

*Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council*

1846

170th  
Anniversary

2016

*Theme: Real Roots Disciples*

# Preface

**By: Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield**

**Deputy General Secretary to the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council**

**Thank you for joining in this 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ministry and mission of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands in the Cayman Islands. There is much to give God thanks for and to celebrate as we recall the tremendous sacrifice made by the fathers and mothers of the faith. This year we have celebrated our 170<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary and Back to Church Sunday on the same day, 11 September, 2016 providing a common order of worship across the Council themed “Real Roots of Disciples’.**

**As many of you know each year the Council provides tokens for our annual event; however, this year Council has decided to put together some of the history of the Church and a written recitation of events that have happened through the years. Paper and electronic copies of the publication are being made available to each Charge and Congregation. This compilation is by no means a completed work. Instead it is the beginning of a fuller record of the Church’s time and work in the Cayman Islands, which we plan to have completed for our 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

**Between now and then Congregants, both young and old, will be asked to provide photographs and submit to interviews so that we can get a thorough accounting of our history. The Council prays that anyone who is approached about this project will do so with a cheerful and willing heart and attitude. If we do not record our history what will those who come after us have on which to base their future works in the Church?**

**I’ll not reiterate the history of the Church and how it came to be in the Cayman Islands. That information is included in the pages of this publication. But I do ask that we rekindle the spark of the Rev. James Elmslie and revive our work of the Ministry. We have a generation to be won for Christ and the task ahead is tremendous. We hope that you enjoy this publication and if you have ideas of what should be included in the next publication, please do not hesitate to share your thoughts.**

**We offer special thanks to Tammie Chisolm of the William Pouchie Memorial Congregation and Renita Barnes of the Council Office for their contribution to this production.**

**Thank you and God Bless.**

# Preface

## **A Brief History of the United Church in the Cayman Islands**

**The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands began its ministry in the Cayman Islands in 1846 as the Presbyterian Church, after two other Denominations had been unable to keep going. Our Church has continued its ministry unbroken ever since and in that way was instrumental in the establishment of Christianity in Cayman, and thus the Christian heritage to which the majority of Caymanians still lay claim.**

**In 1830 the Presbyterian Church of Jamaica decided to send Missionaries to preach the Gospel in Africa; they set out for Calabar in Nigeria in 1845 but did not get beyond the Cayman Islands as their ship was wrecked on the reef there. Rev. Hope Waddell was one of the ministers on board the ill-fated ship and when he discovered that there was no organized church on the islands he appealed to the Presbyterian authorities in Jamaica for ministerial help. It took some time for any action to be taken.**

**In 1846, the Synod meeting at Goshen in St. Mary decided that someone should go. The Rev. James Elmslie heard of the plight of the Caymanians and at the age of 50 he was sent to the Cayman Islands to establish the Presbyterian Church there. Rev. Elmslie had been at Green Island Church in Jamaica and when no other volunteer was found to set up the Cayman Church he said, "If no one will go, I will go"!**

**On September 11, 1846, Rev. James Elmslie arrived in the Cayman Islands. Rev. Elmslie travelled all over the Island of Grand Cayman on horseback, by boat and on foot, planting churches. The first groups that Rev. Elmslie established were called Mission Stations. When they grew strong enough and were ready to take on the responsibility, they were 'congregated'. Bodden Town was the first to be congregated, then George Town.**

**In his report of Oct. 1859, James Elmslie wrote: "The Island is divided into six stations, George Town, West Bay, Prospect, Bodden Town, North Side and East End...West Bay [has] upwards of 180 [inhabitants]...There are churches at all the stations, built by the people... There are at all the stations 400 members...six Sabbath Schools superintended by 48 teachers and attended by 500 scholars. There are three day schools attended by upwards of 200 scholars. Thus you see what the Lord has done for this remote island of the sea."**

# John Gray Memorial United Church

**When George Town was congregated West Bay (along with North Side) became a mission station of George Town. It remained this way until May 1908 when West Bay was congregated and celebrated its 100th Anniversary in 2008**

**In March 1994 the Church was dedicated in honour of a much beloved former Minister, the Rev. John Gray. The United Church has been an integral part of the West Bay community for 170 years.**

**In February 2008 a series of services, based around the theme Synodical theme: Holy Spirit, Renew and Transform your Church, JGMC celebrated “A Century of Christian Service”, which recognized the establishment of the Congregation in 1908. The minister in 2008 was Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield. The Guest Speaker for the celebrations was the Rev. Sylvan Hinds of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. The celebration began with an open-air praise and worship service at the four-way stop in West Bay and an evangelistic service.**

**In January 2010 the West Bay Charge of The United Church in Jamaica and The Cayman Islands, John Gray Memorial Church, welcomed the Reverend Tara Tyme as its new minister. She took up the vacancy left by the Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield, who returned to Jamaica along with her family including husband and local educator Denver Bloomfield in August 2009 after serving the John Gray Memorial Congregation and the West Bay community for over seven years. Rev. Tyme took up the Charge on 1 January and was formally inducted by the Cayman Council at a service held at John Gray Memorial Church on Sunday evening, 24 January.**

**Rev. Tyme, a young dynamic minister, hails from Jamaica. She served in Jamaica until December 2009, at the Mount Olivet Charge, which comprises of three congregations. Rev. Tara Tyme Campbell demitted office in August 2015 and accepted a Call to serve as the Minister for the St. Paul’s (Montego Bay) United Church Rev. Donovan Myers has accepted a call to be the Minister of the John Gray Memorial Church and formally began his ministry there on 1 September, 2016. John Gray Memorial Church has been shining its light in this district for 170 years. Through its many programmes it has shown how we ought to live.**

# John Gray Memorial United Church

Our programmes are always open and seek to embrace as many in our community as possible.

- ***Children's Church/Sunday School:*** The Sunday School started from Rev. Emslie's time. We have been blessed with many, many people over the years who have been diligent in sharing the message of God through the Sunday School.
- ***After School Programme:*** JGMC has one of the longest running After School Programmes on island. We cater now for fifty (50) children drawn from the Sir. John A Cumber Primary and other schools in the district of West Bay.
- ***The Women's Fellowship:*** Sometimes referred to as the backbone of the church, started in 1950, these ladies minister in many ways inside and outside of the church, to carry out their motto: "By Love Serve".
- ***The Men's Fellowship:*** Although not as active as a few years ago the men of the Church endeavour to assist in whatever way they are called upon to do.
- ***The Youth Group:*** Christian Endeavour in earlier years, then the Youth Group, now joined by His Kids. By whatever name, there have been programmes for young people, to help shape their lives so they will know the fullness of God's will for them.
- ***The Girl's Brigade:*** Formed in 1946 as part of the celebrations to mark the first century of the Presbyterian Church. An interdenominational organization, GB has influenced many girls within the District.
- ***Seniors Programme:*** Another first for JGMC, once a month the seniors of the District are hosted either in the hall or for an outing. In more recent times this group has been successfully partnering with a few other churches in the community to provide social and spiritual interaction which benefits the senior population of West Bay.
- ***Food Pantry:*** Soup kitchen & community Christmas meal. This is an area where we all contribute: we bring groceries each week and they are gratefully received by those who find themselves in need of a helping hand. Delicious, nutritious home-made soup is delivered twice a month to some very appreciative persons. Each Christmas through the kindness of an anonymous donor we are able to deliver over 100 meals to deserving persons.

Our facilities are also used by the Scouts for meetings. Our doors are often opened to other civic groups to meet, as well as our Hall continues to be a Hurricane shelter whenever necessary. We are thankful that for the last 170 years we at John Gray could endeavour to do what Jesus commanded, to feed the hungry, visit the prisoner, clothe the naked, comfort the sorrowing and spread the gospel. We must be cognizant that we are reaping what others have sown and we are grateful to be able to continue faithfully in this work.

