



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

PENTECOST

May 16, 2024

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 20

Rooted and Resilient: Re-ignited by the Power of the Resurrection and by God's Spirit

The Church Today - Reignited by God's Spirit

Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

Please read Acts 1:1-21

On May 19, 2024, the Church Universal will celebrate the Day of Pentecost. This Sunday is also known as Whitsunday. Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Disciples of Jesus who were gathered in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. This infilling of the Holy Spirit enabled the once timid and afraid Disciples and the others gathered to become the bold proclaimers of the Gospel. Jesus had told them in Acts 1:8, that they would be filled with the Holy Spirit (power/dynamis) and that they would become witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. This promise of Jesus to the Disciples was therefore fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. The Greek word Pentecost means fifty and the Jews used the term to demarcate the Jewish agricultural festival which occurred fifty days Pasch or Passover. Pentecost celebrated the wheat harvest which was one of the pilgrim festivals for the Jews. The celebration of this festival accounted for the large throng that gathered in Jerusalem who became witnesses to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Disciples. Some of the people present politely asked, 'What does this mean?' Others concluded that those who were filled with the Spirit were filled with new wine and therefore were highly intoxicated. This was indeed a new moment for the Disciples as they received the power of the Holy Spirit and started to speak in languages that were understood by all who were gathered in Jerusalem.

For us as Christians, Pentecost is not an agricultural or covenantal festival but rather Pentecost marks the completion of the work the crucifixion and resurrection

when the promised Holy Spirit became evident, empowered the Disciples, and thus gave birth to the Church. Pentecost marked the beginning of the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Church has survived two millennia through the power of the Holy Spirit and continues to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ with fervency.

There is however the need to reflect on the power of the Holy Spirit and Church on this Pentecost Sunday by asking three questions:

How does the Holy Spirit transform the life of the Christian?

As Christians, we are called by the Holy Spirit into a newness of life. Our lives are hidden in Christ, and we are through our baptism in water and by the spirit called to live lives of peace, to be beacons of hope and to respond with grace to our sisters and brothers. Being a Christian today requires a Pentecostal moment in our lives when our spiritual hearts and eyes can be open to the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Because the individual Christian is endowed by the power of the Holy Spirit there is a call on our lives to agents of change in a society that longs for love and grace.

The call in **Acts 1:8** to be witnesses in Jerusalem initially, is a call to serve as Christians in the place we are most familiar with, the home and immediate environs. In many homes the light of grace and peace has gone dim as many live in tension and distress as the calming yet powerful presence of the Spirit is remarkably absent. This void lends itself to resentment, anger, hatred and ultimately bitterness. Unfortunately, the Christian home is sometimes just as tumultuous as homes where the name of Christ is not known.

During the months of May and June, as we celebrate Child's Month, Mother's Day and Father's Day, the call is

to look closely at the home, the covenant of marriage and the guidance offered by parents to children in order to improve the dynamics and to ensure that the basic human institutions are saturated by the power of the Holy Spirit.

How does the Church experience the Holy Spirit today?

The Holy Spirit continues to consecrate the Church in new and dynamic ways. To dwell in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is an essential call to the Church by the Holy Spirit.

The marks of the Church remain relevant as the Church is One, Holy, Universal and Apostolic.

The Church Is One and Holy

As such, we receive our oneness as the Church in the same way God is one in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Church Is Holy because of our union with Christ the Holy One and we are therefore expected to lead lives of holiness and to challenge each other to live in circumspect and righteous ways. We receive the source of our holiness from Christ and the Holy Spirit and as such, our conduct and relationship within the body of Christ should be regulated by that level of holiness. Holiness must permeate our worship and fellowship as the body of Christ.

The Church Is Universal

The Church is universal or catholic because all those who are baptized are welcomed in the Church. One of the important roles of the Church is to point all people to the saving grace of Christ. In its mission work, the Church is universal because the Church has been sent to proclaim Christ to the entire human race.

The Church Is Apostolic

This mark of the Church alludes to the tracing of the traditions of the Church directly from the apostles and hence, the Church is considered apostolic. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the Church preserves and continues the teaching of the apostles.

What does the Holy Spirit require of the Church?

The Church is called to be the proclaimer of truth and to respond to the needs and cries of those around us. The Holy Spirit defines and equips the Church for ministry and mission. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church is empowered to proclaim the gospel of salvation to the four corners of the earth. This is

therefore a call to evangelism and discipleship as the Church reaches out with the gospel to those who still need to be saved. The message of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His saving grace is still relevant and needed in our world today.

As Christians, we are called to reach out and care for our neighbours, to work for a world that is fair and just and to respond to the needs of others including and primarily so, their salvation. There is a requirement for the Church to love as God so love and to understand God's vision for the world recognizing that we are all made in the image and likeness of God. May the Holy Spirit stir us and reignite us towards good work. Amen.

Webster Memorial United Church (Bodden Town) 170th Anniversary Celebrations

The month-long 170th Anniversary celebrations of the Webster Memorial United Church in Bodden Town continued last Sunday, May 12, 2024, with the visiting **Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary**, delivering the sermon.



