



UCJCI UPDATE

AUGUST 16, 2023 VOL. 10 NO. 13

THE OFFICIAL WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS



"OUR HEALTH FAIR WAS A SUCCESS!" LUCEA UNITED CHURCH. PAGES 5 AND 6

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UCJCI UPDATE

UPDATE IS PUBLISHED BY THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS. THE PUBLICATION PROVIDES INFORMATION ABOUT THE DENOMINATION, NEWS OF HAPPENINGS IN REGIONS, MATERIAL TO FACILITATE WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY, ACTIVITIES FOR PARTICIPATION AND PRAYER, AND SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES OF PUBLIC CONCERN.

FEATURE ARTICLE

"THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE IS THE HAND THAT RULES THE WORLD", A POEM BY WILLIAM WALLACE, HOLDS WITHIN IT THE BELIEF THAT THE WHOLE WORLD MAY BE IMPACTED BY THAT WHICH HAPPENS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HOME. THIS EXTENDS WALLACE'S PLACEMENT OF POWER IN THE HANDS OF MOTHERS. OUR FEATURE ARTICLE PRESENTS THE POSSIBILITIES FOR TRANSFORMATION OF INDIVIDUALS, AND BY EXTENSION, THE BREADTH OF COMMUNITY - LOCALLY, REGIONALLY AND GLOBALLY - BY THE RENEWAL OF MINDS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD. READ ABOUT THIS IN A REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP THEME (PAGES 2 -4)



THE HOME - POWERHOUSE FOR TRANSFORMATION.

THE REALIGNED HOME

Lessons from Genesis 37

Rev. Otto Menko



The Home Environment Impacts Well-being

It is common knowledge that the home environment is a primary and fundamental building block for individual and family well-being. A supportive, loving, and nurturing home has profound and lasting effects on our physical, emotional, and psychological development, shaping our lives and influencing our engagement with the world. It is especially so in the case of Christian homes, where the life of the entire family and its individual members must be an expression of God's will, purpose, plan, values, and standards. In such homes, mutual love, compassion, forgiveness, respect, and unity can create a harmonious environment where everyone can thrive. In addition, the influences of a good Christian home can positively impact the life of future generations.

Christian homes aligned with God's intentions also have a ripple effect on the broader social environment. Among other things, they exemplify and practice high moral values and ethics, actively engage in the life of their community, participate in volunteer work, and contribute to charitable activities. In broad terms, they represent and spread God's light and love in our wanting world.

Unfortunately, the home can also be a place of selfishness, rivalry, discord, abuse, and neglect. Just like in the case of a positive home environment, the undesirable effects and harms induced in a dysfunctional and toxic home can last a lifetime and even beyond, both within and without.

Trouble in the Home - Favouritism and Sibling Rivalry

Genesis chapter 37 provides a vivid illustration of trouble in the home in the form of parental favouritism and the ensuing sibling rivalry and its effects through the story of Joseph and his brothers.

Joseph is the favourite child of his father, Jacob, and receives a fancy, colorful coat (tunic). This favouritism and the extravagant gift trigger jealousy and resentment among Joseph's brothers, who become increasingly envious of him, especially after he shares dreams suggesting his future authority over them.

Their jealousy leads to a conspiracy to get rid of their brother. They seize the opportunity when Joseph visits them on behalf of their father and sell him to a group of traders who take Joseph to Egypt as a slave. As an explanation of his disappearance the brothers deceive their father into believing that his favored son was killed by a wild animal.

Lessons from Genesis 37 cont'd

Jacob is devastated by the loss of his son and is consumed by grief. He mourns deeply and is unaware that his other sons are responsible for Joseph's disappearance.

This chapter highlights the dynamics of inconsiderate preference in affection, jealousy, competition, and the consequences arising from unaddressed and unresolved conflicts within a family.

To some degree we can understand Jacob's sentiments for Joseph. To be the last child born into the family and his parents advanced in age, Joseph became the baby. His parents, especially his father, showered him with special attention and favours, something his older siblings never experienced and eventually resented, especially after hearing the claims of the 'baby' of the family playing a divinely ordained role of importance in their lives!