# George Town Charge

## Elmslie Memorial United Church

**The Elmslie Church, which has been named after the Rev. James Elmslie, was built on the site that was the former Anglican Church and it was destroyed by a hurricane in 1838.**

**The present building was constructed during the 1920s by Capt. Royal Bodden and has a noteworthy feature. Capt. Royal, being a naval architect designed the roof in the form of a ship's hull turned upside down, which can be seen in its strength and beauty.**

**Rev. Elmslie laboured unflinchingly in his task despite sever opposition both from the people and those in authority. The few with an interest in religion who welcomed him were enough encouragement; eventually even the Chief Magistrate who had so rigorously opposed him was converted and became quite a strong supporter. The climate and breadth of the work took its toll on Rev. Elmslie's health, leading to a stroke. He did not desert his post; however, but was eventually forced to return to Scotland in late 1863 and died in mid-1864. He has been followed by many other dedicated ministers.**

### Over the years

**In April 2005 Elmslie Memorial United Church was the site of a gathering of pastors and lay persons for a symposium organised around the topic of 'post-Ivan spiritual reflections'.**

**Main presenters were Rev. Norbert Stephens, Pastor Alson Ebanks of the Church of God on Walkers Road and Chief Secretary George McCarthy. But the people in the pews did not hesitate to offer their own reflections, questions and problems. Pastor Alson spent some time talking about prayer. He referred to pastors as 'the spiritual watchmen on the wall.' The only way to render spiritual protection is through prayer, he commented. The church needs to free pastors for more prayer and less administration, he suggested.**

**But lay persons need to understand that they have the watchman's role also. How much do Christians pray? He had recently started an initiative called '30 days to a successful prayer life'. The idea is to encourage people to pray 30 minutes a day for 30 days.**

# George Town Charge

## **Elmslie Memorial United Church (contd.)**

**Participants will reflect on their experiences in mid-April, when the 30 days will be over. Rev. Joseph Crawford offered the opening prayer. Pastor Al Ebanks welcomed everyone and Rev. Nicholas Sykes introduced the presenters. Pastor John Macmillan gave the vote of thanks and Mr. Bryan Bothwell offered the closing prayer.**

**In May 2006 Elmslie celebrated the end of the 40 Days of Purpose Campaign with a huge fellowship lunch on Easter Sunday under a large tent close to the church. Some 300 people attended. Men, women and children took part in an Easter Bonnet parade and the children enjoyed an Easter egg hunt. Musical entertainment was provided by church members.**

**Testimonies were given by some as to the effect the course had on them and all agreed that having everyone together at this time made it a very special occasion. In March 2007 an editorial in the Caymanian Compass said “It shouldn’t even be necessary for Minister Arden McLean to suggest the Elmslie Memorial United Church not be sold or destroyed. But with progress comes the threat that the church could be sold for development. Doing so would be a sin.**

**Elmslie is part of our history, our heritage and who we, as Caymanians, are. Its future shouldn’t be dictated by greed, either on the part of church members or developers. If members of the congregation feel they’ve outgrown the structure, have a fundraiser, find someone to donate a spot of land and build a new church; but keep Elmslie where it is and hold special services and events there as well continue to use it as a meeting place for various organisations.**

**Captain Rayal is probably turning over in his grave. Elmslie was the first church he built of handmade concrete blocks over a two-year period between 1920 and 1922. The good captain went to Jamaica to learn how to mix concrete properly and came home to take the job as foreman, overseeing the work of talented Caymanian craftsmen. The interior of the church is a testimony to our maritime history. Its ceiling resembles the hull of an upturned ship and is made from timber, mostly salvaged from a shipwreck.**

# George Town Charge

## Elmslie Memorial United Church (contd.)

**Elmslie has and will continue to do just fine at its waterfront site while multi-storey buildings go up around it. If plans are being made to sell Elmslie, they should be nipped in the bud now. Carrying through with such a plan would be doing a disservice to this country and her people.**

**“The next month the newspaper’s editorial writer got her response: Elmslie Memorial United Church on Harbour Drive is not for sale. I’m the chairman of the body that owns the property,” said Administrator John MacMillan this week in no uncertain terms. ‘Elmslie Church, its board and its members have no interest in selling the place. It’s not for sale and we don’t intend to sell it,’ Mr. MacMillan said. He was responding to questions that arose after a National Tourism Management Policy meeting in which the church property was discussed. Minister for Infrastructure Arden McLean raised the topic, saying he wanted historic George Town buildings, including Elmslie Church, never to be removed (*Caymanian Compass*, 29 March).**

**Mr. MacMillan said a rumour of sale may have started because church officers looked at other land for possible use as a school and hall for youth activities. ‘But we have not even considered moving our worship,’ he said. ‘For most of our people, it’s their home church. ‘In many ways we have outgrown the present facilities and can’t expand,’ he said, referring to nearby construction projects. There is less space to park and cruise ship activities can hamper access to the church, he said. The church hall and the sanctuary – the structure in which the congregation worships – are two buildings but one property, he said.**

**The National Trust of the Cayman Islands presented a plaque naming Elmslie as a Building of Historic Interest in 1996. In December 2010 Elmslie was one of the buildings to receive the inaugural Governor’s Awards, representing Cayman’s past. The church, designed by R. Gilles of Scotland, was built by two Caymanian master shipbuilders, Royal B. Bodden and Roland Bodden, for The United Church in Jamaica. New technology for Cayman at the time was introduced with the use of reinforced concrete and concrete block work, which set the stage for concrete and masonry in Cayman.**

# George Town Charge

## Elmslie Memorial United Church (contd.)

**In December 2012 Elmslie celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Over the decades the Elmslie United Memorial church has occupied a special place in the history of the Caymanian people and has been the venue for many national events. It is also the church that any visiting members of the British Royal Family attend. In May 2013 a special worship service in respect of the General Elections was held at Elmslie.**

**The Church's Deputy General Secretary for Cayman, Bryan Bothwell, said, "democratic government is something to celebrate. The Church recognises the tremendous contribution so many people make in this respect, whether those who offer themselves to govern the nation or those who are responsible for the integrity and effectiveness of the many aspects of the elections process, and it wishes to give thanks for them.**

**And in Cayman, where our Constitution proudly recognises the unarguable role of our 'Christian heritage and its enduring influence and contribution in shaping the spiritual, moral and social values that have guided [our] development and brought peace, prosperity and stability to [our] Islands', it is right that we continue to give thanks to God for this blessing."**

**He noted the significance also of the intention declared in the Constitution "to [continue to] be a God-fearing country based on traditional Christian values". He felt this spoke very clearly of the standards required of everyone involved in the General Elections process, candidates, voters, elections officials and staff, the news media and others.**

**"So, in the service we will be lifting all of this up to God and seeking to encourage and help everyone involved to grapple with what the breadth and depth of Christ's love and humility and His precepts of that which is just and right demands of us all," he said. Rev. Dr. Dave Hazle served the Elmslie Congregation from September 2007 to January 2016. The current Interim Minister is the Rev. Dr. Derik Davidson who came to Elmslie on August 18, 2016.**

# George Town Charge

## South Sound United Church

In a move that they feel will help them to become closer and move relevant to their present community, the former George Hicks United Church Congregation was renamed the *South Sound United Church* in a renaming service on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, 2013. The Rev.

George Hicks, a fiery and passionate Presbyterian Minister who served in meagre conditions as a missionary and educator in Cayman from 1936 – 1961, would have been pleased to see this revival of commitment by the Congregation to bring others to a redeemed relationship with Christ, as he had dedicated his whole life to doing.

South Sound was one of the congregations he had served for that extended period, and in presenting its history, Elder Vassell Johnson Jr. noted that when others had at one time wanted to close the mission, Rev. Hicks had prevailed to keep it going. (Rev. Hicks also served as the Government Inspector of Schools for part of his time ministering in Cayman, as well as the first – temporary – Head Master of the Cayman High School, now the Cayman Prep and High School, at its launch in 1949, and continued to teach there for many years as part of his selfless service to God and our Church.) *At the same service, the sanctuary that houses the congregation was named in memory of Rev. Hicks*, so that the dedication of so much of his life to helping the people of Cayman find salvation, in a time when very few people from elsewhere wanted to live in the poor and difficult conditions here, can continue to be honoured, as it definitely deserves to be.

In examining the state of its mission, the Congregational leadership recognised that in the reality of today's Cayman relatively few people (mainly Older Caymanians) were aware of the significance of the name of George Hicks. Therefore, a name that would resonate much more with the current population of the community might help the Church to gain a hearing from its new neighbours and help them to represent the caring love of Christ to more people in need of a relationship with God and the fellowship of other Believers. The change of name was then approved by the Council and the Synod, though the General Secretary was anxious to ensure that the memory of Rev. Hicks' faithful, sacrificial service in Cayman continued to be honoured publicly.

