



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

October 27, 2022

SEASON OF PENTECOST

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 43

ECCLESIA SEMPER REFORMANDA EST - THE CHURCH MUST ALWAYS BE REFORMED

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

Lessons from Habakkuk

Rev. Norbert Stephens – General Secretary (UCJCI)

Please read Habakkuk 1:1-4

At some time or the other all of us have engaged in sightseeing. Some of us in faraway places others of us within these shores. Indeed, some of us are seasoned tourists who have seen and experienced many, some or a few of the great sights and wonders of this world. Often for every visit we tend to ask two pertinent questions, “why?” and “how long?”

You see there are basically two ways to engage in sightseeing, the first is as a tourist, the second is with a mission in mind.

When you are a tourist, your sightseeing has *intent without long-term investment*. Your interest is to be informed and or inspired but the sight is merely one on your bucket list and while you might ask the questions of why and how long, once done, you are moving on to another sight. *Intent without long-term investment*.

When you sightsee with a missional focus in mind you have *intent with long-term investment*. This is not merely a place or issue on your bucket list; indeed, it is the bucket on your list. You are no longer a tourist, you become vested. For the location or issue requires both your ongoing presence and participation. *Intent with long-term investment*.

Truth be told, you cannot truly engage in mission without sightseeing. One enables the other... it's the act of sightseeing, which generates the mission, which in turn seeks to address the why and how long questions.

The prophet Habakkuk, like Martin Luther, engaged in sightseeing and the same generated for both the why and how long questions.

Chapter 1:1-11 is basically a prayer, which asks two questions, *how* and *why*? Habakkuk's concerns in these verses reflect a crisis on three fronts. There is a social crisis, a theological crisis and an external crisis. Injustice defines the crises. *How long shall I cry for help, and you do not hear, why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble?* It is a cry for intervention which seems long in coming.

Social Crisis

Verses 2-4 outlines an underlying concern best described as **institutional failure**.

There were three areas of this institutional failure:

When Habakkuk visited the significant institutions of his day, he encountered,

- **Political Failure** 1:4, rooted in the abuse of power, in the administration of King Jehoiakim.,
- **Social Failure** -*The exploitation of the poor and the less privileged* by the rich and powerful was a fundamental feature of his tour. The terms “violence” and “destruction/plunder” in 1:2-3. The social institution had failed thus producing moral and ethical failure.
- **Judicial Failure** - Judah's judicial system was characterized by “strife” and “contention” brought on by irresponsible litigation or the failure to administer justice properly. The victims of such abusive policies are identified as society's poor and marginalized. Such abuses of power are ultimately to blame, according to Habakkuk, for a society in which *justice is absent and the law is ineffectual*.

The institutional structures and systems created to **provide and care for the people** had failed! The structures and systems created to **protect and defend the people** had failed! The structures and systems created to **affirm, inspire and guide the people** had failed! Can we not say the same about our own crises? One writer states that, there is no greater distress than when power ordained for the service of justice makes injustice legal.

Habakkuk's description of institutional failure, (politics, social institutions, and judiciary) offers another truth. Significantly the failure was not experienced by the architects of the systems and institutions but rather the people they were meant to serve! And the result was injustice at all levels. So, he cried to God, as we are now crying, *how long?*

Theological Crisis

This raised for the prophet a theological crisis, thus he asked the *why* questions, *why Lord? Why do you make me see wrongdoing, look at trouble, expose me to destruction and violence?*

Habakkuk argued that the institutional failure has gone unnoticed and unpunished by God. Habakkuk therefore **accuses**

God of sleeping on the job, in fact he clearly states that God is *indifferent* (2); *inactive* (3-4). Later he accuses God of being *inconsistent* (12-17).

What does it mean then to listen to Habakkuk at a time like this, both as a nation and as a missional church within this global context?

