



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

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UCJCI 42nd SYNOD THEME 2021 – Rooted, Resilient: Responding in HOPE (Health, Opportunity, Peace, Evangelism)

Welcome Back Rev. Myers!

With a deep sense of gratitude and an abundance of joy, the CIRMC welcomes back Rev. Donovan Myers, Minister of the John Gray Memorial United Church, West Bay.



Rev. Myers and his loved ones have recently been through a particularly difficult time in their life, yet during the many trials and tribulations they remained strong in their faith and never gave up hope. We celebrate God's goodness and mercy toward them, for God has restored him and filled him with renewed strength and zeal. Rev. Myers has resumed the administrative duties of his Charge as of August 1, 2021,

and will take on his full duties on September 1, 2021. We continue to keep him and his family in our thoughts and prayers as they embark on this new phase of their life.

The CIRMC also wishes to record its gratitude to all those who have assisted in various areas of congregational ministry during the temporary, yet prolonged absence of Rev. Myers. Their contributions proved to be invaluable during this critical period.

When Leadership Models a Peaceful Life

By Ms. Brenda Dawkins

Please read 2 Samuel 18: 5-9

One of the most written, spoken about and researched topic is that of "Leadership." There are myriads of definitions on types of leadership, from autocratic to laissez-faire leadership; from transactional to transformational leadership; but regardless of what type you connect with there is one commonality - you are

dealing with people, emotions, abilities, behaviors and attitudes. Therefore, it is inevitable that there will be increased chance of conflict.

Several writers have sought to provide content on how to be effective leaders. Whether you read Johnson's Who Moved my Cheese, Blanchard's One Minute Manager or Ron Clark's Move Your Bus, one thing is certain - leadership requires you to model the behavior you wish to see. This is true in the corporate and business world as it is in the family environment.

Organizations require management or leaders to possess characteristics such as integrity, emotional intelligence, creativity and initiative. Applicants for jobs are careful to highlight these in resumes and cover letters. Very rare, if at all, does a leader highlight how much they are able to model a peaceful life, and rightly so because if you really want to land the job, that is not a requirement for most posts. However, more and more we are realizing that leaders are required to model a peaceful life and often in their quest for peace they go to war, because if they don't it could be seen as a sign of weakness.

In 2 Samuel 18: 5-9 We read of a leader, King David who, despite being at war with his opponents and his rebellious son, instructed the leaders of his thousands of fighters to show some mercy (peace).

You will recall in earlier chapters that Absalom (David's 3rd son) had carried out revenge killing on his brother Amnon. Absalom ran away from his household and after 3 years his father David took him back in the household but Absalom was not satisfied that his father had forgiven, he wanted to be the King. The family dysfunctionality continued and again Absalom was leaving the house, yet his father said "Go in Peace". Again, when David's men were going to war, he pleaded with them "Whatever you do, don't harm the young man Absalom". What David's leader saw as victory in killing Absalom, David detested because his army men had failed in making peace. On bringing him the news of victory, David's first question was "Is the young man Absalom all right?" On learning it wasn't so, he cried out, "Absalom, Oh Absalom, if only I had died instead of you." Despite the high conflict among that family, the leader of the flock demonstrated how important it is for at least one family member to bring some semblance of peace. Like David, you can never make everyone happy but that does not mean that you can't take the initiative to aim for peace.

You might be thinking that there is no hope for peace in your family but if you are the head of your household, consider how

Introspection: An Important Disposition For Peace-Building

By Mr. Bryan Bothwell

Please read Psalm 51:1-12

St. Augustine in his “Confessions” is disturbed by this reality: “Who am I, and what is my nature? What evil is there not in me and my deeds? Or if not in my deeds, my words? Or if not in my words, my will?”

That is an extremely sobering line of thought: What evil is there not in me? Wow! But it probably is the right start for any period and prayer of confession to God our Creator, especially by those of us who call Him “Lord”. For, by using that title, we are saying that it is God Who is the master of our daily lives, the One Who actually determines all we do, say or think. Clearly, therefore, that is a very serious contention: ‘He made me do it!’ We wish. Probably, if we were very truthful, most Christians could each fill a fairly long book with just a list of our own confessions that, “no, God, I know that when I did so and so, that was not what You would have had me do”.



No doubt, we too, need to face up to that question of what truly lies within our nature, in order to honestly do before God what we are called upon to do, namely, “**introspection**”.

The meaning of “introspection” is pretty self-evident, as it suggests to us the process of “looking inward” or an “inspection of my inner-being”; like St. Augustine was asking, “Who [really] am I? It is defined in leading dictionaries generally as a ‘self-examination of one’s own thoughts, feelings and mental processes’. And is also an important concept in psychology. Some persons also push the idea that when engaging in introspection we must not let any external force affect us. Clearly that part is not for the Christian; for we do have a standard for our self-inspection and a specific outcome which we are seeking, both found only in God in Christ.