In the renaming ceremony, led by the Moderator, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield, the Congregation pledged to *rededicate themselves to God and to offer to serve the South Sound Community as agents of God's love and bearers of the Gospel of Christ*. The South Sound area has mushroomed in recent years as a prime residential area and there is therefore tremendous potential for the congregation. For inspiration to keep them motivated for the tireless drive that will be required to carry out God's mission, they need look no further than the name of the sanctuary, the Rev. George Hicks, an epitome of faithful devotion to the Gospel and to Christ's commission.

# *Savannah & Robert Young Charge*

## **Robert Young Memorial United Church**

**George Town and Savannah Charges realigned. In what many termed ‘a beautiful service’ the Robert Young Memorial United Church was linked with the Savannah United Church to become the new Savannah / Robert Young Charge of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.**

**This leaves the George Town Charge now with two congregations also, and will therefore allow both Charges, which together cover the single most populated geographical area of Cayman, to better focus their resources through the ministries of each congregation. Further details on the move are contained in the Narrative presented at the Service of Realignment, held at Savannah on Sunday, 23 January, 2011, (reproduced below).**

**Mr. John Macmillan, who has served the Robert Young Congregation and the former George Town Charge as Lay Pastor for many years since qualifying as a Lay Pastor in 1990, was commissioned as Lay Pastor of the new Charge, at the request of both Congregations.**

**Members of all four Congregations participated in leading different aspects of the service, in confirmation of their commitment to continued harmonious partnership in the ministry of Christ and the United Church, regardless of the changed links that now exist in the restructured Charges. Rev. Dr. Dave Hazle, Minister of the George Town Charge served as Liturgist. Rev. Donovan Myers, Minister of the Savannah / Robert Young Charge, was the preacher, whose very challenging sermon was entitled, “Positioning or Posturing?”**

**Rev. Myers did not fail to live up to the provocative promise of its title! His challenges to the congregations involved and to the wider United Church were centred around the Scripture texts taken from Joshua 3: 1- 6 and Acts 20: 7 – 12.**

**Both Ministers were especially thanked by the Regional Deputy General Secretary, Mr. Bryan Bothwell for their thorough work in leading the discernment and subsequent implementation process in the respective Charges. Mr. McFarlane Conolly, Chair of the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council, led the Act of Realignment and the subsequent commissioning of Lay Pastor Macmillan.**

# *Savannah & Robert Young Charge*

## **Robert Young Memorial United Church (contd.)**

**Perhaps the main inhibiting factors in addressing what no doubt appears to everyone to be an obvious candidate for a restructuring, were the strong historical ties between the three congregations.**

**In recent years, therefore, the Charge itself began to explore the matter, as it sought to better understand God's purpose for its ministries. There are obviously other challenges in the Charge as each congregation seeks to better position itself for growth, and physical constraints are very real in each case.**

### ***Narrative for the Act of Realignment***

**For some considerable time now, it has been the aspiration and planned goal of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands to reach the stage where no Charge comprises more than two congregations, so that all of our congregations can have a sufficient level of Ministerial and other resources.**

**This perhaps became more pressing over the last couple of years as the Church has pursued the special process of renewal and transformation, under which each congregation is to become a focal point of growth and of a ministry of healing, hope and spiritual strengthening in its community.**

**And our Ministers have covenanted to lead and be accountable for this process in their congregations. While a number of charges in Jamaica have been challenged in this aspiration and already some have succeeded in, and others made progress toward, achieving the goal of a maximum of two points, in Cayman only the George Town Charge, with three congregations, has been faced with a necessity for action in this respect.**

**We have, though, applied the principle otherwise, with JGMC having decided a few years ago that the population of West Bay, and its ministries there, had grown to the level that it needed its own Minister, which also positioned Savannah to optimise its ministry in the fastest growing area of Cayman. But the circumstances of our George Town Charge did raise a few questions in comparison to our overall situation in the Cayman Council.**

# *Savannah & Robert Young Charge*

## **Robert Young Memorial United Church (contd.)**

**For while the three congregations fitted together nicely, in being all in one District, we saw that by the 1999 Census, if not before, that District had grown to comprise about half of the population of the Island.**

**So, while we had one Minister responsible for a geographical area with half of the Island's population, the rest of the Island was divided amongst 4 other Charges. After prayerfully grappling with the issue for some time, the joint Board reached the decision to become a two-point Charge.**

**The first strategy tried was for the Robert Young and George Hicks Congregations to see if a physical merger would both be feasible and position the membership for the renewal and transformation they were aiming for. After a trial period, the Robert Young Congregation decided that it would prefer to remain as a separate congregation, "in their little church they all love so well".**

**At a Congregational Meeting on the 10th October, 2010, that congregation voted instead to pursue realignment with the Savannah United Church, which was a one-point Charge. The leadership of the Council met with the Congregation, without the Minister present, and was reassured that the Congregation had reached that decision freely and saw that as a positive move for them, as well as for the Church as a whole in Cayman.**

**They felt that in this way they could pursue their objective of ministering both in their immediate community and in particular for those persons who prefer to worship in the intimacy of a smaller congregation.**

**Indeed, we were fortunate to have people in the meeting that night who spoke highly of how warmly they had been welcomed into the fellowship there when they first visited the church, and that had led them to stay. And we give God thanks for all of this.**

# Savannah & Robert Young Charge

## Savannah United Church

**Rev. Elmslie travelled all over the Island of Grand Cayman on horseback, by boat and on foot planting churches, among which was the Church in Savannah. The Sanctuary was originally built on the land that was donated by Mr. Edward Watler in 1876. It was built by Mr. Edward Chisholm.**

**This was taken down in 1925 and another built in the same year by Mr. Willie Jackson. On 11 January, 1970, the last sermon was preached in this Sanctuary. This too was taken down and another built in the same year. On 21 May, 1970, it was dedicated to The Glory of God. The minister during this time was Rev. Coke who returned to serve as the Interim Minister between 2002-2004.**

**During the seventies more land was donated by Messers. Jim Boddan and Rex Creighton. This enabled the erection of the Church Hall during the ministry of the Rev. E.L. King. The Basketball Court was built in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Lanaman Watler. It was dedicated on 18 November, 1994.**

**We first started out under the Boddan Town United Charge, sharing the same minister and organist. In those days there was no electricity, we had to use kerosene lamps. We had a pump organ as the only main musical instrument. Our worship service was kept in the evenings.**

**This continued for a while until the decision was made to put North Side United under Boddan Town and put Savannah under the West Bay Charge. We continued sharing the minister. This time our service was early in the morning and West Bay would be later. This went on until August 1998 when we became our own Charge.**

**Here is a list of Clergy that have served with us:**

**Rev. J.L. Martin, Rev. T.D. Redpath, Rev. William Pouchie, Rev. J.S. Blackman, Rev. John Gray, Rev. Raymond Coke, Rev. Joseph Crawford, Rev. Edmund King, Rev. Talmadge Ebanks, Rev. Colin Cowan, Rev. Raymond Coke – Interim, Rev. Donovan Myers, and Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield – Interim**

# *Bodden Town & North Side Charge*

## **Webster Memorial United Church**

**In the 22 Dec., 1965, edition of the Caymanian Weekly, Arthur Hunter wrote: “This will be my last article before the Christmas anniversary and so I wish to take this opportunity of extending to my readers Seasons Greetings. “The Christmas season is essentially a season of peace and goodwill. It is perhaps fortunate that such a season should follow so closely behind the recent general elections, the campaigns of which generated undue hate and animosity.**

**“This coming Christmas would for us in Bodden Town and throughout the Cayman Islands, be a season of fine meaning if we can allow the forces of hate to be buried with the spades of goodwill. By so doing, we will maintain the ‘Christ’ in Christmas rather than allowing the season to revert back to its pagan concepts for which it was known prior to the birth of Christ.**

**“It was at Bodden Town that the first congregation of the Presbyterian Church was established. It is therefore significant that with the merger of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches of Jamaica and Grand Cayman into the United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman, the first meeting of the Council of the new church should have been held in Bodden Town. This meeting took place Wednesday evening last.”**

**In the 5 Jan, 1966, edition of the Caymanian Weekly, we find: “On New Year’s Day, the annual Garden Party of the United Church at Bodden Town (formerly Presbyterian) took place at the Manse. The attendance was as usual, very large. Many not only from this community, but also from other parts of the island availed themselves of the opportunity of partaking tasty native meals. Entertainment was provided for young and old, one of the main features being the selection of ‘Miss Popularity 1966.’ From a field of five contestants the winner was Miss Aileen Bodden. The runner-up was Miss Janice Watler, ‘Miss Popularity 1965.’**