We know this book deals with the crisis of injustice, we are more than familiar with injustice, but we also know something else. We know that the greatest threat to hope is the loss of confidence in our sources of hope. Low morale is the killer blow to hope in any society. Institutional failure, expressed in political, social, economic, judicial or religious failure produces a loss of confidence and generates a low morale. *When we lose confidence in the systems which should provide and care for us, protect and serve us, inspire and guide us, we lose hope!* And the tell-tale sign is *ambivalence: tourists with intent without long-term investment* – those who are along for the ride, those who refuse to exercise their duty during an election, social concern, volunteerism...

When we, in the church, lose our confidence in the divine and by extension the gospel, we have nothing of substance and hope to offer to those who, in the midst of challenges, cry out *how long* or *why* and we live not in hope, but in delusion or we live with wishful thinking as our bed partner and our dreams for the future are like the lines in the famous song - *Mona Lisa, many dreams have come to your doorsteps, they just lie there and they die there...*

Missional Lessons

The grounding for hope lies in divine faith and divine faith produces confidence and confidence produces positive and hopeful possibilities for the present as well as for the future.

What then are the missional lessons for us? I offer us three for consider based on Habakkuk's role in this passage.

1. In the midst of his sightseeing, the prophet searched for a **VIALE FAITH**. A faith, which would give him and his people both the confidence and the courage to face the systemic injustice with which they were confronted.

2. In the midst of his sightseeing, Habakkuk offered a **VOCAL FAITH**. He was not reticent to declare publicly his concerns and convictions. He was more than prepared to name the evil of his day and to lament the same. Evil not only thrives when good people do nothing, evil also thrives when God's people say nothing!


3. In the midst of his sightseeing, Habakkuk demonstrated a **VISIBLE FAITH**. He not only named the injustices of his day, he proceeded to do something about it. He sought God as the source of his theological grounding and without hesitation pursued his vocation as a prophet.

Believers Baptism in Bodden Town

The members of the Webster Memorial Church (Bodden Town) gathered for a Believers Baptism at Coe Wood Beach after the Sunday morning Worship Service on October 23, 2022. Three young persons from the Congregation accepted Christ and received the Sacrament of Baptism.



The three young persons in the company of Rev. Wray and Elder Dale Ebanks from the Savannah United Church.



Cayman Prep & High School

Priority Registration

CPHS Priority Registration deadline is October 31st

If you have a child who is currently NOT a student attending Cayman Prep and High School, but you would potentially like to join the school in the 2023-2024 academic year, in KG – Year 10, please take note that the priority application deadline is October 31, 2022. This includes a child that is either hoping to join KG 2023/24 or attends another primary school, high school or is home-schooled and wishes to be considered to attend the school.

If you have a child who meets any of the below criteria, does not currently attend Cayman Prep and is not already on the waitlist, you should complete the online application form found on our website www.cayprep.edu.ky and pay the non-refundable application fee of \$300 before the 31st of October to gain priority for the 2023-2024 school year.

If you have already applied you do not need to do this again, if you are not sure if you have applied, please call the Primary School on 949-5932 or the High School on 949-9115.

Alternatively email hsadmissions@cayprep.edu.ky or psadmissions@cayprep.edu.ky

Priority status on our waitlist is available to:

1. Children who are Members, or who are children or grandchildren of Members of the United Church, in good standing (requires Church letter)
2. Children of active adherents of the United Church (requires Church letter)
3. Children of current permanent staff of the School
4. Children who have a sibling in the School
5. Children who have previously had sibling/s in the School
6. Past students and children of past students of the School
7. Others in order of receipt of completed application form and application fee.

