



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

September 15, 2022

SEASON OF PENTECOST

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 37



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

Grounded in Prayer

By Mrs. Sonia Wallace

Throughout the month of September, we have been exploring the topic “A church responding with God-given confidence.”

From Old Testament to New, the Bible depicts prayer to our Heavenly Father as our response to a loving God who knows us and watches over us. Heb 4:13 tells us “*Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*” The passage affirms that God is in control. God sees and is aware of everything and everyone. In relationship with us, God directs our steps, supplies our needs, is ever present with us, and works supernaturally on our behalf. This is so whether it is for our deliverance, healing, comfort, protection, provision, or guidance for living lives pleasing to God.

A life grounded in prayer

This reflection is a reminder of our need to live a life grounded in prayer to God at all times and in all circumstances. We will briefly look at Jesus, our example, also Paul’s exhortation to Timothy and draw examples from the experience of the prophet Jeremiah and the Psalmist Asaph.

First, we focus on how Jesus, our Savior, modelled a life grounded in prayer. He often withdrew from the crowds or rose early in the morning to pray to His Father. In Matt. 6: 8-9, He taught His listeners, “*Your father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.*” He taught His disciples to pray what we all know as the Lord’s prayer. Hebrew 5:6-7 referring to Jesus, states, “*when He had offered up prayers and supplications with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, (He) was heard because of His godly fear.*” We recall His tears over Jerusalem and His travail and agony in the Garden of Gethsemane as He faced suffering in our stead.

Live the prayer life of Jesus

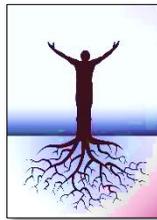
Secondly, Paul encourages the church or followers of Jesus Christ to live the example of Jesus’ prayer life. In 1 Timothy 2:1-7, Paul exhorts Timothy and the church to pray for all people, including kings and all in authority. He emphasizes that the church grounded in prayer acts with supplication by presenting the needs of various people groups, crying out in prayers, and interceding on behalf of others, like boldly accessing God’s presence on behalf of others and their

situations. These prayers are accompanied by thanksgiving for God’s mercies and answers. Paul calls every believer in Jesus Christ to pray for the salvation of all, for it is God’s will that all be saved and know the truth. Praying for rulers and for those in authority should go beyond the boundaries of our own nation, so that the universal church may live in peace and order in every corner of this world. Paul further emphasizes that the church prays to the “one God, and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.”

Intercede for the nation

Thirdly, let us examine the situation faced by Jeremiah the prophet and reflect more on how the church is called to intercede for the nation. Jeremiah faced opposition, yet he obeyed God, declared an unpopular message, and prayed in agony for his people.

In Jeremiah chapter 5, the prophet warns about the consequences of Israel’s turning from truth to false religions by worshipping images made with hands. Jeremiah called for repentance to avoid the approaching judgement. However, the people failed to repent and turn back to the true and only God. The Bible says the people became stubborn, misled by their leaders, and refused to repent.



Jeremiah called out their lies which brought grief to the heart of God. Chapter 5:12, (Message Bible) states, “*They have spread lies about God, they have said there is nothing to God. Nothing bad will happen to us.*”

In vs. 18, the prophet declared submission to the foreign power (Babylon). The verse states, “*Just as you have forsaken Me (the true God) and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve aliens in a land that is not yours.*”

Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, cries out in anguish in chapter 8:18, grieving over the people’s sins and lamenting their fate. Oh, that the church, like Jeremiah, would prophesy, call for repentance and reflect the heart of God in lifting voices in agony for souls of people drifting away from God to destruction. Jeremiah grieved over the destruction of Jerusalem, but even more, a people captured and killed because of their hardness of heart. They did not turn away from false worship to the truth, although they received numerous warnings and opportunities to repent.