**“The day’s festivities terminated at the Town Hall with the presentation of the comedy ‘Aaron Slick from Pumpkin Crick,’ directed by Miss Evelyn Wood with a cast selected from Bodden Town’s most noted actors and actresses. The entire cast performed with distinction and kept the packed Town Hall in fits of laughter from start to finish.”**

**Rev. Rohan Forrester was appointed Minister of the Bodden Town – North Side Charge at an Introduction Service that packed the Webster Memorial United Church in Bodden Town, Grand Cayman, on Sunday, 24 October, 2010.**

# Bodden Town & North Side Charge

## **Webster Memorial United Church (contd.)**

**The Chair of Council, Mr. McFarlane Conolly, conducted the Act of Introduction under which Rev. Forrester pledged to faithfully serve Christ and the Church as the Minister, and the Members of the two Congregations pledged their support for the ministry under his leadership. Rev. Tara Tyme of the John Gray Memorial Church preached a very challenging sermon in which she also provided practical advice and encouragement and urged the Congregations to “shake off” the past and look to the future – move forward with a unity of purpose in the service of Christ. Her message was warmly received by the congregation, as was the beautiful music of the evening. Mr. Ralph Beckles offered the welcome to the Forresters from the Charge and assured them – with some humorous asides – that they would indeed be very welcomed and cared for in their new context.**

**Deep appreciation was conveyed to Rev. Dr. Dave Hazle, the Interim Minister, for his dedicated and energetic leadership and service to the Charge over the last year since the Pulpit became vacant. Thanks were also expressed to Rev. Donovan Myers, Lay Pastor Ormond Williams and the various others from within and outside the Charge who had assisted Rev. Dr. Hazle in this regard. The occasion was capped with a great time of fellowship and food in the Hall afterwards, with everyone very appreciative of the efforts of the members of the Bodden Town and North Side Congregations for their generous hospitality.**

**In January 2012 the New Year’s garden party was moved back to the original venue at the church on Manse Road in Bodden Town. Attendees enjoyed traditional music and food in a beautiful seaside setting, accompanied by a cool breeze. A number of mouth-watering local dishes, such as conch, whelk, turtle and beef stew, lobster and fried fish were on sale, as were sides such as rice and beans, potato salad, ‘breadkind’, heavy cakes, cookies and banana cakes.**

**Along with the food and music, people enjoyed reminiscing as Josie Solomon took to the dance floor. Everyone gathered around to give her support and coax others to join on the dance floor. Each year, the congregation adds more to the event. This year, the event featured a modern ‘Glamorous Granny’ show, and the young ladies modelled the latest fashion. Local comedian Quincy Brown also made an appearance. Today, even without the festival, church members still take time to ensure visitors have a good time. Children enjoyed face painting and gift drawing.**

# *Bodden Town & North Side Charge*

## **Webster Memorial United Church (contd.)**

**He was formally introduced and warmly welcomed as the new Minister of the Bodden Town – North Side Charge of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. It was a notable coincidence that for the last five years Rev. Forrester served as the Associate Minister of the Webster Memorial United Church in Kingston, Jamaica. Before that, from 2000 – 2005, he served as Ministry Intern and then Minister of the Carron Hall Charge in Jamaica. The Regional Deputy General Secretary, in presenting the Narrative leading to Rev. Forrester’s appointment, noted in this connection that, “In all his congregations in the past, I see that he was also involved in school chaplaincy, and I hope that he will become involved with the schools in the two Districts as well as our own school.**

**Interestingly, he also provided chaplaincy support for business and governmental organisations and I am sure that experience and expertise would also be useful here. He is well experienced in ministry with Youth as well as with Men and Women Fellowships and in discipling the members of the church generally. His resume` and profile show that he is well equipped to offer these two communities of Bodden Town and North Side as well as the Congregations and the wider Church and country, leadership, ministry and assistance in critical areas. I hope that we will help him to do so fully. I am therefore very much looking forward to his ministry amongst us here in Cayman and in seeing a strengthening of these two congregations in all respects and at all ages, and therefore join with all of you in praying for God’s blessings on Rev. Forrester’s leadership of the Charge.”**

**It was also explained that, “especially after a long period under one Minister (as was the case with Bodden Town), the United Church recommends that its congregations take some time to carefully examine its ministries and missions and its vision for its future service within the communities it serves, with their peculiar circumstances, needs and aspirations, before calling a new Minister. However the Congregations also wished to get on with the needed rebuilding and strengthening of their ministry and when Rev. Forrester recently made himself available for a move within the Church, the Synod saw an opportune fit with this Charge.**

**And in a short time, Rev. Forrester, the Charge and Interim Minister and the Council readily agreed and the arrangements were quickly made under the procedures for the Settlement of a Minister, which is speedier than the Call process. As a result, Rev. Forrester, his wife Raquel, son Russell and baby daughter Reaganne arrived for him to take up the post of Minister of the Bodden Town – North Side Charge from 1st October 2010.”**

# *Bodden Town & North Side Charge*

## **William Pouchie Memorial United Church**

**In the 4 May, 1966 edition of the Caymanian Weekly, North Side correspondent Nettie McCoy wrote: The ground-breaking ceremony for the new United Church took place on April 28th at 4:30 p.m. The service was conducted by the Rev. John Lord, Moderator.**

**The first part of the service was held in the old church building after which the congregation moved to the site where the new church will be erected.**

**Rev. David Laplsey of Webster Memorial Church Kingston, Jamaica preached the sermon. Taking as his text Phil. 3:19(b) 20(a). He preached especially to Church members a very inspiring and challenging message. He reminded us of the pace at which Cayman (like all other places) is moving and stressed the point that we should all take time off, quietly to listen to what God has to say to us.**

**At the close of the service many were heard to remark how impressed they were by the sermon. Rev. John Gray offered prayer and Rev. Raymond Coke read the scripture. Rev. J. Lord gave a brief report. Dr. Roy McTaggart, our good friend, broke the ground where the new church will be erected. Mr. C.A. Hunter gave the closing remarks and vote of thanks. "There was quite a good number of outstanding church members from the various districts in attendance, also Rev. Ruth Bowman, and some of her members from the Pilgrim Holiness Church in this district."**

**From the offerings and donations received a good spirit of love and cooperation was manifested. Total proceeds from offerings and a sale which was held afterward amounted to 103 pounds 5 shillings. The church here would like through this medium to say how very thankful we are to each and every one who helped make this occasion such a great success both spiritually and financially.**

**In the 18 May, 1966 edition of the Caymanian Weekly she wrote: Building of the new United Church commenced on the 16th. Materials have been arriving on the site and everyone is quite pleased that at long last the prospect of a new building is being fulfilled. Mr. James Arch is in charge with Mr. Ned Miller and other local men assisting. Work has been progressing on the road coming into North Side, which is in bad condition and it is hoped that this improvement will continue on through the district as the roads are almost unfit to walk on now, with loose rocks and pot holes in great numbers. As one walks back and forth on this road, one is tempted to agree with our Bodden Town reporter and his comments in the press. So many times North Side seems to be not only the last but the least as well.**

# *Bodden Town & North Side Charge*

## **William Pouchie Memorial United Church (contd.)**

*February 2003*

**In the Caymanian Compass weekender Carol Winker wrote: History, culture and religion were celebrated on Sunday, 2 February, 2003, when the pulpit of the United Church in North Side was re-dedicated.**

**The Rev. Otto Menko, minister for the William Pouchie Memorial United Church, pointed out in his prayers that a church pulpit “invites everyone to focus, not on the speaker, but on the Word of God”. Some of the history came from Mr. Ezzard Miller, great-grandson of the man who built the pulpit for the North Side congregation in 1903.**

**Mr. John “Jackie” Miller was a carpenter, builder and lay preacher, he related. There was no electricity in those days so the senior Mr. Miller used a lathe powered by pedalling a bicycle. The pulpit was installed in the original church building further east on the main North Side Road. That building was condemned after a fire in the mid-1960s. Mr. Ezzard recalled how he and his brother Jerris used a carjack to try to move the pulpit, but it was built so solid the jack could not lift it. Eventually it was moved to the site of the present church.**

