to love:

**1.** The capacity to love someone requires a heart that can comprehend unconditional acceptance, loyalty, commitment, and deep respect for the person and the relationship. Love requires a pure heart, without alloy. There is no space in love for bitter envy and selfish ambition, nor is there any room for arrogance and untruth.

Jesus also underscored the fact that to love requires the capacity to forgive. His signal of forgiveness on that night was the washing of their feet, including that of Judas. Hence Jesus' adamant for Peter to allow his feet to be washed as indeed, there would arise the need for Peter to be forgiven.

Jesus gave this commandment to His friends and us as the Church. He wanted them and us to understand kingdom love, that is, God's perspective of love.

## Mission Trip to Tanzania

By Mr. Mike Bowerman

**2.** Love requires mutuality. Love cannot be in isolation. In the context of Jesus giving this commandment, He recognized that sometimes we cause love to be defined and experienced as a lonely one-way expression. For love to maintain its property and construct, there must be mutuality. The ability for one to love and to express that love, the recipient ought to have a sense of emotion and deep regard emanating from the other. God alone has the capacity to keep on loving even when love is disregarded and trampled upon. Yet, God hold us to that standard because the command is unconditional love for each other.

**3.** The propagation of the kingdom of God depends on the understanding and practice of love among those who belong to Christ. Verse 35 reminds us, 'By this everyone will know that you are my Disciples if you have love for one another.' The early Church began with an incredible display of love and by extension care for each other. This is seen in the practicality of adhering to the teachings of the Apostles, in koinonia, table fellowship, and prayer (Acts 2:42) However, by Acts 5: 1-11, the Ananias and Sapphira saga enveloped the Church. Persons were straining to maintain this requirement to love in totality so that others can be drawn into the kingdom.

The Jewish widows' appeal for help in Acts 6:1-11 and the subsequent introduction of the Diaconal ministry, testify to the challenges that the Church experienced and the solutions that had to be created in response to the call to love all.

Jesus still expects the Church to respond to the call to love each other. This is still the focus of the *Missio Dei* that we are called to proclaim and to live by. The world's current temperature would suggest a departure from kingdom perspective love, but what of the Church?

The prayer is that we hear anew this commandment to love one another and to express that love in the most caring and careful ways. To achieve this may require us to repent, redefine our faith and restore the pattern set by Christ.

May God forgive us for our waywardness. May we come to a new place of love and maturity in Christ, so that the mission of God can be experienced by all who are seeking the kingdom of God.

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### **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).

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*The main street through Songea, Tanzania*

A team of four will be traveling to Tanzania in East Africa on Wednesday, May 18 at the invitation of the Anglian Union and the Bishop of Ruvuma, Rt. Rev. Raphael Haule. They will be based in Songea, located south of the country. The Diocese of Ruvuma is one of the many in the country and has 151 parishes and 67 clergies.



*Bishop Raphael Haule with his family*



The visit has two primary goals: to provide training and teaching for the diocesan leadership and to investigate the practicalities of building a school.

Bishop PJ Lawrence and Mike Bowerman will be spearheading the first. The training of about 30 leaders will focus on Old Testament, New Testament, and Church History, led by Bishop PJ, while Mike will do workshops on Evangelism and Witnessing and a second series on Church Leadership. Andrew & Debreca Rollins, who are members at St. George's Anglican, will be working towards having the school built, discussing viability, financing, and project management with the local leadership. Mr. Bowerman will be preaching on the first Sunday at St. Nicholas cathedral in Songea and the following Sunday in Liuli, 120 miles away, located on the shores of Lake Nyasa. The missionaries will return at the end of May and will give a short presentation on Sunday, June 8, at Elmslie Memorial Church.



Debreca and Andrew Rollins, Rev. Dr. P. J. Lawrence, and Mike Bowerman

Please pray

- For God's Spirit to show them what to teach and how to prepare, and to do so in a way which those to whom they are ministering will find understandable and helpful, especially as it is a very different culture.
- For Bishop Raphael and for those who will attend the training sessions. Pray for our interaction together and that the participants will return to their ministries able to serve more effectively and be truly blessed and encouraged.
- For God's protection in travel (about 36 hours, and several airports) and from illness, and for His strength: spiritual, emotional, and, physical.

