



UCJCI UPDATE

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

THE UNITED CHURCH
IN JAMAICA AND THE
CAYMAN ISLANDS

Congregational
Disciples of Christ
Presbyterian

12 Carlton Crescent,
Kingston 10

Tel: 926-8734

E-mail: synod@ucjci.com
Website: www.ucjci.com

OUR VISION: "Touching
Lives, Nurturing Disciples,
Seeking Transformation
through Christ"

SYNODICAL THEME:
"Renewal and Transfor-
mation: Discipleship for
Life"

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PRAY FOR:



The biological and
Hope United
Church families of
Ambassador Patri-
cia Durrant, who
has passed on.

Volume 5: Issue 50

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

SRMC KIDSQUAKE 2019

The UCJCI's South-
ern Regional Mis-
sion Council
(SRMC) hosted their ninth
(9th) annual Kidsquake
and Reading Competition
on November 16, 2019 at
Ridgemount United
Church!

The one hundred and forty-
eight (148) Church School
students who registered for
the event participated in
the areas of music, speech,
dance, reading and poster
competitions.

Twelve (12) church schools
across the Region partici-
pated. They included: Blue
Mountain, Sunbury, Min-
eral Heights, Bryce,
Ridgemount, Andrews
Memorial, Happy Grove,
Ebenezer, Salem, Hyde

Park, first time entrant,
Longville Park Mission, and
Lowe River United Church-
es.

*Ridgemount United Church
School were the overall
winners! Bryce United Church
School won second place for the
second consecutive year, and Blue
Mountain United Church School
won third place!*

Sunbury United Church
School won the Reading Com-
petition for the first time; and
Longville Park Mission re-
ceived gold in the small group
dance and solo music competi-
tions for the 8-12 years age
category, and bronze in the 3-
7 years age category for solo
music.

The children gave their best
performances, with one of the

judges commenting, "There
is hope for this Church". He
recalled not seeing any of
the children using their
phones during the competi-
tion, but busily participat-
ing in the activities.

Many individuals and or-
ganizations offered contri-
butions for the staging of
the event, and the organiz-
ers wish to say, "Thank
You".

Plans are already afoot for
many activities and surpris-
es at the 2020 staging of the
SRMC Kidsquake, and we
greatly look forward to
reaping the fruits of this
year's event and many more
in the future. *May God con-
tinue to bless our children and
those who teach and nurture
them!!*



Mrs. Rose Wedderburn, RDGS, SRMC, and Blue Mountain Church School students who placed 3rd in the Kidsquake competition.

The Kidsquake winners, Ridgemount United Church School students!

CELEBRATIONS!



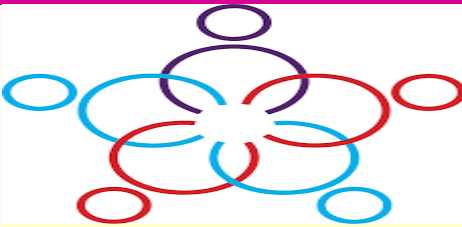
70:

- Rev. Nicole Ashwood**
Mrs. Jeannette Rose-Bryan
December 21
- Rev. Gary Harriott**
December 23
- Mr. David Tucker**
December 25
- Rev. Dwight Kelly**
December 27
- Rev. Nevroy Francis**
December 31



The donations from the UCJCI congregations in Jamaica and Cayman, and the Council for World Mission (CWM) towards the **Hurricane Dorian Relief Fund** have amounted to **US\$43,430!!!** God bless you!!!

UCJCI VALUES



In seeking to live out our calling, we particularly value and are committed to:

FAMILY—Family is a gift from God. As we grow in relationships, we encounter God through each other, and are strengthened to live for God in the world (Psalm 127:3-5, 128:3-4, Ephesians 5:22-33, 6:1-4).

MONA PREPARATORY SCHOOL WINS TVJ'S JUNIOR SCHOOLS' CHALLENGE QUIZ 2019



UCJCI FAMILY AD CORNER

SPORTS DAY **FEBRUARY 8** **2020**
DELIBERATELY NURTURING ANOTHER (D.N.A) FOR CHRIST

NORANDA SPORTS COMPLEX, DISCOVERY BAY, ST. ANN

ADMISSION	EVENTS
\$200 GENERAL	TRACK & FIELD FOOTBALL NETBALL ETC
\$100 CHILDREN UNDER 12	

REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 8 AM
LUNCH WILL BE ON SALE

NEED A RECORDING STUDIO?

The United Church's Recording Studio is available
12 Carlton Crescent, Kingston 10
Mondays to Fridays; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

ON THE AIR

☎ : 876-926-6059 or 876-926-8734

Recording of radio programmes, and voice overs for commercials and other types of broadcasts.
 Cost: \$2,500 per hour for ministries and UCJCI institutions. \$3,000 per hour for non-ministries

Send comments and news about your congregation to: ucjiupdate@gmail.com

Mental Health and the Church: A Call to Action

As several organisations have been putting mental health and wellness on the front burner, and are striving to tackle the stigma and misperceptions of mental illness and wellness, I wish to bring the church into the discussion.

I find that talking about mental health and illness is taboo for many Christians. So, while we will seek out a health practitioner for physical pain, we do not readily do so for emotional pain or distress. We believe that worry, anxiety and sadness reflect signs of spiritual weakness and are akin to sinning. We believe that the power of prayer can change men/women, thus the spiritually strong do not need mental health guidance or counselling about interpersonal relating, coping with stress, or building self-confidence and esteem.

The disinclination to seek counselling may also be related to the many lay persons—parents, pastors, political leaders, teachers—who are placed in a caring position where they are called on to counsel, and as they can do this effectively in their respective domains, seeking mental health counselling professionally may mean acknowledging a deficit in themselves.