**More detailed background came later from Captain Ned Miller, Miss Jackie’s grandson. The wood of the pulpit is old Cayman mahogany and yellow pine, he confirmed. New spindles were also mahogany, but they were lighter in colour because the wood was fresher. They have darkened with age. Captain Ned, whose father was Nevin Miller, is credited with restoring the pulpit to its present lustrous condition.**

**His work took about two weeks. Mr. Ezzard referred to the pulpit as representing the “dedication and pride our forefathers had in things Caymanian”. That pride was not arrogant, conceited or destructive, he emphasised. It comes from a fear of God that “demands we do our absolute best with our God-given talents”. The builder of the pulpit used his abilities to serve God, his community and his family.**

# *Bodden Town & North Side Charge*

## **William Pouchie Memorial United Church (contd.)**

**Other descendants of Mr. Jackie who took part in the programme included MLA Edna Moyle and Mrs. McCanna Anderson, daughters of Mr. Jackie's son Willbanks; Capt. Ned's daughter, Mary Lou Gallegos; Mr. Jackie's great-great grandchildren Kristy Watler and Ned J. Miller III. Mr. Eddington Powell, bringing greetings on behalf of the United Church Council, said it was appropriate in this year of Quincentennial celebrations to remember the work the Church has done in the building of these Islands.**

*October 2005*

**Miss Clarice Alverda received a great honour at the William Pouchie Memorial United Church Sunday. A special plaque was unveiled as a memorial to her 50 years as a life elder of the church. The plaque is on the wall above the pew where Miss Clarice dutifully sat each Sunday, passing out the Sunday bulletin to arriving church members and guests.**

**'We thought that was a very fitting place,' said Lay Pastor John Fleming. The stone was unveiled by her brother and sisters, Clinton, Cynthia and Nell Whittaker. Miss Clarice passed a year ago. Enclosed in the Sunday bulletin was a tribute to Miss Clarice, which read in part, 'words cannot express the way we miss you. You were a mother and a sister, but God saw your suffering and He did what was best.**

**'You were a brilliant graceful spark from God's eternal light above, sent here to us, as God was sure, we'd shower you with love.' 'In our eyes there lies a vision of the smile that lit your face and in our hearts we know that you have won the final race.' That theme of winning the final race flowed through the sermon from the Rev. Otto Menko, which followed the memorial.**

*January 2009*

**Members of the Girls Brigade from around Grand Cayman travelled to North Side on Monday, where they planted a neem tree in memory of Mrs. Virginia McCoy, who was actively involved in the organisation for over 40 years until her death last September.**

# *Bodden Town & North Side Charge*

## **William Pouchie Memorial United Church (contd.)**

The tree was planted in the yard of the district United Church to which she belonged. Harris McCoy, seen shovelling sand over roots, said he thought his mother would be pleased by the tree, which will grow and be a part of everything that takes place at the church and hall, which is where the Girls Brigade meets. Assisting with water and plant food are Mrs. Effie Johnson and Mrs. Olive Miller.

*November 2012*

More than 130 members, friends and visitors gather at the William Pouchie Memorial United Church in North Side Sunday to celebrate the church's anniversary. But obviously missing from the programme was the year being celebrated. That's because there are several key dates that link the forerunning Presbyterian Church to the Cayman Islands and North Side.

The Rev. Thomas Redpath was one of the original ministers who oversaw the Presbyterian Church, serving from 1896 until 1908, which means North Side congregants were meeting 116 years ago. But the first North Side Presbyterian Church was erected in 1903, setting the anniversary at 109 years. Then again, the first Cayman minister, Rev. William Pouchie of North Side, was appointed to succeed Mr. Redpath in 1909, putting the anniversary date at 103 years. But then again, the first Presbyterian ministers, which included Rev. James Elmslie – for whom the harbour front United Church is named – arrived in 1846, making the church's foundation here 166 years old.

The William Pouchie Memorial United Church is a congregation of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (Presbyterian, Congregational, Disciples of Christ). Services included a history of the church, recounted by North Side MLA and church member Ezzard Miller, special songs, scripture readings, Rev. Rohan Forrester's sermon titled Remember, Rejoice and Rededicate – followed by a re-dedication liturgy from the minister and congregation.

Also participating in the services were Lay Pastor Ormond Williams and Rev. Arthur Henriquez and former ministers Rev. Godfrey Meghoo, and Rev. Otto Menko. Coffee and nibbles followed the service in the Fellowship Hall. The Rev. Rohan Forrester is the current Minister of the William Pouchie Memorial United Church.

# East End & Gun Bay Charge

## East End United Church

In 1830 the Presbyterian Church of Jamaica decided to send Missionaries to preach the Gospel in Africa; they set out for Calabar in Nigeria in 1845 but did not get beyond the Cayman Islands as their ship was wrecked on the reef there. Rev. Hope Waddell was one of the ministers on board the ill-fated ship and when he discovered that there was no organized church on the islands he appealed to the Presbyterian authorities in Jamaica for ministerial help. Rev. William Niven, a Scottish Presbyterian Missionary then serving in Jamaica, also passed through Grand Cayman that year and from then passionately prevailed upon the Church in Scotland and Jamaica to extend its mission to the Cayman Islands.

In 1846, the Synod meeting at Goshen in St. Mary decided that someone should go. The joint objectives were the development of Christianity and education. The Rev. James Elmslie heard of the plight of the Caymanians and at the age of 50 he was sent to the Cayman Islands to establish the Presbyterian Church there. Rev. Elmslie had been at Green Island Church in Jamaica and when no other volunteer was found to set up the Cayman Church he said, "If no one will go, I will go". Rev. Niven literally gave his life in accomplishing the mission he felt so passionately for – he was lost at sea in a hurricane in October 1846 on his way back to Jamaica, after bringing the Rev. Elmslie to Grand Cayman to take charge of the work here.

Rev. Elmslie travelled all over the Island on horseback, by boat and on foot, planting churches, eventually in all the main settlements of Grand Cayman. In 1857 when the Rev William Whitecross arrived in the Cayman Islands he was assigned to the Bodden Town and East End Stations as well as North Side. These stations had been previously served single handily by the Rev. James Elmslie for the previous ten years. East End seems to have conveyed a favourable impression on Rev. Whitecross as he considered that "there, some fruit had been gathered to the Lord's praise".

Ministers who served the East End Congregation also served Gun Bay, Bodden Town and North Side. They include Rev. J.L.Martin, Rev. T.D. Redpath, and Rev. William Pouchie.

Most of the older Members would remember Rev. Ricketts, Rev. Longmore and Rev. Meghoo. More recently the Congregation has been served by Rev. Gary Harriott, Rev. Randolph Turner, Rev. Louis Sully, and Rev. Coke – Interim and now, Rev. Alice Blair the first female Minister to serve the Congregation. The Introduction Service for the Rev. Alice Blair was held on 29 May, 2016, at the East End United Church. The service consisted of praise and worship; the sermon was given by Rev. Dr. Dave Hazle, the RDGS Rev. Yvette Noble Bloomfield and the Chair of Council also participated in the Introduction of Rev. Blair as the Minister of the East End and Gun Bay Charge.

# East End & Gun Bay Charge

## Gun Bay United Church

When the faithful gathered at Gun Bay United Church in June 2007 they celebrated 100 years of a building that had served East End well. Congregants were re-charged with the responsibility to continue community work. ‘This will be something of an impetus for the Congregation in terms of its ongoing ministry to the community,’ said Rev. Randolph Turner. He had been behind the pulpit at Gun Bay since 1999.

‘The community in Cayman is changing and the Church needs to take a proactive approach on how it responds to this,’ he said. ‘It needs to take on some other activities.’ Mr. Turner did not deliver the sermon Sunday. He’s leaving that to Rev.

Gary Harriott who served Gun Bay from 1991-1997. The celebration marked the physical Gun Bay United Church building in East End. The church was built in 1907 under the leadership of Rev. Thomas Redpath, who served the Bodden Town Charge, under which Gun Bay and East End fall, from 1896-1908. It replaced the first church building, which was destroyed in a storm in 1903.

It is not known what year the first Gun Bay church was built, but it is recorded that it was destroyed by a storm in 1903. Construction of the present Sanctuary was completed in March 1907. Local Elders who assisted the church in the early days included Joseph Watler, grandfather to the late Reverend Crosby Watler, and Joseph Armstrong Watson. In 1930, Dosie Watler was appointed “Keeper of the Lamps,” tasked with ensuring the church’s lamps were lit well in advance of the evening meetings.