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## Mother's Day Celebrations in East End and Gun Bay

By Mrs. Itza Bodden

The little ones of the East End United Church recited poems dedicated to Mothers while the teens of the Gun Bay United Church presented a skit, focusing on 'How to Help Others'. A hungry mother went to the Church looking for help to feed her children's but was mistreated by the members. The Minister of

the Church reminded them of the Christian duty of helping others in need.



Mother's Day recital at the East End United Church



Mother's Day skit at the Gun Bay United Church

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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

Save the Date!





on Radio Cayman 89.9  
every Sunday at 7:45 am

**May 15, 2022**  
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield



# Elmslie Memorial Church 100th Anniversary Celebrations

By Elmslie Memorial Charge Family News

The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year Celebrations continue in the month of May with two special events, *Jazz Under the Stars* (Monday, 23rd May), and *Fun Run/Walk* (Saturday, 28th May).

ELMSLIE MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH PRESENTS

## JAZZ UNDER THE STARS

Featuring Antonio Sanchez (piano), Lisvany Cisneros (bass), Roberto Cortes (sax) and Ernesto Raymant (drums)

Monday, 23rd May 2022 | 7:30pm  
National Gallery of the Cayman Islands

ADM \$25

Tickets available at:  
Godfrey's Enterprise 926-0968  
Alex's Variety Store 923-4651  
L & T Tyres 949-6162  
Divers Supply 926-2909

Special guest: Denny Carbo, and other performances

CREDIT UNION and other sponsors

Join us and be a part of history!

1922 2022

ELMSLIE MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH 100

SAINTUARY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS 1922 2022

Built on Jesus Christ the sure foundation

## RUN/WALK

### MAY 28, 2022

**Course:** Starts and ends at Elmslie Church. Choose your course (loop of under 2 miles or loop of under 3 miles).

**Start Time:** 5:15 pm (walkers) and 5:30 pm (runners).

**Fee:** CI\$15 Adults and CI\$10 Youth (Under 17).

**Registration:**

- 1) Download the registration form from the church website [www.elmslieunitedchurch.ky](http://www.elmslieunitedchurch.ky). Complete, scan and e-mail the form to [elmslie100anniversary@gmail.com](mailto:elmslie100anniversary@gmail.com).
- 2) Drop forms and payments by way of cash or cheque (payable to Elmslie Memorial United Church) to the Elmslie Church Hall on Tuesday, 17th May (3pm - 7:30pm).
- 3) Collect event packages on Thursday, 24th May or Thursday, 26th May (4pm - 7:30pm) at the Elmslie Church Hall. There will be no registration the day of the event.

**Amenities:** First 300 participants will receive a t-shirt and a water bottle. Light refreshments provided.

**Contacts:** Evelyn at 916-5754 or Harriet at 926-1826.

Please continue to show your support by participating in both exciting events. Registration forms for the Fun Run/Walk are available on their website [www.elmslieunitedchurch.ky](http://www.elmslieunitedchurch.ky). For tickets to the Jazz event, stop by any of the locations listed in the flyer below.

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## CIRMC 2022 Summer Camps

The Annual Summer Camps of UCJCI are one of those extra special times our children and youth look forward to with eager anticipation and much excitement. The combination of wholesome activities and fun under the supervision of dedicated and capable leadership in a perfect setting creates what our camps are known for: memories, friendships, and commitment to Christ that last a lifetime.

Please ask the Youth Leaders of your Congregation for more information and once Registration Forms are available, don't hesitate to sign up. Spaces are limited!

Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council \$125 CI

# SUMMER CAMP

DAY CAMPS 2022

CHILDREN'S (AGES 8-12)  
JULY 10-15

TEENS' (AGES 13-17)  
JULY 17-22

Theme: A NEW SEASON

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### UPCOMING EVENTS

May 14 (Saturday)  
**Lay Leaders Certificate Course Training**– 9:00am-4:00pm via Zoom

May 15 (Sunday) 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

May 16 (Monday) **Discovery Day – PUBLIC HOLIDAY**

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