



# CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

## Palm Sunday

March 21, 2024

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 12

**Rooted and Resilient: Re-ignited by the Spirit to Re-connect**



## All Praise King Jesus, Righteous King Who Came to Save

Ms. Catherine Gomez

(Pastoral Assistant - Robert Young Mission Station)

With Palm Sunday, the Church begins the annual Holy Week journey. This journey opens with a joyful celebration, but in a few short days, it takes an unexpected turn, leading to a shocking conclusion.

As we witness the rapidly unfolding drama of the last week of Jesus' earthly life, the events speak volumes not only about God's passionate love for all but also about the sobering reality of sin that plagues humankind both collectively and individually.

Jesus became the new Passover Lamb whose blood was shed for all so that those who believe in Him may be freed from the slavery of sin and have life and have it eternally.

At the heart of the story of Jesus' passion is the manifestation of a love unlike any other. The love we confront is so sincere, selfless, and transforming that it is beyond human comprehension. In Jesus' suffering, we witness a love of unprecedented depths. The Son of God voluntarily enters the deepest humiliation ever seen to meet us in our fallenness, sin, and helplessness and raise us to the highest heights imaginable.

As we begin this Holy Week, let us walk through it with Jesus every step of the way. As we go about our days this week, fulfilling our daily duties, let us take to heart afresh the generosity of God's grace and our total dependence on it, with all its possibilities and responsibilities.

I am sure we all remember as children how we would go to church on Palm Sunday and enjoy the decorations of palm branches. Some of us would be selected to walk up the aisle with the branches in our hands. It was a time of celebration and also a reverent time of reflection on the beginning of the days leading up to Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection - the glorious season of Easter. Palm Sunday is a Biblical event mentioned in each of the four gospels and marks the beginning of Holy Week. Not only does Palm Sunday represent the beginning of the countdown to the Passion of Christ, but it also underscores the fulfillment of prophecy, where Jesus is clearly hailed as King and Messiah. In the Old Testament, the word of the Lord came to the prophet **Zechariah**, and we read in part, in **chapter 9: 9 - 10**,

*'Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion, shout, daughter of Jerusalem, see! Your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.'*

In the New Testament, in **Mark chapter 11**, we read the story of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Jesus sent two of His disciples, saying to them,

*'Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no-one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "why are you doing this?" tell them, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly."*

Everything unfolded as Jesus predicted, and when they brought the colt to him, they threw their cloaks over it, and he rode it into Jerusalem. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,



*'Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming Kingdom of our father, David. Hosanna in the highest!'*

The prophecy was fulfilled! **John chapter 12** also gives an account of the story of Jesus's triumphal entry and in **verse 16**, we read,

*'At first, His disciples did not understand all of this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.'*

The colt, the palm branches, and the clothes strewn across the road were all symbols of Jesus's ascendancy. Spreading garments before a dignitary was a symbol of submission. Palm branches were employed also as a token of victory. The Jewish disciples were no doubt expressing the hope that Jesus would be the one to lead them to victory over Rome, their oppressor. Some scholars see Jesus's journey as symbolic of His earthly enthronement. Both John and Mark record the crowds affirming Jesus as King of the Davidic lineage, perhaps due to the prophetic word that *'the King would appear coming on a colt'* in **Zechariah 9**.

However, Jesus was no ordinary King, He was the King of the New Jerusalem, the King of Peace, and His use of a colt shows that He is subverting the 'war' order for the way of **peace, humility, justice, and righteousness**. As they spread garments in submission, so are we to submit to Jesus in our hearts, recognizing Him as a righteous King who reigns forever. Like Jesus, we choose the path of peace, for it is the Kingdom of Peace that is eternal. **Psalm 118 vs 1-2** reminds us that His love endures forever. War and arrogance will perish. **Luke** also states in **chapter 19: 41** that as Jesus entered Jerusalem, *He wept over it*. He knew of the dark times that would come and spoke of how the people could not see what would bring them peace.

As I read this scripture, I recalled my visit to the Holy Land in 2008. Our tour guide was from Jerusalem and as we approached by bus, I asked if he could play the song 'Jerusalem' by the Hoppers. He did, and he cried while the song was playing, and he explained that every time he enters Jerusalem, he cries. When we think of the suffering in Israel, Gaza, and many other places around the world today, there is reason to cry, but amid the tears, we find the hope that comes from Jesus Christ alone.

We can learn so much from the Palm Sunday story:

**1. Firstly, Jesus portrays a calming spirit** as He rode on the donkey, accepting the people just as they were; even today, He does that for us. He is always approachable and available as we bring our concerns and burdens to Him. It is important for us to remember

this during our moments of crisis or some other life-changing event in our lives.

**2. Secondly, He demonstrated humility** by seating Himself on a lowly donkey, not a high horse. From this level, He could see the people eye to eye. Today, He remains reachable to all of us, no matter who we are or what we have done.

**3. Thirdly, His choice of a donkey was a symbol of peace.** In those days, those who arrived on a donkey were considered to come with peaceful intent. We see Jesus as the Holy One who brings calm and comfort to our daily lives, which are sometimes filled with anger, discontent, and other negative emotions from those around us.

**4. Fourthly, the shouts of 'Hosanna' are Hebrew, meaning 'save, rescue.'** The people did not know how Jesus would save them, but they trusted that He would. Our faith should also be grounded and rooted in the knowledge that Jesus came to save us, not to condemn us, as we read in **John 3:17**: *'For God did not send His son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.'*

**5. Finally, the Palm branch represented victory** - they symbolized the final victory Jesus would soon have over death. We, too, can know that even in death, we win. Jesus said to Martha in **John 11:25**, *'I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.'* These words remind us that we do not fear death - and today, there is so much fear in our world: from natural disasters, pandemics, war, gun violence, and the list can go on and on. We can relax in our upside-down world, knowing that our ultimate destination is to live with Jesus Christ.