Their resentment, annoyance, and anger, over time, led them to make decisions and take actions they much regretted afterward. At first, they were satisfied and felt justified, for seemingly, they restored the natural order of things. But their satisfaction was short-lived and turned into misery when they confronted the grief of their father and the impact of the void left by the absence of Joseph. Years of miserable coexistence followed, marked by a shared sense of guilt, shame, and deception. The brothers miscalculated the effects and consequences of their actions, which sowed discord, mistrust, and anguish within the family

Genesis chapter 37 teaches us the dangerous consequences of following our own head and heart instead of God's.

Re-Aligning our Minds and Hearts

The good news is that we can realign our minds and hearts with God's love which contributes to creating and sustaining healthy and harmonious family relationships and home environments.

In a realigned home, the relationships of family members, the decisions, and the actions all spring from a genuine love for God and each other. This love is the very essence of everything that follows. It is the motivating force and the enabling power to be and to do. Of course, we don't mean our limited, self-centered love but God's limitless, unselfish, unconditional, sacrificial love. The more this love finds space in us, the more we become realigned and can contribute to making a realigned home.



Lessons from Genesis 37 cont'd

In such a home, as time goes by, relationships can grow healthier, stronger and deeper, as family members learn:

- to navigate adversity together,
- to constructively address conflicts and seek resolution,
- to forgive and to forget,
- to be a source of strength when faced with challenges and difficulties,
- to be an inspiration and positive example for each other,
- to be grateful and appreciative,
- to practice generosity and service, and
- to grow deeper in faith and dedication to God.

Unrealistic Expectation or Continuous Journey?

But before anyone accuse us of being idealistic and unrealistic, we acknowledge the truth: there is no perfect home, not even a Christian one! A realigned home is not free from problems, conflicts, hurt, frustration, worry, anger, or sadness. It is not immune to the harmful effects caused by sin, which can reign or resurface in human nature.

Realigning ourselves and our homes with God's mind and heart is a continuous journey that requires our intention, effort, and ongoing reflection. Love can indeed dwell richly in a realigned home when consistently and sincerely pursued and practiced by every family member. It will not only have a multitude of positive impacts but will also bring glory to God!



Wear BLACK on Thursdays
**as an indication of your stance
against violence.**

LUCEA UNITED – Commended for Accountability to the Community

**F
HEALTH
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R**



A BENEFICIARY RECEIVES MEDICAL ATTENTION.

Health Fair a Resounding Success!

The Health Fair hosted by Lucea United Church was dubbed a resounding success by Rev. Glenroy Clarke the minister of the Lucea charge, following the event held Saturday August 12, 2023.

This productive partnership between Lucea United Church Social Outreach Committee, Dr Conway Gordon and Friends, Project C.U.R.E AND I&I Foods by Jus Chill, Inc. offered hundreds of school medicals and other medical examinations, scores of vaccinations and school supplies given to those in need.

Rev. Clarke expressed thanks to the Social Outreach Committee of Lucea United for their tireless efforts in helping to plan, organize and execute this event seamlessly.

"As a church, it is admirable just how much these people take pride in holding themselves accountable to the community in which they serve."

– Dr. Conway Gordon



A SECTION OF THE CROWDS FROM THE COMMUNITY WHICH GATHERED FOR ASSISTANCE.

F HEALTH I R

Rev. Clarke was expansive in his commendations with the following comments. "A special thank you to Project C.U.R.E. for their generous donation of medical equipment and supplies, without which, we could not dream of hosting an event of this scale.



UNITED CHURCH DOCTORS SERVING THE COMMUNITY, MANY OF THEM HAD THEIR FOUNDATION AT LUCEA UNITED CHURCH AND HAVE BEEN MENTORED BY THE MINISTER, REV. GLENROY CLARKE, OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS.



SCORES OF VACCINATIONS WERE GIVEN.

We are forever grateful and look forward to working together to make an even bigger impact on health and wellness in Jamaica in the near future.