The church under its present name was the result of a union in 1992 of the then United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman and the Disciples of Christ in Jamaica. In January 2015 Gun Bay’s 108-year-old church closed suddenly, leaving its Congregation concerned about the future of the building. The membership under the leadership of Rev. Louis Sully started worshipping in the Gun Bay Civic Centre due to the uncertainty of the structure of the Sanctuary. Mr. Bothwell said the Gun Bay Congregational Board made the decision to suspend the use of the sanctuary as a safety precaution because the structure has been deemed unsafe to accommodate any meetings.

In May 2016, the Rev. Alice Blair started ministry under the Settlement Policy of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. She was welcomed in a Service of Introduction on May 29, 2016.

# Women's Fellowship

**In 1920 The Women's Missionary Society was formed in the Cayman Islands consisting of some of the members of the then Presbyterian Church. In 1992, following the Union of the United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman with the Disciples of Christ, the name changed from Women's Guild to Women's Fellowship. Women's Fellowship was the name used in the Disciples of Christ Church for their ministry to women. Each United Church has its own branch of the Women's Fellowship.**

**In Savannah it was formed in 1986. Some of the members are Sunday school teachers, Elders, Ushers and Choir members. They serve whenever the need arises.**

**One of the main missions of this Fellowship is the care of the Children's Home.**

**Every first and third Thursday of each month some of the members go to the Children's Home to do Bible Study and Prayer with the children. At Christmas the fellowship takes the children out for dinner and presents them gifts. The Women's Fellowship, including the others on the Island, has a service of Thanksgiving every year in November. The last Sunday of January is set aside as Women's Fellowship Sunday, which is also observed in Jamaica. In June there is a Women's Fellowship Conference that involves the entire Women's Fellowship in Jamaica and Cayman. There is also a weekend of recreation. Once a year the Women's Fellowship has a Tea Party in Savannah. Gifts are also presented to the elderly at Christmas.**

**Francine Jackson of the John Gray Memorial Branch –served as a former President General of the Women's Fellowship in the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.**

***The motto of the Women's Fellowship is "By Love, Serve".***

**Its mission statement is as follows: "The Women's Fellowship of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands exists to assist the Denomination in its work of witnessing to the love of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, particularly among women through a variety of educational, social and theological programmes."**

## ***Goals:***

- To unite the women of the Church in the dedication of their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ for the service and extension of His kingdom.**
- To seek to widen the fellowship among all women in the congregation and the community.**
- To seek to empower the women for growth and service.**

# Women's Fellowship

**Open to all women who are members of any church. Attendance at monthly meetings is open to women who are not members of any Church, but who have interest in the programs and activities of the Women's Fellowship. Commissioning of new members can take place on Fellowship Sunday in January or at the Annual Cayman Conference of the Women's Fellowship in June.**

## ***June 2016***

**On Saturday, 4 June, 2016, the Women's Fellowship of the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council held a one-day Retreat. It was attended by over sixty ladies from five Branches. The Guest Speaker was Rev. Dr. Dee Dee Haines, former Minister of the John Gray Memorial United Church. The theme for the day – 'Call to Faithfulness'. This was well elucidated by Rev. Dr. Haines. Dr. Michelle Mon Desir presented a workshop on Women's Health Issues and Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield did a presentation on 'Faithfulness in Adversity'.**

**The activities for the day also included a Quiz, which the women thoroughly enjoyed. The RDGS also presented the Child Protection Policy and the Women's Fellowship members gave their support as they recognize how important it is to protect our children.**

## ***WORLD DAY OF PRAYER***

**The Caymanian Compass reported: More than 3 million people worldwide will be praying and worshipping together today during an annual day of prayer, using a form of service prepared by Christian women in Malaysia. The World Day of Prayer movement originated in the US and Canada in the early 1900s. The motto of the World Day of Prayer movement is Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action. Julene Banks, liaison officer for the Cayman Islands World Day of Prayer steering committee, said: "World Day of Prayer has been celebrated in the Cayman Islands since the early 1960s through the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands Women's Fellowship.**

**The first Friday in March every year is always an exciting day as a great wave of prayer sweeps the world, beginning when the first service is held in the Queen Salote Girls School in Tonga and continuing around the world until the final service takes place, some 35 hours later, in neighbouring Western Samoa. By then the day will have been celebrated in over 170 countries.**

# Women's Fellowship

**This year (2012) in the Cayman Islands, we will share ecumenical services at Heroes Square during 1-2pm on Friday, 2nd March, 2012, and at the East End United Church at 7pm as we stand in solidarity with the women in Malaysia and their theme "Let Justice Prevail."**

*February 2012 (contd.)*

**Other members of the ecumenical steering committee for the Cayman Islands World Day of Prayer are Yvonne Miller, former liaison officer; Jennifer King, chair of the UCJCIWF Cayman Islands Council; Reina Jefferson, Wesleyan Holiness Church; Eziethamae Bodden, Boatswain Bay Presbyterian Church; Sandra Langlois, Bethel Ministries; and Yolanda Palmer, Church of God Chapel.**

**Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. Throughout its history, Malaysia has attracted migrants from other parts of Asia and beyond and it is one of the wealthiest and most developed countries in South East Asia. Although Malaysia's multi-ethnicity has added to the rich heritage of its land and people, it has also given rise to many problems.**

**Women have made important contributions to its social and economic development but, nevertheless, they still face discrimination and violence at all levels of society. Even today a girl child is seen as less valuable than a boy. Human trafficking has become a sophisticated and organised operation.**

*February 1966*

## **DO YOU REMEMBER?**

**In the 16 February, 1966, edition of the Caymanian Weekly, Bodden Town correspondent Arthur Hunter wrote:**

**The United Church Woman's Guild branches of the eastern districts will hold their annual Fellowship Day at Bodden Town on Friday next. The social hour will take place at 4 p.m. in the Industrial Centre. A public meeting will be held in the Bodden Town church commencing at 5:30 p.m.**

**The program will be made up of items from all the branches and a guest speaker will discuss the subject 'Jesus our Unity.'**

# Cayman Prep & High School

**In 1946, when the centenary celebrations of the Presbyterian Church of Jamaica were held in Cayman, it was suggested that a secondary school with a preparatory department should be established in these islands. The Synod agreed and the Reverend John Gray arrived here in 1948 to begin work as headmaster. The school opened its doors for the first time. Parents helped the school, as they do today, and they clubbed together to buy a school bus. Before the bus arrived, Benson Ebanks, Rupert Moxam and Craddock Ebanks had been amongst those who assisted by letting children travel in their own trucks.**

**A list of the first Governors of the school includes many of the important figures in the history of these islands in the 20th century and includes names such as Dr. Roy McTaggart, Mr Clifton Hunter M.B.E., and Mr. Ernest Panton I.S.O. M.B.E. with Mr. Desmond Watler C.B.E., Mr. Lee Ebanks M.B.E. and Mr. Clarence Thompson as treasurers. The school thrived and the first successes in the G.C.E. examinations were in 1951. After this time, the Cayman Government began to grant a sum of money each year to the school. In 1960, the Administrator, Major Alan Donald, indicated that the Government wanted a High School.**

**Negotiations began to have the older students in Government High School while the Prep School remained under the Church. The Prep School was fortunate that two Governors of Jamaica and the Dependencies took a keen interest in our situation and were heavily involved in these deliberations. For a time the Prep School was housed in Mrs. Olive Cuthbert's land which was on Jennett Street. This was later sold and the school moved to its present site on Walkers Road. Progress continued until the mid-1970s when school enrolment dropped.**

**This was because of the economic recession affecting these islands and also at the same time the development of the Government schools. As usual, parents volunteered to help by teaching and by helping to run fund-raising activities such as a Fair and the newly introduced 'Cycloprep'. Other attempts to raise money were a school concert, a school play and a school magazine.**

**The school enrolment began to pick up because of the high standard maintained by teachers and students and when the Government introduced Middle School in 1980, the Prep School was able to add two more year groups which would allow students to go straight to the Government High School. In 1997 the school extended into High School once again and students began to take the I.G.C.S.E. examination in 1999 and then in 2003, the school's first A-levels.**