Palm Sunday carries Christ toward the ultimate sacrifice of His life on the cross; this is where, by **His** sacrifice, **we** are healed! Its central message is that God sees us and loves us so much. God may not love some things we do but loves us unconditionally. God is worthy of our praise. God is worthy of our dedication.

Will you exercise faith in God's ultimate healing? - on earth and in heaven? Are we exemplifying the Palm Sunday promise to a world that is watching?

Not only can we have confidence because of Christ's provision for our lives, but we can strive to be more like Him in our everyday lives and help others trust Him. People are watching, and more than ever, they need to see our strong, spiritual faith. When we sing that wonderful song, 'Victory in Jesus,' let us truly mean it in our hearts. God bless you all.

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## Savannah Girls' Brigade Expresses Appreciation to Mrs. Jennifer King

On Sunday, March 17, 2024, the Savannah Girls' Brigade presented Mrs. Jennifer King with a token of their appreciation for her dedication to and leadership in the Savannah Girls' Brigade since 1996. Throughout her years of service, Miss Jennifer has been an example of commitment and passion, inspiring young explorers to grow and flourish under her guidance. With patience, kindness, and love, she created a welcoming and supportive environment where every girl was valued and encouraged to discover their potential.



Right: Mrs. Jennifer King

## Youth MAT Sunday at Savannah United Church

The Savannah United Church had its Youth MAT (Mission Action Team) Sunday on March 17, 2024, as the next in a series of Worship services focusing on the ministry of the various MATs created in the Congregation.

The MAT's theme for 2024 is, **'It's a New Season'** with a focus on the fruits of the Holy Spirit in each month of the year. In her presentation, Co-Chair of the MAT, Mrs. Grace Bryant-Scott informed the congregants of the following:

The Youth MAT engages in both Evangelistic and Discipleship Programmes for children and youth, designed to reach young people and nurture them in their Christian walks as disciples of Christ.

### THE MINISTRY AREAS OF THE YOUTH MAT

1. Youth and Young Discipleship

This ministry caters to those who have Christ as their Savior and are prepared to be disciples in the Church and the community. Youth Disciples are involved in the various ministries.

2. Sunday School and Nursery
3. Youth Groups (with an Evangelistic focus)
4. Vacation Bible School
5. Camp Ministry
6. Girls' Brigade



The Youth MAT Leadership Team from left to right: Ms. Camile Watt (Youth Minister), Mr. Chester Hurlston (Co-Chair), Mrs. Grace Bryant-Scott (Co-Chair), Ms. Jody Jackson and Mrs. Marisa Crawford (GB Captain-Savannah).

The **Youth MAT Leadership Team** expressed their gratitude to Ms. Camile Watt for sharing her gifts and all her love through words, deeds, and life and for making a tremendous difference as the Youth Minister of the Savannah United Church.



Monday to Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> March  
**LENTE LUNCH TIME MEDITATION**

12:00 – 12:45 PM

Elmslie Memorial United Church  
108A Seafarers Way,  
George Town

## TENEBRAE WORSHIP *Service of Fading Lights*

John Gray Memorial Church Hall  
THURSDAY, MARCH 28TH, 6:30 PM



The United Church Lay  
Training Institute

## TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS MODULE 1

**NEW START DATE -  
MARCH 23, 2024**

**TOPICS INCLUDE**  
EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP,  
COMMUNICATION, BIBLE  
STUDY, WORSHIP,  
CAREGIVING

THIS TRAINING IS FOR  
PERSONS PREPARING TO  
SERVE AS:

- Elders
- Specialized Ministry Leaders
- Lay Pastors

2nd and 4th Saturdays- March to  
August 9:00 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
via Zoom. Registration through regions  
opens February 27



**COST  
JMD  
\$10,000**

FOR MORE INFO

ucjci.karen.francis@gmail.com  
1876-4327057

RECORDED ORIENTATION SESSION  
AVAILABLE BY EMAILING  
UCJCI.SHERYL.CHUNG@GMAIL.COM

## National Day of Prayer

**Date:** Tuesday, March 26th

**Time:** 12 noon - 12:50

**Location:** Glass House Lawn

## Easter Sunrise Services

**Date:** Sunday, March 31st

**Time:** 6 am

**3 Locations:**

- Seven Mile Public Beach
- Spotts Dock
- North Side (opposite Wesleyan Holiness Church)

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Website: [www.unitedchurch.ky/](http://www.unitedchurch.ky/)

# WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

A MUSICAL FOR EASTER

Webster Memorial United Church

Presents Easter Cantata

Sunday March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, at 11 AM

Featuring

Webster and Savannah Choirs

261 Bodden Town Road



## GLOBAL MISSIONS CONFERENCE

*Nations United for Christ*

Guest speakers



**BISHOP RAPHAEL HAULE**

Bishop of Ruvuma Anglican Diocese, Tanzania



**MRS. KEITRA VILMA**

OM Regional Director Northern Caribbean

10th-14th  
April 2024

Elmslie Memorial  
United Church

**MORE INFO**

949-7923

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ELMSLIEUNITEDCHURCH.KY



on Radio Cayman 89.9  
every Sunday at 7:45 am

**March 24, 2024**  
**Ms. Catherine Gomez**