"We will put the UNITY back into COMMUNITY... One step at a time".

Shoutout to Jay Blake and Christopher Gordon with I&I Foods by Jus_Chill, Inc. for ensuring everyone got a taste of their wonderful, healthy breadfruit chips throughout the day, and to the many private citizens who donated to the cause.



HUNDREDS OF MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS WERE DONE.

Thank you for starting to believe again that we can and we will put the UNITY back into COMMUNITY...One step at a time".



DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS



SCHOOL SUPPLIES WERE DISTRIBUTED AS NEEDED.

NEWS FROM CAYMAN



The children thoroughly enjoyed the VBS. It was good listening to them shout out on the last day all the things they learned. For the closing activity, they had a piñata as a surprise.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT EAST END – GUN BAY UNITED CHURCHES

by Mrs. Itza Bodden

The East End and Gun Bay United Churches had their combined VBS from July 24-28, 2023, at the East End Church Hall. It was a week full of joy where 20 children participated in the lessons, trivia, art and craft, and games. The theme of this year's VBS was Food Truck Party.

Rev. Rohan Forrester took charge of the devotion every day, followed by activities linked to the daily theme, led by Mrs. Itza Bodden, Youth Worker of the Charge. Mr. Ednie McLean made a truck from foam. Each day the children could earn coins by actively participating in the activities. They could exchange these for the snacks of their choice at the end of the day.



The VBS received support from several parents who readily assisted where needed (registration, kitchen, art and craft, games, keeping order, finance, etc.). At the end of the VBS, each received a thank you token as an expression of appreciation for their contributions. The children's parents also received letters of invitation to attend with their young ones the Sunday morning worship service on August 6, 2023, at the East End United Church and collect their certificate of participation

Our Homes are Places of Worship



AUGUST – REALIGN THE HOME

Our fellowship with God enables our communion with others. What happens in the home affects the society, hence God in Jesus Christ must be the Head of the home in order for the family to dwell together in peace.

Theme this Week:

Love Dwells Richly in the Realigned Home

Suggested Scriptures:

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

Psalms 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b

Romans 10:5-15

Matthew 14:22-33

Learning to love those in our homes is a turning point if we are to realign the relationships we share with our family members.

- How deep is your love for family?
- Sibling rivalry is real in some households. How do we help families to come to terms with each other?
- Matthew 14-22-33- 'Lord, save me' is a guttural cry from Peter and it echoes in our hearts today. Are there experiences in the home that cause us to feel the need to implore the Lord to save us?
- Can the home become a destroyer of faith? If so, how do we live? How do we keep walking on the water in faith?

Let us pray for

- Victims of violence in Jamaica.
- Those who face economic suffering as a result of the drought.
- Rev. Dr. Richmond Nelson who is unwell
- Mrs. Shernett Smith whose brother died last week and for her brother-in-law who has been hospitalized
- Rev. Hyacinth Edwards
- Sustaining faith for children and youth who have made commitments to Christ during our camps, Vacation Bible School and other activities during the summer period.
- The family of the late McFarlane Conolly of East End United in Cayman
- Vulnerable groups who are seriously impacted by the intense heat.
- Our preparedness and safety during the hurricane season.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS!

**REV. DONOVAN
MCPHERSON**

AUGUST 20



**REV. ANTHONY
WALLACE**

AUGUST 20



*May you continue to experience the
blessings of God*



**UNITED CHURCH YOUNG ADULTS
ACTION MOVEMENT**



UCYAAAM CAMP CONFERENCE 2023

THEME

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FOCUS, LIFE GIVING**

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Adults - \$10,000.00

Children - \$6,000.00

Private Rooms - \$13,000.00

Daily Rates Are Available

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17-20 AUGUST 2023

**VENUE: Madge Saunders Conference Center
Tower Isle St. Mary**



SYNODICAL THEME:
Rooted, Resilient: Re-ignited by the Spirit
(Return, Reconnect, Realign, Re-ignite)

OUR VISION

*Touching Lives, Nurturing Disciples, Seeking Transformation
through Christ*

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