



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

December 07, 2022

SEASON OF ADVENT

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 49

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

Advent 3 – JOY

The Season of Advent reminds us of the importance of spiritual preparedness, of the readying of our hearts and minds for the life-transforming presence of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

On the 1st Sunday in Advent, we lit the candle of Hope in our churches as a reminder that as followers of Jesus Christ, we are the people of hope.

On the 2nd Sunday in Advent, we lit the candle of Peace as a reminder that we are the people of a special kind of peace, one that transcends all understanding.

The 3rd candle today reminds us that we are also the people of joy. Joy is fundamentally different from happiness. Happiness is a temporary feeling dependent on favorable circumstances and events that seldom last and can change quickly.

Joy, on the contrary, is a choice, a decision of our inner being, the recognition and appreciation of God's presence in our lives, the treasuring of our relationship with God. In addition to this, it is also the recognition of God's many favors to us, the celebration of God's goodness and love, forgiveness and mercy, God's gifts, promises, and countless blessings.

In our fallen world, almost everything is about chasing the promise of happiness in some way or another and many lives are ruined directly or indirectly in its relentless pursuit. Let us remember not to fall into the same trap.

Let us also remember those who find it difficult to experience this joy because of their loss, suffering, or circumstances. Ours is the sacred duty not only to have but also to share this joy – and do so in a sensitive and meaningful way.

*“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”
(Philippians 4:4)*



A Life of Significance

Rev. Otto Menko

Please read: Luke 1:26-38

Every one of us plays a unique role in God's universal plan. But what is that role? What is it that only we can do and no one else? In the case of Mary, it is obvious. She was chosen to carry Jesus in her womb, to give birth and nurture Him into adulthood. It is as unique as it can possibly be.

So how about us? What is our unique role in God's plan? Perhaps at some point in our life, we dreamt of becoming a popular evangelist like the late Billy Graham, able to reach out to millions around the world. Or maybe we dreamt about becoming a famous gospel singer who captivates the hearts, brings people to tears and is in constant demand. Or maybe, we dreamt of becoming a renowned theologian, an internationally recognized Church leader, or a successful pastor of a megachurch. Or again, maybe, we don't dream of such things because we 'know' that we are not fit for these roles or because we are fully content and satisfied with what we do where we are. In our simple way, we wish to live a quiet, hidden life of faith in the company of our loved ones and friends, safely tucked away in the Congregation we attend.

We don't know what dream Mary may have had for her life. But one thing is for sure. She never imagined that she would be assigned a unique role in God's plan. She didn't even know until the angel Gabriel visited her that God was 'mindful' of her (Luke 1:48). It was only then that she realized that God paid attention to her and that she was a person of great importance. And it had nothing to do with her achievements, social status or exceptional gifts because none of those applied in her case. Yet, she was "highly favored" (Luke 1:28).

Could this indicate that we might have a unique role in God's plan? That God is mindful of us? The story of Mary precisely suggests that. It is easy to think that we don't really have much to offer. But nothing could be further from the truth. God is mindful of us; we are highly favored, and God has assigned each of us a unique role to fulfill. We may not enter the spotlight, become famous evangelists, highly successful Ministers, or popular Christian YouTube influencers. And yet, God assigned us a role that is just as real and important as the ones played by the greatest servants of the past or present.

Mary's role in God's great plan of Salvation was indeed one of a kind. On the one hand, it was an extraordinary and unrepeatable event. But on the other hand, everyone who has turned to God in faith, confessed their sins and accepted the gift of Salvation has received Jesus Christ in their life. The Apostle Paul commenting on this fact, asks, "Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you?" (2 Corinthians 13:5). Paul also states that Christ dwells in one's heart through faith. (Ephesians 3:16-17)

You see, while Mary carried Jesus in His human form, we carry Christ in a spiritual sense. Every one of us is a Christ-carrier. In our sinful, flawed, ordinary human condition, we are like vessels, or as Paul puts it, 'jars of clay' (2 Corinthians 4:7), destined to receive and carry a priceless treasure that is the life and image of Christ in us. We all are chosen to carry and reveal the life of Jesus Christ to those around us. It is a unique assignment. It is our personalized role in God's plan, and no one else can do it for us.

Mary did not know what the future held for her, yet she accepted God's call to play her role in God's universal plan. It was a plan that reached far beyond her simple, time and space-bound life. God's plan for our life is always part of God's broader plan. When thinking about God's plan for our lives, we assume it is only about us. But that is not so. Our 'yes' or 'no' to God's call, our obedience or disobedience will send a ripple effect across our environment, the present and the future. Whatever we decide will have far-reaching consequences, some for us and some for others.

Let us consider this exceptionally glorious, personal assignment to carry the life of Christ and let us embrace it fully with all its implications. Let us commit ourselves to fulfill this mission in our particular time and environment; in our family, at our Church, at our workplace, and wherever we go. May we say it with Mary, "I am the Lord's servant... May your word to me be fulfilled."

Basketball Social (Evangelistic Ministry)

By Ms. Camile Watt – Youth Minister

On Sunday, November 27, 2022, the Savannah United Church Youth Discipleship Group had a Basketball Social at the North Sound Gardens Community Park.



The initiative derived from a joint effort with the RCIPS Community Policing to assist with the revitalization project for the Community Park. There were lots of prizes and giveaways, along with a fun Bouncing Castle, snow cones, and face painting, all compliments of the Community Policing Department.

We hope that this effort will set the platform to foster stronger relationships with the youth in the North Sound Community through a Basketball Sports Ministry. The Youth Ministry of the Church will continue to partner with Community Policing as we seek to impact our communities and make Disciples for Christ.



Community Policing and Church Elders playing games with the children and family.



Left: Elder Sonia Wallace, Chairperson for the Evangelism Mission Action Team sharing the Gospel through Tract Distribution. Right: Youth Minister, Ms. Camile Watt leading musical games and other entertaining activities for prizes and giveaways.

Girl's Brigade Carol Service

The Cayman Islands Girl's Brigade Christmas Carol Service was held on Sunday, December 4, 2022, at the Savannah United Church, focusing on the theme 'Advent Reveals the Light of the World'.



The George Town, Savannah, Bodden Town, North Side and West Bay Companies presented poems and songs on Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Christ. A time of fellowship and refreshments followed the Service.



Savannah United Church After School Enhancement Programme (SASEP)

By Ms. Camile Watt – Youth Minister

On Monday, December 5, 2022, the children of the Savannah Afterschool Enhancement Programme (SASEP) wowed their parents and family at their Christmas Carol Service through songs, poems, and musical items prepared by the Teachers and Staff of SASEP.



The Lord is coming,
always coming.

When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize Him at any moment of your life.

Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord.

-

Henry Nouwen

3rd Sunday in Advent
December 11, 2022
Jesus, Our Magnificent Hope

Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10
Luke 1:46b-55

Despite the potential of being ostracized, stoned, and disgraced, Mary celebrated the awesomeness of sharing in God's redemptive plan. Could she have been familiar with the prophetic proclamations from Isaiah?

- How can we celebrate Jesus today and be included in the witness of Jesus to a dying and hope-less world?

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 11. (Sunday) 3rd Sunday of Advent (JOY)

Children's Christmas Program -11:00 am John Gray Memorial UC

Children's Christmas Program 5:30 pm South Sound UC

December 18. (Sunday) 4th Sunday of Advent (LOVE)



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

December 11, 2022
Rev. Otto Menko

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