# Cayman Prep & High School

**Space for this expansion of secondary education was made possible because of the new Infant school that was built on Smith Road in 1997. The new wing built for the secondary school is a continuation of the work of the United Church in Jamaica and the support and commitment of parents and teachers over many years.**

**Despite the growth of the school it remains, as the Mission Statement says, firmly rooted in Christian principles. Students are taught to respect the achievements of important figures in the school's history and the three school houses are named after the Ministers who were instrumental in its origin and progress.**

*May 2006*

*Proud of our Children!*

**It was a proud moment indeed for Cayman Prep and High School when its new two-storey building was finally officially opened last week. Teachers, pupils, parents, Board of Governors representatives, Church Council members, benefactors and volunteers attended the opening and dedication ceremony that included a blessing of the new building by the Rev. Dr. Colin Cowan, General Secretary of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, as well as a ribbon-cutting ceremony, performed by Cayman Prep student, Kelly Phillips, who designed the distinctive 'Keep Building Education' logo, adopted by the school.**

**Bud Johnson, Chairman of the Board of Governors at the school and deputy chairman of the special Building Committee that was established to oversee the project, thanked all those involved in the erection of the building, including those responsible for building, contracting, marketing and financing the project.**

**Parents contributed financially via additional payments to their regular school fees, while major corporate sponsors included Ernst & Young and Butterfield Bank. In a welcome move, Simon Whicker, partner with KPMG announced at the event that his firm would also become sponsors of this project that is always in need of extra funding. After the official ceremony, which included entertainment by the National Festival of the Arts gold medal winning Cayman Prep girls' choir, attendees were invited to look around the new building, which houses classrooms and a brand new library downstairs and specialist rooms upstairs, including computer room, maths specialist room and an art/science/design technology room.**

**In an especially poignant move, Mr. Brian Wilson, Vice-Principal of the school unveiled a plaque with the names of all pupils who had contributed to this truly worthy cause.**

# Cayman Prep & High School

*July 2006*

*Do you remember?*

**The Year 11 graduating class of the academic year 2005-2006 graduated from Cayman Prep and High School last Thursday evening. The Year 13 A-level students also received leaving certificates. The graduation featured several keynote speakers, including Reverend Joseph Crawford, minister at Elmslie Memorial United Church, and John Bothwell, research officer at the Department of the Environment.**

**The Year 13 leaving address was presented by Melanie McTaggart, last year's Head Girl of the school and the chairman of the evening's proceedings. Miss McTaggart presented an eloquent speech regarding heroes, and the different definitions the term hero can carry. 'Our world is built on heroes,' she said. She proceeded to thank CPHS's teachers for being the heroes of the student body throughout their time at the school. Mr. Crawford similarly commended the teachers at CPHS. 'Recently there was an international incident, where part of the Israeli army went into the Gaza strip to save a 19-year old soldier,' he said.**

**'This one soldier meant so much to an entire army; an entire country. This reminded me very much of the philosophy of CPHS, who make sure that no child is left behind.' Mr. Bothwell, a former CPHS student, gave a refreshing speech aimed at the young people graduating that evening.**

**'Everything you do now is preparing yourself for the future. Your dad telling you not to slouch but to sit up straight was preparing you for the off-chance of getting asked to speak at Prep graduation in 15 years' time,' he joked. Mr. Bothwell also emphasised that work can be fun, and should be done for enjoyment as much as for financial success.**

**'I worked hard to be a marine biologist so that I went diving last Tuesday and got to call it work,' he said. 'If you find yourself leaning towards jobs that don't traditionally pay that much, don't worry about it. It will mean much more to you to have a job you enjoy.' The graduation also encompassed a prize giving ceremony for Years 7-10. Awards were given for academic achievement and also for responsibility within a tutor group.**

# Cayman Prep & High School

*July 2006 (contd.)*

**For Year 7, Juliana Creary, Julian Solomon and Toby Sutton received the awards for responsibility within a tutor group. Amber Martinez and Bianca Alberga received the same awards in Year 8 while Kirstie McMillan and Breanne Gill won for Year 9. Erin Hislop and Ainjalina Schwartz received the honour for Year 10. The junior choir and chamber choir performed songs such as Linstead Market and the popular Lean on Me accompanied by music teacher Catherine Boyd-Moss.**

**The Outstanding Student in Year 13 award was presented to Jamie McDowall and was collected on his behalf by his younger sister Jessica, who donned a red baseball cap for the occasion. Jamie had already departed for the United States Air Force Academy, and so was unable to attend graduation.**

**The House Trophy, which was awarded to Redpath house, was collected by graduating class members in Redpath to much applause and cheering. The night was one of many memories for graduating students, and Catherine Hinds, Lauren Moore and Godfrey Johnson gave a touching Year 11 Graduates' Address together.**

**For Year 13, the majority are headed off to renowned universities worldwide for further study. Melanie McTaggart will be attending the University of Pennsylvania, Lori-Ann Speirs was accepted into the Savannah College of Art in Georgia, Rory Reid is going to the University of the West Indies in Jamaica and Tonicia Williams was accepted into Queen Mary and Kingston in the UK.**

***Cayman Prep and High School celebrated a milestone on Thursday, 30 April, 2009, with its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.***

**Launching an Open House day, where parents were invited to tour the school and attend various concerts and performances throughout the day, the school day began with an assembly which welcomed back some familiar faces to the school's hall.**

**Michael Bowerman, a former principal of Cayman Prep and High School for 25 years, spoke at the morning assembly of his memories of the school and how he had enjoyed meeting former students who had found success in their adult lives. He also recalled the school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary 10 years ago, which was also his last year as principal.**

**His message to the students was that, at the end of the day, accountability and one's character are of much greater import than being extremely wealthy or the president of a company.**

# Cayman Prep & High School

*February 2011*

*Do you remember?*

Cayman Prep and High School celebrated the dedication and official opening of their new high school building on Tuesday. After an introduction and welcome by Principal Sheila Purdom, Chairman of the Board of Governors Bryan Bothwell spoke about the new building. “We are assured that it is a very functional building, and the science and computer labs and the library are superbly equipped,” said Mr. Bothwell. “For some years now, the board and management have been committed to integrating cutting edge technology throughout the school.”

Cayman Prep and High School Director Michael McGrath thanked sponsors and donators and boasted about the students of his school. “In recent AS examinations, two of our students earned a most unusual award,” he said. “They came top in – I’ll wait for it – not just top in the area or top in the school, not just top in the Caribbean, but they came in top in the world.”

Education Minister Rolston Anglin told the audience that education is more than just about grades. “Indeed, it is preparing our young people to not only take up an important place in society, that is to be responsible adults and parents, but to make this country stronger, the community stronger, to make these islands stronger,” he said.

He added: “Whether or not we could accommodate every student or not is irrelevant as far as I’m concerned. What’s most important is that parents and students have choices about education in this country. And we ensure that the friendly competition continues to drive all of us to higher heights in excellence. That ultimately has got to be what our national education agenda is all about.”

After a dedication and prayer by the Rev. Henley Bernard, the moderator of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, the ribbon-cutting took place. Governor Duncan Taylor helped cut the ribbon and was the first one inside for a tour of the new building.