He states in Chapter 8:21, “*for the hurt of the daughter of my people, I am hurt.*” Gilead was one of the first Israelite territories to fall to the Babylonians, who carried many as slaves

to serve in Babylon. It was known for its balm (See Gen. 37:25), but there was no balm, no ease in sight, no rescue, no healing from the hurt of the Babylonian invasion and the loss of life and home. Israel would suffer long captivity without deliverance. In weeping before God, Jeremiah cried (13:17), *“my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore and run with tears because the Lord’s flock is carried away captive.”*

Pray like the Psalmist

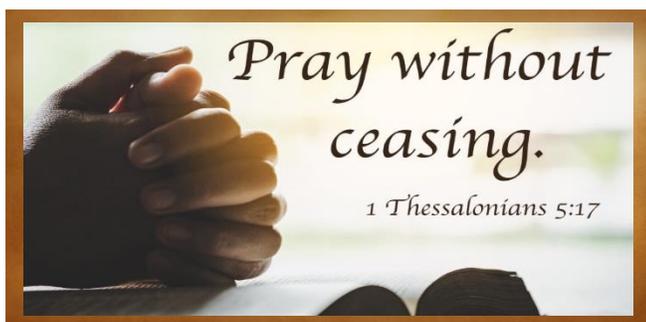
Fourthly, Asaph, the Psalmist likewise agonized in prayer over the long duration of the Babylonian captivity. In Psalm 79:5, with a prayer of intercession for the invaded city of Jerusalem, Asaph cried on behalf of the suffering *people* *“How long Lord? Will you be angry forever?”* He calls to God not to continue to be angry with God’s people in an appeal for God’s divine mercy. He also cries out for divine forgiveness and deliverance which would result in continual praise from the people.

Will the church of God rise up to respond and speak the unpopular message today as did Jeremiah? In obedience to God, we must agonize in prayer over the prevalent departure from Biblical values outlined in scripture. We must cry out against the pursuit of vain philosophies and call a people that stubbornly defy the word of God by denying the existence of God and setting up their own gods of materialism to turn away from this path.

Like Jeremiah, the church is called to respond by speaking out where they can be heard, calling people to repentance, and praying continually that those who have drifted away from God will return; praying also for leaders to be peacemakers and grieving for those on the path to a lost eternity.

Author Andrew Murray cautions us about our individual prayers in his book ‘Teach me to Pray.’ He states, “As long as we look at prayer chiefly as the means of maintaining our own Christian life, we cannot fully know what it is intended to be.” He writes, “Through intercession, the church finds and exercises its highest power.” Would that the church exercise its “highest power” by multiplying diligently its prayers for nations, leaders, and governments; for children, families, and the institutions in our society; and more importantly for people to know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, are you obeying this call to pray? If you do not know Jesus, let this be the moment you call to Him because He is near. Confess your sins and accept the gift of God’s grace by inviting Jesus Christ to be in charge of your life.



Friends and Family Sunday in Bodden Town

By Anna Kareen Watler

On Sunday, 11th September 2022, Webster Memorial United Church's morning worship service focused on friends and family, celebrating the 176th anniversary of the United Church in Grand Cayman and also the fourteen students in their church family who were either moving to higher learning or returning to school abroad. Each student was presented with a token and special prayer/blessing extended. The service was very well-attended, and an inspiring message was brought by Ms Cathy Myles (Elmslie Memorial Church). Although Ms. Myles addressed the students primarily, her message was a blessing to all in attendance. Light refreshments followed the special occasion.



Rev. Wray thanking Ms. Cathy Myles for her message



Mrs Maxine Bodden Robinson (Sunday School Supt and Elder) presenting small tokens to two of the students.



UPCOMING EVENTS

September 18 (Sunday) 15th Sunday after Pentecost

September 19 (Monday)

Public Holiday – Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II State Funeral

Council Executive Committee mtg – 5:30 pm via zoom

September 24 (Saturday)

Council Meeting – 9:00 am – East End UC



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

September 18, 2022
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