I must confess I don’t want to believe that all possible kinds of evil potentially lurk within me, as St. Augustine posited. But I always realize that it would be the start of a slippery slope were I to begin convincing myself that there are certain types of evil, wrongdoing, sin, that I could never be capable of, and therefore do not have to worry about. In that respect, our Scripture text today highlights some of King David’s areas of introspection and confessions.

That particular Psalm was written after the prophet Nathan came to him, as recounted in 2 Samuel 11 and 12, to confront him with the message of God, in regard to David’s appalling conduct, his sins, revolving around Bathsheba. The slippery slope for David in this case probably started before he went out on the roof of his palace that night. Perhaps the writer of 2 Samuel is suggesting he had been indulging in a period of idleness (and children of my generation were certainly warned constantly about that deadly sin!).

can you model peaceful behavior. Parents, grandparents, caregivers who are moulding the lives of young ones have to be positive role models of peace. Our children are watching us, the way we speak to and of other family members or our neighbours, is being copied by the young minds. We see more and more of our young ones exhibiting behaviors that are not peaceful as they experience difficulty regulating their emotions. They are quick to fight, hit or swear and will even refuse to apologize when in the wrong. We must continue to teach our little ones to practice peaceful life and living. It is not easy, but as David in Psalm 34 vs 8 suggests, we should “taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that takes refuge in him”. In this Psalm, David is inviting us as leaders to just try-taking the first step to becoming that peaceful person. We are encouraged to seek God’s guidance in handling difficult moments. This is why Christ came to “Bring Peace on Earth” and this means that this supreme peacemaker is available to help us as leaders lead a peaceful life.

Matthew 5: 9 says, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God”. There was no promise of the absence of conflict and the call is not to put your head in the sand and wish it away. Modelling a life of peaceful leadership is based on biblical peace of justice and righteousness. When justice prevails and righteousness rules, we will have peace in the workplace, organizations and the families.

You might say, that it is your nature, or that your parents had the same temper. Others looking on might think they don’t expect better from you because of your experiences. But you can make that change to be the leader in your family to bring peace to situations in the home, and when you try, you might be mocked and asked, ‘What are you trying to prove?’. They did the same to Jesus. John 6 tells us that the religious leaders grumbled because they could not accept Jesus’ divinity and peaceful nature. They saw him as the ‘carpenter’s son’ (John 6: vs 41-42).

In order to model peaceful leadership we need a higher moral code which can be guided by the moral compass given in God’s word and that will help us avoid being swayed by popular opinion. You may think, you are not a leader or hold any high position, but you can be an example of peaceful leadership wherever you are.

To be a servant leader you have to think of others other than self, lead with integrity, empathy, humility, kindness and generosity. This can lead to better morale among team members and lead to higher productivity and engagement and peace in the home.

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:7

But certainly the slope involved sexual lust, conceit that gave birth to a feeling of unlimited power and self-importance, with the resulting disregard for the identical importance, worth and rights of other people, equally created by God in God's Image; disregard even for a loyal subject who put his life on the line every day for David. Next, a further slip, down to actual abuse of his power, adultery, deceit, disdain for the law he was supposed to see enforced, then murder, the pinnacle of sin, and further cover-up. Or, rather, attempted cover-up, as he realized when Nathan visited him. And the slippery slope did not end even there; for there are consequences of sin, inevitably. And too often others, like innocent children and other family members, sometimes for generations, are caught up in that atmosphere of sin, leading to various forms of emotional, developmental, physical and psychological poisoning, or outright suffocation, as happened amongst King David's family.

Certainly, in that episode of David's life, there is no sign of the humility, justice and mercy that God expressly requires of us – yet God had foreseen from David's youth that he would be “a man after God's own heart”. Would the young David who stood before Goliath declaring the only armor he would rely upon was “the Lord Almighty”, would he have believed that he was capable of such depths of evil as had crept up on King David one beguiling step at a time? That helps explain why St. Augustine took such an extreme line in his own introspection, and why we must be constantly on guard from within. But, thankfully, God knows the good made into each of us and never gives up trying to get us to allow that good to become our dominant nature.



While **introspection** is the subject of this meditation, its objective is **peace**. Peace, or shalom, in the Biblical sense has a very broad meaning, encompassing basically life as God intended it to be for us. Starting with the absolute essential of the restored relationship of the individual and mankind as a whole with God as our loving, loved, and followed Lord. It certainly encompasses having no violence, whether physical, psychological or emotional. But, equally, no other discord amongst families or indeed with any other; no poverty, financial and otherwise, so that everyone would have sufficient for a decent life, out of the abundance God provides and which is intended for all, like the manna in the wilderness. Therefore each person would access necessary health services, even in times of pandemic. In addition to that, every child and adult would have the other elements to develop their full potential and embrace the fullness of life in the joy of mutually loving family life; would enjoy fulfilling opportunities for education, work and service, that are necessary to our sense of self-worth and our inbuilt urge to create good things; and on and on. And clearly that restored relationship with God means salvation, and thereby that otherwise elusive inner peace, that joy even in the valley of the shadow of death.

