



UCJCI 43rd SYNOD THEME – Rooted, Resilient: Re-ignited by the Spirit (Return, Reconnect, Realign, Re-ignite)

The Realigned Heart is Blessed

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Abraham’s servant Eliezer understands God’s purpose and God’s plan for Abraham’s life. God has already shown God’s capacity to bless and prosper those who remain faithful. Eliezer reiterates the list of God’s blessings, and, by his action and faithfulness, he secures a wife for Isaac.

Romans 7:15-25a

Paul reminds the Roman Church that living for Christ is difficult, but by God’s grace, we can live righteously, and we can, thereby, experience God’s blessings.

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Perhaps the Matthew text best helps us to understand how blessed we are in Christ- 11:28 "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The heaviness of the burden of life is lifted in and through our response to Christ. Yoke and burden no longer have the potential to destroy us as Christ invites us to lay down our burden and take His burden, which is easy, hence our blessing!
– (UCJCI Preaching Themes – Sunday, July 9, 2023)



Every year churches around the world commemorate Sea Sunday, a special occasion when people pray for seafarers and fishers and express gratitude for their indispensable contributions to our lives. In this year Sea Sunday will be celebrated on July 9.

“Seafarers and fishers play a vital role in all of our lives, but they often work in difficult, hazardous conditions. In the last year, more crews have been abandoned by their employers than ever before. Many are still being denied the right to leave their ships for even a short break away from the relentless noise and pressure onboard. Many are reporting more stress and poorer

mental health.” (excerpt from the Sea Sunday 2023 newsletter announcement, www.stellamaris.org.uk)

Gun Bay Dinner Sale

On Monday, July 3, 2023, the Gun Bay United Church held its annual summer dinner sale to the delight of locals and visitors coming from all around the island.



As customary, the organizers went to great lengths to create a beautifully decorated venue in the Churchyard for the event, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for everyone. Those arriving from near and far were welcomed by well-known tunes played by a small band of local musicians and a cultural display.





The meals showcased a wide array of delectable dishes, each prepared with love and care by the talented cooks and volunteers of the Congregation. From mouthwatering main courses to traditional delicious desserts such as cassava and yam cake and homemade ice cream, there was something to satisfy every palate. Congratulations to the organizers and volunteers of the Gun Bay United Church for another successful event!



WCC to celebrate the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is planning a year of activities in 2025 to mark the 1700th anniversary of the first Ecumenical Council at Nicaea in 325, a key moment in the history of Christian faith and for the ecumenical journey today.

“The anniversary offers an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on the outpouring mission of God’s triune love and the implications this has for the common witness and service of the churches, it gives us the opportunity to ask afresh with others what Nicaea means for us today,” said WCC general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay.

The first Ecumenical Council was a gathering of Christian bishops in Nicaea, now İznik in present-day Türkiye, as the first attempt to reach consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom.

“Then, as now, the call to unity was heard within the context of a troubled, unequal, and divided world,” recalled Pillay.

At the center of the WCC’s activities in 2025 will be the holding of the Sixth World Conference on Faith and Order.

Organized by the WCC’s Commission on Faith and Order, the conference will gather church leaders and theologians to engage

the many issues that challenge churches today and to reaffirm the desire for the visible unity of the church in the midst of deep diversity and changing contexts.

World conferences on Faith and Order have been held at key moments in the history of the ecumenical movement. The first such conference was held in 1927 in Lausanne, Switzerland, and the Faith and Order movement was one of the streams that lead to the creation of the WCC in 1948.

In its commemoration to mark the Nicaea anniversary, the WCC is planning to focus on three main issues: faith, unity, and mission. This would be an opportunity, Pillay said, for the fellowship of churches in the WCC to reaffirm, in a creative tension, their vocation of calling one another to visible unity and of pursuing the unity of all humanity.

“At the same time,” said Pillay, “the anniversary also prompts us to reveal those practices of discipleship resulting from the association of the church with imperial powers that require intense self-reflection.”

The year 2025 also marks the 100th anniversary of the holding of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work in Stockholm. Sometimes described as the “Nicaea of Ethics,” this was the first large-scale organized expression of the 20th-century ecumenical movement after the destruction of the First World War. Together with the Faith and Order movement, it fed into the creation of the WCC in 1948.

The Nicaea anniversary will be reflected in the plans and activities of all WCC programmes, including both thematic events and activities organized jointly with ecumenical partners, member churches, Christian World Communions, as well as theological associations and institutions.

It is planned to organize webinars on theme-related topics, encourage contributions by younger scholars and students, and invite local churches to mark the anniversary in person or online.

“The Nicaea 2025 celebration will therefore create an opportunity to foster the idea that the churches are called to nurture an ecumenical theological vision that is dialogical, mutually enriching, and resourceful for the Pilgrimage for Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity that was mandated by the WCC’s 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe in 2022,” said Pillay. (<https://www.oikoumene.org/news/wcc-to-celebrate-1700th-anniversary-of-the-council-of-nicaea>)

Nations United for Christ

Mrs. Betty Ann Mobley

We have provided a brief account in the June 15, 2023, issue of our CIRMC Weekly Update about the Missions Weekend hosted by the Elmslie Memorial Church from June 9 to 11, 2023. The following report is a fuller version of the event, providing more details.

The annual Elmslie Charge Missions Weekend made its return this past weekend following a hiatus, as a result of the Covid pandemic. The event was blessed to have two speakers from Operation Mobilization (“OM”). Mr. Paul Wheatley is the Caribbean Executive Director of OM. Paul is from England but currently lives in the US. Mrs. Keitra Vilma, accompanied by her husband Jude, is from the Bahamas. Keitra is the OM Regional Director for the Northern Caribbean.



Youth Night - Philippines

The weekend opened with a service at 7:00pm on Friday evening. Keitra shared her testimony about leaving banking to go into full time missions. Paul spoke about “Missions in our Backyard”. Youth Meeting followed immediately with an introduction to missions, including a rich cultural experience of Saudi Arabia and India. Saturday morning started with breakfast, followed by two workshops – the first on Missions was led by Keitra, while the second seminar on Everyday Evangelism was led by Paul. The sessions were well attended, including invited guests from various nations and other churches across the island.



Youth Night – Saudi Arabia

Paul spoke at our Sunday morning service while Keitra shared with our children and showed a video on the OM Ministry. The closing service was a grand finale as we worshipped with our invited guests from Zimbabwe, India, Philippines, Nicaragua, Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba and many other nationalities who are a part of our congregation and community. We were challenged, as Paul spoke on “Ordinary believers involved in God’s plan

for the nations”. Fellowship continued in the courtyard as we enjoyed music and food from the various nations, many in their cultural dress. A feast of Cayman style dishes was prepared by Elmslie’s ladies (even though the conch stew was prepared by a Texan). There was an undeniable Christian union as the Nations worshipped and shared together, many expressing their appreciation of the blessing, inspiration and challenge they received over the weekend. To God be the Glory!



Youth Night - India



Youth Night - Zimbabwe

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Matthew 28:19-20



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