His message titled "**Answering the Call**," based on 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 invited the Congregation to reflect on the central question: '**What are we building here?**'

Drawing practical guidance from the epistle, Rev. Stephens pointed out that the Congregation is responsible for building an inclusive and diverse community of faith. Such a call can be answered only by building on Jesus Christ, the solid foundation, and under the guidance of the unifying power of the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, God will test what we build, and we will receive the appropriate reward.



A Message for the Churches - At Pentecost (2024)

We, the presidents of the World Council of Churches, greet you in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship on the occasion of the feast of Pentecost.

The Pentecost is the descent of the Holy Spirit on the church and the empowerment of its missionary outreach. The church is the Koinonia of people held together by Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our ecumenical journey at the 7th Assembly of WCC (Canberra, 1991), with its theme "Come, Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation" was an appeal to the member churches to reaffirm the renewing power and transforming action of the Holy Spirit in the church, and in the whole creation. It was also a reminder of the vital importance of the church's Missio Dei sustained by the Holy Spirit.

In a world in which life in its human and ecological dimensions is threatened, we need the Spirit of life to protect the sacredness, wholeness, and integrity of the God-given life.

In a world torn apart by intolerance and polarization, we need the intervention of the Holy Spirit to tear down the "dividing walls" (Eph. 2:14), and help establish coherence and harmony, among diversities of race, religion, and culture.

In a world dominated by corruption, injustice, and the decay of moral and spiritual values, we need the renewing presence of the Holy Spirit to transform our societies through the Gospel values.

As a global fellowship of churches, let us pray, as we did at Canberra Assembly, come Holy Spirit and help us grow in unity, which is a gift of God, and move forward with renewed vision in our spiritual journey. Empower us to articulate more concretely our missionary engagement in all parts of the world, and particularly at these critical moments in the Middle East. Help us to replace hatred by love, violence by dialogue, and self-centeredness by mutual acceptance. Make us instruments of justice, apostles of peace, and messengers of life.

The Presidents of the World Council of Churches

H.H. Catholicos ARAM I, Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)

Rev. Dr Susan DURBER, United Reformed Church
Rev. Dr Henriette HUTABARAT-LEBANG, Gereja Toraja
Most Rev. Dr Rufus Okikiola OSITELU, Church of the Lord (Prayer Fellowship) Worldwide
Rev. François PIHAATAE, Église protestante Maohi
Rev. Dr Angélique WALKER-SMITH, National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.
Rt Rev. Philip WRIGHT, Church in the Province of the West Indies
H.E. Metropolitan Dr VASILIOS OF CONSTANTIA AND AMMOCHOSTOS, Church of Cyprus

(source: <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/a-message-for-the-churches-at-pentecost>)

Reignited by God's Spirit: that Dry (Church) Bones might Live

Ezekiel 37:1-14

It's Pentecost, the birthday of the Church! The reading from Acts speaks of 4 things that resulted in the re-igniting of the disciples:

1. United presence
2. Sound of rushing wind
3. Spirit filled room
4. Individual flames

Note that these are both collective and individual - because the move of God's Spirit is (a) for the benefit of the church, and (b) manifested in each believer's life. Part of the challenge many churches face these days is the denial of God's Spirit, or the mistaken belief that God's Spirit is only manifested through tongues or in particular people's lives.

Ezekiel 37 tells us that the 'dry bones' all came back to life as a mighty army, not one particular bone. In the successive weeks consider very intentional teaching on the role, gifts and witness of God's Spirit in the Church. This is the means by which the denomination will be reignited for ministry.

(UCJCI Preaching Themes - Sunday, May 19, 2024)

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.**

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glow with Thy fire divine.

Edwin Hatch, 1878

Celebrating 170 Years of Service
In May 2024



WEBSTER MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH,
BODDEN TOWN, GRAND CAYMAN

Cordially invites you and your family to join us for the
following special events:

May 18, Saturday – 10:00 – 3:00 PM

170th Anniversary Beach Day (Coe Wood Beach) with
lunch provided

May 19, Sunday – 11:00 AM

170th Anniversary Youth Sunday

May 19, Sunday – 6:00 PM

Singspiration Service

May 20-24, Monday-Friday – 10:00 – 3:00 PM

Historical Display in the Church Hall

May 26, Sunday – 11:00 AM

170th Anniversary Celebrations Closing Service
Guest Speaker: Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott (Moderator)

Come and celebrate with us!

BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Ephesians 5:18



The United Church in Jamaica
and the Cayman Islands

**SUMMER
DAY CAMP 2024**

Cayman Islands (CIRMC)

"Spread the Fyah"

FUN, WORSHIP & FELLOWSHIP



Children's Camp
July 9-14



Teens' Camp
July 16-21

Venue:
Prospect Youth Centre
8am - 6pm Daily
Cost: CI\$150

**USE QR CODE
TO REGISTER**

Deadline: June 17, 2024



Remember in your prayers

All those God has placed on your heart and those brought to your attention in some way. Please also include in your prayers especially for our retired Ministers, Rev. Harry Bodden, Rev. Joe Crawford, and Rev. Godfrey Meghoo.

BETHESDA
COUNSELLING CENTRE

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on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

May 19, 2024
**Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-
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