# Council - Historical Highlights

## **DO YOU REMEMBER?**

*July 2006 – Rev. Dr. P.J Lawrence*

**A man who came to the Cayman Islands five and a half years ago as a missionary is leaving today for his home country of India, returning as a missionary. The Rt. Rev. Dr. PJ Lawrence is returning to the Church of South India as its bishop. Under his charge will be 500 churches and 100 ministers. ‘This is a spiritual faith journey,’ Mr. Lawrence said in an interview in the Caymanian Compass. ‘I believe strongly that God is calling me to this. It is a call of God; I know because of the kind of peace I have. I’m very happy and very excited.’**

**Mr. Lawrence was sent to the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands more than 15 years ago as a missionary from India. He spent his first 10 years ministering in Jamaica. From Jamaica he was sent here. ‘I feel my experience in the Cayman Islands is of a special value to me because I began to appreciate my role here as the trainer of trainers in the fields of caregiving, counselling, psychology and theology,’ he said.**

**Mr. Lawrence has served as Regional Director the Institute for Theological and Leadership Development in both Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. Mr. Lawrence has already begun an ITLD programme in India. Mark Minott has been Acting Dean since December when Mr. Lawrence went on sabbatical and will remain in this role.**

**It was during that time a Church committee comprised of religious leaders and laymen met 9 May to select a new Bishop for the Church of South India, Diocese of Nandyal. As Bishop he wears a gold ring with a purple stone to show that he is wedded to the church. A large cross hangs around his neck as a symbol of his sacrifice in service.**

**A staff is a symbol of caring for his flock and a special Bible will be used to preach the word of God to all people at all times. He will take up his duties in a rural area of India where most of the residents are farmers. The closest airport will be an eight-hour drive away, or 11 hours by train. ‘I’m really going into a remote area,’ he said.**

**‘I do not want to call them poor, but we are developing. ’There are hospitals, schools, care-giving facilities and a school for the blind, but much more needs to be provided, he said. ‘It is an enormous responsibility in terms of giving leadership, primarily spiritual leadership,’ Mr. Lawrence said.**

# *Council - Historical Highlights*

**He's going to an area where Christians make up only two per cent of the population. The majority religion is Hindu followed by Muslim and then others. 'We have a very special task of being witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ, not only through actions, but through living,' he said.**

**Mr. Lawrence sees his return to India as a missionary from the Cayman Islands to the Church of South India, forming a partnership between the two. His term in office at the Church of South India will be six years and then he plans to retire. And it's more than likely he'll return to his home of Grand Cayman. 'I have three children on this side of the world,' he said. Going with him to India will be his wife, Shandha Kumari who is a teacher at John Gray High School. She will be by his side as he leads the church, taking over women's fellowship.**

## ***June 2010 Public Service Campaign Ads***

**The current state of Cayman's crime levels has become too much for one Church to bear and they are taking steps to address it. The Cayman Council of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands has launched a campaign of public service ads in response to the increasing public concern about the unprecedented level of crime, according to an article in the Caymanian Compass. The ads focus on a series of practical reminders that most people will be familiar with but many often lose sight of in the expediency of dealing with every day issues. As the Church's Regional Deputy General Secretary Bryan Bothwell states the plan is to promote positive sentiments in the community.**

**"The ads seek to remind the community that everyone has a part to play if we are going to make Cayman once more into a place where people can feel safe and where families and businesses alike can thrive," Bothwell said. "Much emphasis is given to parenting and nurturing our children in the right way. The adage that it takes a village to raise a child, which has become almost a cliché, has been turned around to make the point that the village will raise the child.**

**The question is, which village will that be? To have your young neighbours raised by the village of law-abiding people all honourable people have to chip in." The ads also look at the need for both employees and employers to each do the right thing so the economy can provide the means for fighting crime through education, policing and other programmes generally regarded as effective and to avoid the kinds of unconscionable economic disparities that previously did not exist in Cayman.**

# *Council - Historical Highlights*

**Mr. Bothwell notes that, “The call in general is for all of us to do right; for some that will mean the emphasis is to turn from doing wrong; for others the emphasis might simply be on doing more to help ensure the necessary corrections and enhancements are made.” Although the reminders are predominantly not overtly Biblical, the Church notes that the redeeming message of Christ’s Gospel will be evident throughout, as will God’s insistence on justice, mercy and humility.**

**It adds that no matter how stridently some residents now oppose the voice of Christianity, it is difficult for any thinking person to dispute the wisdom of major Biblical themes such as that people suffer from the sins of (or put another way the adverse social conditions left behind by) their parents or earlier generations and that at the same time individuals do not have to suffer for the wrong doing of their forefathers. They can rise above that and God is there to help lift them out of such conditions.**

***October 2010***

***Do you remember?***

**The Gospel of John refers to a pool in Jerusalem – the Pool of Bethesda, which translates to ‘house of mercy’ – as a source with healing powers. With this in mind, the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands has opened the Bethesda Counselling Centre in George Town, a non-profit organisation that welcomes all who seek healing through counselling. Regardless of faith, tradition, gender or income, the centre provides affordable, advanced counselling covering a wide range of needs, including pre-marital and marriage counselling, couples,**

**family and child counselling, as well as group and individual counselling. The centre charges a fee set on a sliding scale structure in order to accommodate everyone. The Rev. Joseph Crawford, the Centre’s Director, uses donations to help those in need who can’t afford the service on their own. Mr. Crawford also lends his expertise in social work to counsel those who suffer from depression or grief. “People need encouragement, people need support, especially when the times are financially difficult,” he said.**

**“Depression has a lot to do with one’s thinking, what one tells oneself, so our main focus there is to work on the thinking to encourage people to say positive things to oneself.” The centre encourages people to exercise, not to isolate themselves from others, and to try to get involved with community and religious affairs – to be a part of the wider community.**

**“Psychotherapy has been referred to as the talking cure,” he says.**

# *Council - Historical Highlights*

Noting the recent increase in crime in Cayman, particularly among youth, Rev. Crawford said: “The world has changed; the entire world. We try our best to encourage young people to look on the other side. “There is a saying that a storm doesn’t last forever – it eventually blows itself out,” he says. “And even though right now it’s difficult finding a job, therefore finding money is difficult, too.

It will change, but they’ll have to be prepared to grasp the opportunity when it presents itself.” Rev. Crawford talks about finding solutions to problems that are occurring worldwide, not just in Cayman. “While we have advanced in many areas – economically, technologically – we have sort of fallen back in the areas of honesty, integrity, truthfulness and trust,” he said. “Something has definitely happened to the world, but we can’t bemoan the fact that the world is what it is. We have to find solutions.”

“That’s not to say that there aren’t some wonderful kids out there,” he said. “We should try not to lose sight of that – the wonderful young people who are making great contributions, but we need to have more like that.” He said it’s the responsibility of not just the government, but also the mental health community and the religious community to assist. “Young people must be encouraged,” he said. “They must reach for the stars.”

*Do you remember?*

## *2011 – New General Secretary and Moderator for the United Church*

The Rev. Norbert Stephens has been affirmed as the new General Secretary and the Rev. Oliver Daley has been elected Moderator of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands for the 2011 – 2013 Synod Period, following the completion of voting by all four Regional Mission Councils. The new appointments were confirmed and announced by the Central Mission Council of the Church at its meeting on the 19th and 20th of November.

In an official announcement, the Central Mission Council reported that “On the basis of the vote of affirmation taken in the Regional Mission Councils, the Central Mission Council at its recently held meeting declared Rev. Norbert D. Stephens as the next General Secretary of the UCJCI.

Rev. Stephens received a 4/4 affirmation i.e. all four Regions voted in the affirmative to have him as our next General Secretary.

# *Council - Historical Highlights*

**His appointment takes effect on 1 January, 2011, and a service of induction is being planned. The Rev. Dr. Collin Cowan, in his final report to the CMC, paid tribute to Rev. Stephens who he described as forthright and most attentive to details as well as a man possessed with capacity for calculated judgement. In his response, Rev. Stephens declared that the Renewal and Transformation thrust engaged by the UCJCI is the way forward and committed to ensuring that the whole Church is true to this cause.**

**He thanked the Church for the confidence placed in him and committed to glorify God in his attending to this task. Let us continue to pray for Rev. Stephens, his family and our church.”**

## ***2012 -Elders Training***

### ***Do you remember?***

**During October and November, the annual Elders Training Programme has been taking place at the Council Office in Prospect for those who have responded to, or are considering, a call on their lives to serve as Elders of their congregation. The Synod requires all Elders to have undertaken the course of training as we seek to ensure that the leaders of the congregations, and indeed of the Church at all levels, are Committed, Compassionate, and Competent.**

**The areas covered in the training are mean to give the participants a comprehensive overview of the main components of the duties of the Elder, and insight into these important areas of the Church’s ministry for which the Congregational Board is corporately responsible.**

**The topics that are dealt with cover: The Call to be an Elder; The Role of the Elder in the Renewal of the Church; The Spirituality of the Elder: An Overview of the History, Doctrine and Structure of the United Church (including a look at the Renewal and Transformation Programme): The Congregational Board’s Responsibility for the Oversight of the Administration of the church, including a high level look at applicable risk management considerable etc. in the local congregation; the Marks of a Healthy Church; Evangelism; Preparing and Leading Bible Study; The Elder as Zone Leader; The Elder as Caregiver – Guidance and Counselling; Stewardship; and one elective where the participants have the option of digging deeper into an area of ministry of their choice, with Introduction into Counselling Skills and Administration and Management of the Local Church normally being the most selected of these.**