If you have any questions, please call the High School on 949-9115 or Primary School on 949-5932 or email hsadmissions@cayprep.edu.ky or psadmissions@cayprep.edu.ky



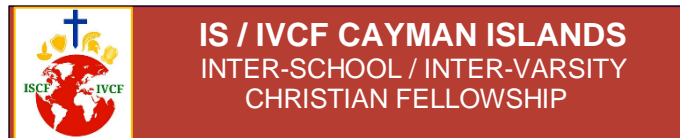
Every year the **World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)** invites its members to mark **Reformation Day** on the last Sunday of October by tuning in to a global online worship service. The event features participants from around the world and is available on the WCRC's website, YouTube Channel, and Facebook page. An Order of Worship is also available for download from the Reformation Day webpage on the WCRC website.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) is the largest association of Reformed churches in the world. It has 233 member denominations in 110 countries, together claiming 100 million people. The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands is a member of the WCRC.

"Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures or by evident reason - for I can believe neither pope nor councils alone, as it is clear that they have erred repeatedly and contradicted themselves - I consider myself convicted by the testimony of Holy Scripture, which is my basis; my conscience is captive to the Word of God. Thus, I cannot and will not recant, because acting against one's conscience is neither safe nor sound.

Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen."

Martin Luther



The Inter-School and Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, also known as IS/IVCF in the Cayman Islands, is a certified affiliate of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) and registered as a non-profit organization. The aim of IS/IVCF Cayman Islands is to conduct activities at the primary, high school, and tertiary levels that will build students into communities of disciples, seeing them transformed by the gospel and impacting their schools, church, and society for the glory of Christ.

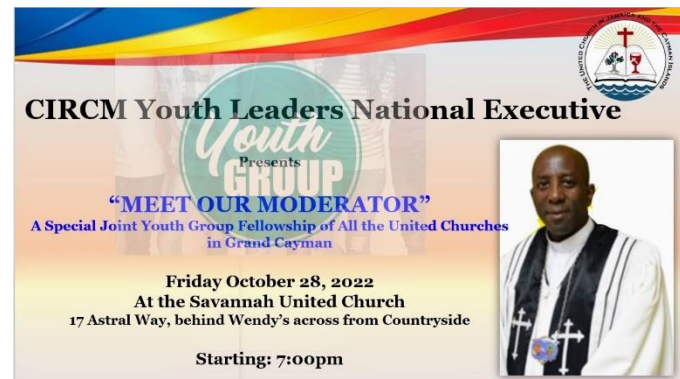
In the Cayman Islands, there are currently six secondary schools that are a part of the movement and one university. While the groups go by various names, each caters to the particulars of their school culture and are united by the core principles and doctrinal basis of IS/IVCF.

The IS/IVCF is present in the following local educational institutions:

- John Gray High School
- Clifton Hunter High School
- Cayman Islands Further Education Centre (CIFEC)
- Triple C School
- Cayman Prep & High School
- Layman Scott High School in Cayman Brac
- University College of the Cayman Islands

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS

IFES was founded in 1947 after ten international student movements formed the initial global movement with the goal to "see a clear witness to Jesus Christ established in every university in the world." Now comprising 170 countries worldwide, the mission remains the same. IFES seeks to equip students in effective witness: to encourage them to initiate spiritual conversations, hold evangelistic Bible studies and mission events, and live lives of grace that point others to Jesus. There are 17 national movements in the Caribbean alone. Around the world, there is a representative national movement in over 160 different countries, serving over 500,000 students. Motto: "To Know Christ and To Make Him Known".



Men's Fellowship Breakfast



October 29, 2022

at 8 :30 AM

John Gray Memorial United Church Hall
West Bay

Guest Speaker: Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott

Theme: Men On A Mission

Caribbean Breakfast

Ackee, codfish, callaloo,

Boiled bananas, dumplings

Cost \$15.00

A Father Son / Mentee Event



Cayman Council - Men's Fellowship



AGM 2022

SATURDAY OCTOBER 29, 2022

3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

**PROSPECT YOUTH CENTRE
292 PROSPECT POINT ROAD**

THE INTERSCHOOL/INTERVARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS INVITES ALL BOARD MEMBERS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS, SPONSORS, STUDENTS, DONORS, PARTNERS AND INTERESTED PERSONS TO ATTEND ITS 3RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

