



40th UCJCI SYNOD POPULAR REPORT

Produced By The United Church in Jamaica and The
Cayman Islands



Symbols of Salt and Light



Rt. Rev. L Christopher Mason delivering the sermon of the Opening Service of the 40th Synod.

OPENING SERVICE

The Opening Service of the 40th Synod will be remembered as a call for UCJCI to take a stand. Held at the Ridgemount United Church, the service was underscored by symbols of salt and light. It began in its usual fashion; the procession of Delegates, Clergy, Lay Pastors and Commissioned Worker. In a foreshadow of Mission Day activities, members of the Synod marched up and down the aisles of the sanctuary bearing placards with statements reflecting UCJCI's support for and opposition of issues in both Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. This was also echoed in the sermon delivered by the Moderator of Synod, Rt. Rev. L Christopher Mason.

According to Rev. Mason, "We stand against crime and violence, exclusion, ostracism, human trafficking, and we commit as a church to eradicate these evils from our society. We stand for justice, righteousness, peace, reconciliation, truth, our historic support for education, accountability and responsibility in both Jamaica and the Cayman Islands." The Moderator also emphasized the need for the church to be symbols of salt and light and reminded us that it cannot be business as usual. He underscored the need for change as he called us to be missional.



Immediate Past Moderator Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield Installs Rev. Mason to the office of the Moderator at the opening service of the 40th Synod.

**MODERATOR! MODERATOR!
MODERATOR!**

Rev. L. Christopher Mason arrived at the Ridgemount United Church on Monday April 24 as the Moderator Elect of Synod. He ended his first term with a stirring sermon to the Opening Service of the 40th Synod.

Immediate Past Moderator Rev. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield installed him to the office of Moderator and led the congregation in prayer as Chairs of Councils laid hands on him. He received the symbols of his office; the Moderatorial Chain and the Bible.

His response to the call to the office of Moderator was similar to that of his first response at the 39th Synod and therefore served as a reminder to the members of Synod. He accepted his call with humility and an understanding that there is work to be done in this new synodical period.



Dramatic Presentation from members of WRMC during their context reading



General Secretary Rev. Norbert Stephens reports to the meeting of the 40th Synod

CONTEXT READING

The Second half of Day 1 featured context readings of each region. Each RDGS shared the issues of celebration and concern relative to their context and how the congregations were responding.

The presentation made by the W.R.M.C led by the RDGS, Mrs. Mauleen Henry and Chair of Council Rev. Glenroy Clarke was very impactful. Together with the participation of members of the region they delivered a powerful dramatic presentation which highlighted their challenges. A key thread which ran through each presentation was the evidence of crime and violence and unemployment in each region.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The General Secretary's Report was presented on Day 2 at the Kendal Conference Centre where the business sessions were held. It encompassed the reports of the regions, committees and auxiliaries of UCJCI. Two areas which are worthy of mention are:

1. Growth for 2015 & 2016
2. The Synodical direction for the next four years

The church grew by 3% and 4% in 2015 and 2016 respectively. This is cause for celebration. As we celebrate we must now look to the new Synodical period. The theme for this period is "Renewal and Transformation: Discipleship for Life!" There are 12 subthemes which we will focus on for the next four years. Four of which were highlighted during the Synod; Worship, Fellowship, Stewardship and Mission.



From left: Rev. Astor Carlyle, Rev. Paul Pinto, and Rev. Kevin Calvert leading Bible Study on Day 4 of the Meeting of the 40th Synod.



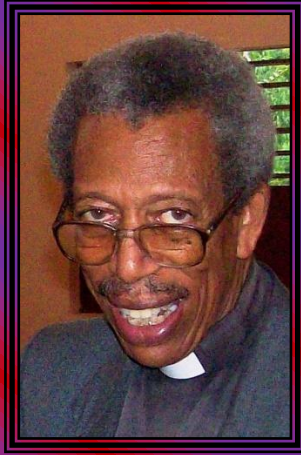
Moderator makes presentation for stewardship

BIBLE STUDY

One of the features of the Synod was the Bible Study presentations led by Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield and Rev. Astor Carlyle. Rev. Dr. Noble-Bloomfield focused on the Child Care and Protection Policy which was recently developed by UCJCI. She underscored this with scriptures about children and how we should take care of them. Rev. Carlyle and his team lead us from garden to wilderness and back to the garden with a dramatic and engaging presentation which reminded delegates of God's constant presence through every stage of life.

AWARDS

During the Service of Celebration of Life and Witness, regional awards were made to a number of persons for outstanding contributions throughout the previous Synodical Period. Members of the Clergy and Lay Pastors also received awards relative to the areas of focus under the Renewal and Transformation agenda. Top awards were given to clergy in each region for embodying the Spirit of Renewal and Transformation in Ministry to their respective congregations.



Rev. H. Earl Thames remembered on Mission Day at the 40th Synod



From left: Past UCYPF President Alex Hayden, UCYPF President Monique Ferguson and Past E&D Coordinator Ladia Young

MISSION DAY

Wednesday April 26, was designated Mission Day.

A special tribute was made by CANACOM Education in Mission Secretary, Mrs. Jennifer Martin on the late Rev. H. Earl Thames in whose memory the day was dedicated. Reflecting on his passion for mission, Mrs. Martin said, "If Rev. Thames lived to 100 years old he would still be on the mission for God."

Each region presented a mission project and the Synod welcomed presentations from three of our ecumenical partners; CWM, CANACOM and JCC. Mission Partners Rev. Richard Lealofi and Nurse Joan Page-Bain also addressed the Synod.

YOUTH SYNOD

For the first time in UCJCI's history the Meeting of the Synod facilitated the Meeting of a Youth Synod. UCYPF representatives from each region gathered and had discussions on the way forward. The Synodical UCYPF President, Ms. Monique Ferguson then addressed the Synod in partnership with members of her executive who delivered a dramatic presentation. Their presentation was greeted with applause from the delegates as they expressed how the leadership of UCJCI could journey with them. When the floor was opened for questions it was suggested that the Youth Synod become a permanent fixture in the Meeting of the Synod.



Gathering of delegates at the Fesco Petrol Station in Mandeville, singing songs of praises and witnessing to members of the public on Mission Day.

RESOLUTIONS AND DIRECTION

The 40th Synod came to a close on Thursday April 27. This day featured the tabling of resolutions which included, exploring the possibility of establishing an educational institution in the name of Rev. H. Earl Thames, establishing a Youth Commission which will focus on our goals for young people 13-25, the establishment of an Adult Commission to examine our ministry among adults. There was also a clear resolve to pursue church planting with the target of at least one church plant per year.

The Closing Service featured a parting challenge from the Moderator and the Commissioning of Ms. Faithlyn Stephens of the Boscobel/Immanuel Charge in the North Eastern Regional Mission Council, N.E.R.M.C as a Mission Partner to the Guyana Congregational Union, GCU. She will work as an administrator in their Union Office.

The 40th Synod behind us, now is time for us to continue and/or expand our engagement in mission.