



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

May 27, 2020

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 21

SEASON OF PENTECOST

Pentecost 2020

By Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield (RDGS-CIRMC)

Please read Acts 2:1- 14

Today we join the Church universal in the celebration of Pentecost, one of the high festivals of the Church. It marks the birth of the Church which took place in the midst of the Pax Roma and after the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.

After Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives, the Apostles and Disciples returned to the Jerusalem as an uncertain group. They were uncertain about their long term future and they were intimidated by the vicissitudes in the daily activities.

They found comfort in gathering in the Upper Room or Cenacle and to stay together in prayer. This was where Jesus had appeared to them and they were clinging earnestly to this memory.

One hundred and twenty persons were assembled, and whilst there they chose the replacement of Judas. Beyond that, their only plan was to remain in fervent prayer because they did not yet know the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had promised them that the Paraclete would come but they were uncertain about the meaning of this powerful image. For the group of Apostles this word **'uncertain'** lingered on their lips and in their hearts.

Similarly, we too have been using the word **uncertain** very often in our speech these days, **'we are living in an uncertain time'**, **'our economic future is uncertain'**, **'my job is uncertain'**, **'my housing is uncertain'**, **'returning to Church is uncertain'**, **'our political future is uncertain'**.....

We have been in our Upper Rooms for most of Lent, through Good Friday, Easter and now Pentecost. Many thought the Church would perhaps disappear or that we would become delusional. **Not so, as although we are scattered, we are very much gathered, and the work of evangelism continues even more fervently.**

This we do know: **"The Cross is steady while the world is turning."** (Motto of the Carthusian Monks). The times of COVID-19 cannot erase the recognition that the Cross and the

Gospel are timeless and eternal and that nothing can separate the Church from her Lord.

1. PROMISE

The Church Will Always have the Fullness of Truth.

At the Last Supper, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit, to guide the Church into the fullness of truth (John 14:25-26):

"These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you".

What is more, **He promised that this Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, will remain with us forever (John 14:16-17):**

"And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you".

In Hebrews 13:5 the Apostle echoed the words of Jesus,

"I will never leave you nor forsake you..."

Jesus also promised that we will be called to remain the Church forever.

On the surface, this is not just a promise but a prayer. It is also from the Last Supper discourse in John's Gospel, in which Jesus prays for us, post-Apostolic Christians (John 17:18-23):

*"As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth. **I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me".***

And these promises are still ours today and we need not fear.

2. POWER – Dunamis

On the Day of Pentecost, the Apostles received power.

Observe here, the Holy Spirit descended and filled the hearts of the Disciples sitting in fear and sorrow. Their lives were transformed from fear to boldness, from being hidden to being seen and heard by all who were gathered in Jerusalem. The Spirit rendered their tongues fiery and inflamed them with boldness to preach Christ and Him crucified. The Spirit gave them free and fearless utterance.

Today, the Spirit has been placed in the hearts of women and men, creating new hearts. With new hearts we may rejoice before God, be filled with love for God and remain ready to serve our fellow human beings gladly.

What are the means and the processes the Spirit employs to change and renew hearts?

It is through preaching Jesus Christ as Lord. It is Christ himself who said in John 15: 26,

“When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me”.

As we have often heard, the Gospel is the message God wants to have preached world-wide.

Our preaching and witness in this COVID-19 era must be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. This power enables our **proclamation** to be intentional in a time when persons may believe that the Church is in a wilderness because of being closed. Our pulpit may now be on social media, but it is empowered from on high as we continue to declare the goodness of God in the land of the living.

The power of the Spirit also enables a **prophetic ministry** in a world that at times lack the vision and the wisdom needed to maneuver the lives of women and men towards what is good, honest and pure. As prophets we must foretell and forthtell with confidence.

The Holy Spirit also engenders the persistency needed in preaching and living in a time such as this COVID19 era.

Martin Luther, over five hundred years ago reminded us that ‘It is not enough simply that Christ be preached; the Word must be believed. Therefore, God sends the Holy Spirit to impress the preaching upon the heart - to make it inherent. Unquestionably, Christ accomplished all - took away our sins and overcame every obstacle. We too will overcome the obstacles of COVID19!

3. PEACE

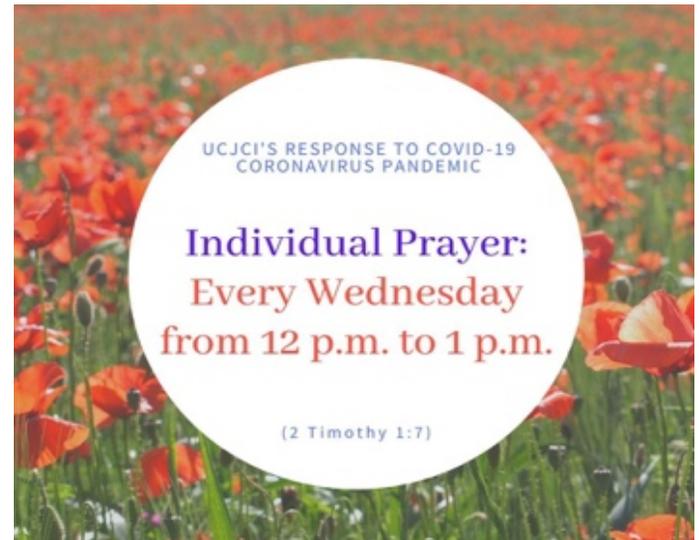
In John 14:27 Jesus declared:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”.

When the Peace of Christ is within us, we are able to **resist sin, speak the truth** in love, **forgive those who offend** and provoke us, and we can **care for and love those who are dispossessed**, especially in these days. The Peace of God also gives us certainty in a time of uncertainty.

In this season of Pentecost let us receive the **Promises** of God, receive **Power** from on high and receive the breathing of Peace.

In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit – Amen.



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

May 31. Rev. Alice Blair

May 31. (Sunday) Pentecost Sunday

Local United Church Worship Services will be distributed via video links.

Speaker: Rev. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield (RDGS-CIRMC)

June 8. (Monday)

Covid-19 Now and Then 6:00-7:00 pm - Online Public Forum of the CIRMC