REGISTER AT: <https://www.isivcfky.com/events>

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT DR. ERICA GORDON, BOARD SECRETARY, PH: 326-0578

ANNIVERSARY BANQUET

In commemoration of the 100th Anniversary
of the Dedication of the Elmslie Church Sanctuary



Built on Jesus Christ the sure foundation

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 29
2022
6:30 PM

Dinner
& Entertainment
including a
Photo Booth

LIONS' COMMUNITY CENTRE
905 Crewe Road, Grand Cayman

Attire: Formal

Keynote Speakers:
Rev. Norbert Stephens

Admission: CI\$75 (adults) and CI\$25 (children 12 and under)

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL: CI\$60 for adult tickets
purchased before 25th September

Tickets available at: the Church office 949-7923; Godfrey's Enterprise 926-0968;
Alex's Variety Store 923-4651; L&T Tyres 949-6162 or Divers Supply 926-2909

100th Anniversary Banquet



Built on Jesus Christ the sure foundation

PLEASE JOIN US!

as we rededicate the Elmslie Church Sanctuary

Sunday
**30th
OCTOBER**
4:00 pm

**ANNIVERSARY
SERVICE**

Celebrating
ELMSLIE MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH

100
Years

Guest Preacher:
Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott,
Moderator
The United Church
in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

Refreshments will be served
in the church hall
following the service.

Elmslie Memorial United Church
108A Seafarers Way
George Town, Grand Cayman
www.elmslieunitedchurch.ky



1922 - 2022


100th Anniversary Service

WEBSTER MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH
PRESENTS


AN EVENING OF MUSIC

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2022
@ 6:00pm
261 Bodden Town Road

COME & BE BLESSED
With Performances from our
Sister churches
Local Gospel and Community Performers



The Cayman Islands Girls' Brigade
Invites you to attend
The Official Naming and Dedication
of the
Olive Miller Memorial Building



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH, 2022
at 4:30 PM
PROSPECT YOUTH CENTRE

Reveal of Commemorative plaque and display immediately after dedication

21st Sunday in Pentecost
Reformation Sunday
October 30, 2022

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4
Psalm 32:1-7
2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12
Luke 19:1-10

Ultimately, salvation is the actionizing of our Hope in Jesus Christ. Whatever we believe is what we expect. Fixing our thoughts God-ward is therefore a sure way to overcome doubt and fears that can and will assail us. We will find that our faith is continually re-forming and being transformed.

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TRANSFORMATION BY FAITH

 Prayer Breakfast 
19th November 2022 | 9:00 a.m.

ST. GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH HALL, 67 COURTS ROAD

The Mothers' Union of St. George's Anglican Church cordially invites you to "Transformation by Faith", a prayer breakfast honouring women who have been agents of transformation in the Cayman community.

Join us on Saturday 19th November 2022 at 9:00 a.m. in the St. George's Anglican Church Hall, 67 Courts Road.

Price: C/\$35.00 per person (seating is limited)

Honourees: Rev. Mary Graham (Retired Rector, St. George's Anglican Church)
Ms. Cathy Gomez (Retired Chaplain, HMP, Northward)

Guest Speaker: Deaconess Dr. Elaine Cunningham (Former Diocesan President, Mothers' Union)

For tickets: contact Karen Williams at 325-0318 or email mothersunionstg@gmail.com



Cayman Council Women's Fellowship

Thanksgiving Lunch

Thursday, 24th November 2022
11am to 2pm
Elmslie United Church Hall

Menu
Turkey
Ham
Macaroni & Cheese
Potato Salad
Rice & Beans
Sweet Yam Casserole
Apple / Cranberry Sauce
Dinner Rolls
Apple Pie / Cassava Cake
Soft Drinks /Water
Ticket: \$16.00

Tickets available from Women's Fellowship Members

WORSHIP
THE LORD
Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council
Sundays at 7:45am on Radio Cayman

on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am
October 30, 2022
Rev. Norbert Stephens