The dreadfulness of the inner turmoil David was going through had been unshakeable, constantly on his mind, and had absolutely “crushed” him, despite all his riches and privileges as king. And he recognized, acknowledged and accepted he was wrong and his actions definitely “evil”; what was “right” and “justified” was God's way, God's justice. And he knew that the

only way for him to get out from under this crushing burden and find peace would be for God to “restore to me the Joy of Your salvation”. Nothing else would be enough; but that surely would; for his soul, our souls, would be unanchored without that sustaining, redeeming relationship with God's “Holy Spirit”. In Psalm 32 he was even more explicit, declaring, “Then I acknowledged my sin to You, and did not cover up my iniquity. I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord – and You forgave the guilt of my sin”.

Certainly, inner peace anchored in God's grace would be the firmest foundation for all those other aspects of peace. But the inner peace of the Christian cannot be found in isolation, for God calls us to be His peacemakers to help all others to receive the fullness of the Prince of Peace. And His brother James would later emphasize that “those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness”. In order to be that peacemaker, we must truthfully examine whether the quality of our own faith and diligence of action is enriching or eroding God's precept of peace.

“We've had this situation where you've got a complete breakdown in the social fabric of society, ... where ... gangs think that the only way to solve the problem is to kill each other.” This was the professional, close-up, observation of the situation right here in Cayman, by Deputy Police Commissioner Kurt Walton, reported in the Cayman Compass recently. Our local news has been filled with other issues that also speak to the lack of the fullness of Biblical peace: other violence and crime, sexual harassment, educational, environmental, economic and cultural challenges, are just a few examples.

Mr. Walton's words, though, speak directly to the assessment by the discerning and insightful Presbyterian preacher and author Timothy Keller, in his book “Generous Justice”, that the call on the Christian to justice, to be peacemakers, is to go “where the fabric of shalom has broken down, where the members of societies are falling through the fabric [for whatever reason], and to repair it.” And Rev. Keller has always noted the unique role of the Christian to help people achieve that key aspect of peace that we saw from David's anguish, spiritual reconciliation with God.

Are you, am I, willing to diligently be a peacemaker for God? Will we then truthfully look inward with the help of God Who is yearning to cleanse and forgive us and renew our hearts to Him, so we can be equipped and energized to help others receive Christ?

IN OTHER NEWS

The **United Church Young Adults Action Movement** (UCYAAM), as part of their Annual Conference (August 12 - 15, 2021), will be conducting a Tree Planting exercise in each Regional Mission Council. For this reason, members of the Savannah UC Young Adults group - the only currently existing group in the CIRM - planted a Poinciana tree at the Prospect Youth Centre grounds on Friday, August 6, 2021.



The Congregations of the CIRMC have been in prayerful support of the government and people of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)** since the explosive eruption of the La Soufriere volcano on April 9, 2021.

In addition to being in prayer, the members and adherents have collectively contributed the amount of CI\$ 6,511.35 towards the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Community in the Cayman Islands Support Organization.

We continue to hope and pray for the complete recovery of the well-being and livelihood of the people of SVG. May Peace and Justice continue to reign in Saint Vincent, Land so Beautiful.



(Left to right: Rev. Rohan Forrester – Chair of CIRMC, Mr. Ormond Williams – Lay Pastor, member of the SVG-CISO, Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield – RDGS/CIRMC and Rev. Louis Sully, - member of the Council Executive, CIRMC)

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 15. (Sunday) 12th Sunday of Pentecost

August 22. (Sunday) 13th Sunday of Pentecost



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council

175th Anniversary



HOPE IS HERE!

Back to Church

Sept. 12, 2021 Sunday

John Gray Memorial (West Bay) - 10:30am	Savannah United (Savannah) - 10:00am
Elmslie Memorial (George Town) - 10:30am	Webster Memorial (Bodden Town) - 11:00am
South Sound United (George Town) - 9:00am	East End United (East End) - 11:00am
Robert Young Memorial (Crewe Rd.) - 8:45am	Gun Bay United (East End) - 9:30am
William Pouchie Memorial (North Side) - 9:00am	

All are invited!

Back to Church Sunday (BTCS), as an evangelistic outreach originated in the United Kingdom in 2004 focusing on inviting those who have been to church as casual visitors for a wedding, a baptism or funeral, or used to go to Sunday School. In 2009 it was 'reinvented' in the USA as a general evangelistic outreach and turned into an international movement. Since then it has spread worldwide, and with the participation of over 40,000 churches across 120 denominations in 90 countries, it reaches millions of people.

As an annual evangelistic outreach event, it has been held in the CIRMC on the second Sunday of September since 2012. Leading up to that Sunday every active member in our congregations is expected to reach out to someone and invite them to the fellowship of believers, either as first-timers or returnees.

To this end, we ask all of you to prayerfully and actively participate in this ministry.



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

August 15, 2021
Ms. Brenda Dawkins

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