The church needs to take on some responsibility of changing the perception of seeking mental health counselling and talking about mental illness and mental health needs. Our pastors have an available platform with an eager listenership, which they have used to try to influence change of attitude, so why not use that platform to help de-stigmatise myths and fears about mental illness and seeking counselling?

Let me share three cases that demonstrate how our beliefs and decision-making are heavily infused with teachings/doctrine from the church:

Case vignette 1: A teenager has become withdrawn, getting into conflicts with his parents and threatening suicide. The school counsellor suggests to the family that he needs to be taken to a mental health practitioner, as this sudden change in behaviour may be a sign of trauma. The family decides against it; they believe that what he needs most is prayer to be delivered from a troubling spirit.

Case vignette 2: A mother's 8 year old is admitted to the hospital and diagnosed with a form of cancer. The distressed mother delays the onset of treatment as initially she does not believe the diagnosis, saying that children do not get cancer so there must be another explanation, and takes her daughter out of hospital to see her pastor for healing.

Case vignette 3: A wife reported that the pastor of her church had a meeting with her and her husband for counselling. The

wife, who is active in the choir, described being uncomfortable in the session, and mumbled to her pastor about the humiliation and mistreatment by her husband, who is a deacon of the church. The minister reassured the couple saying, *“your marital difficulties can be worked out, as you are both faithful leaders in the church, and no issue is so great that prayer cannot resolve.”*

As a Christian and mental health practitioner, I believe that prayer alone will not bring about change in behaviour or poor health (*“Faith without action is dead”*). I have seen Christians struggle with ‘demons’ of addiction to worrying, perfectionism, harmful criticism, impulsive behaviour, pornography, drinking, to name a few. Their spirituality is not in question, however, they continue to repeat poor mental health practices, as they have not been taught skills on how to act differently or to break a destructive habit. I have also encountered those who struggle for prolonged periods with depressed mood related to loss, rather than seek out trained specialists who can assist them with their grief journey through counselling.

“Faith without deeds is dead.” (James 2:26)

I have heard Christians proudly create a divide between mental health and spiritual health, as if both are in competition... *“Went to a counsellor who couldn't help me as only God could help me”*. To me it is unhelpful to compare the Wonderful Counsellor with an earthly counsellor. Rather, let the synergy work between the two. After leading persons to God, they may need help in making changes to their behaviour. Acquiring good mental health skills can be used to change behaviours on the outside, while change is cemented on the inside from looking to God. We become better Christians in our words and deeds when we use good mental health practices of, for example, unlearning negative messages from childhood that undermine our sense of feeling self-assured.

The church's role in breaking down the stigma of mental health is not about mental illness only, but also about mental wellness. Our understanding of mental wellness would be better advanced without the subtle or overt jokes and negative attributions about mental illness, health and wellness – a position often taken out of fear, ignorance, and socially constructed macho behaviours that place men especially at risk. I pray that the church as a body will embrace the emerging focus on mental health, and join with the different groups and organisations locally and internationally that are taking mental illness out of the closet and acknowledging the importance of mental health to optimal overall well-being.

Contributed by: Dr Audrey M. Pottinger, Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Coordinator of the Church-Site Counselling Initiative

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Leadershift from Goals to Growth

The goals we set and achieve are nice, but they aren't as significant as the growth we experience. Goals help us to *do* better. But growth helps us to *become* better. The growth experience gives greater satisfaction.

In making this personal development *leadershift* from goals to growth, you will make three (3) significant shifts in the way you approach becoming a better leader:

Growth outward to growth inward—To make the shift from goals to growth, you need to find inward motivation. Growth on the inside fuels growth on the outside, not the other way around.

Growth in everything to growth in a few vital things.

Growth with a timeline versus growth without a finish line.

Making the *leadershift* from goal-oriented to growth-oriented isn't complicated, but it isn't easy either. It requires a shift in mind-set. It takes time, but it's well worth it. If you shoot for goals, you'll achieve your goals, but you may not grow. If you shoot for growth, you'll grow and you'll achieve goals. To start making that shift, do these things:

EMBRACE CHANGE. Olan Hendrix said, "*Growth means change*". It's human nature to desire improvement and resist change at the same time. And that's impossible.

If you want to become a better leader, a better team member, a better person, you must shift from a fixed mind-set to a growth mind-set. *Why?*

A fixed mind-set results in an early plateau, achieves less, and hinders people from reaching their full potential; whereas a growth mind-set fuels people to a higher level of achievement.

ADOPT A TEACHABLE SPIRIT.

Growth begins with having a teachable spirit. *What does that entail?* It means having a passion to learn, possessing the intention to learn every day, and reflecting on what you learn, so that you know how to apply it. It's a bit like gardening. A garden doesn't spring to life on its own. It requires planning, hard work, and the right environment. A gardener must do the work: prepare the soil, plant the seeds, water the plants, then feed, mulch, and weed. It's an intentional process, and it must occur every day.

How can you cultivate a growth environment and maintain a teachable spirit?

Make growth your number one priority.

Look for growth possibilities in every situation.

Ask questions that will help you grow.

File what you have learnt.

Pass what you learn on to others.

Find your own ways to remain teachable and facilitate learning. It will open you up to amazing new possibilities.

MAKE YOUR LOVE FOR LEARNING GREATER THAN YOUR FEAR OF FAILURE.

Don't allow failure to be a bully in your life. It will, if you let it. Many people get intimidated by failure every day. Instead, you need to make failure your friend. Adopt the

mind-set that failure isn't failure if you learn something from it. Don't be afraid of failing as long as you're stretching and growing.

DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER GROWING PEOPLE.

It's much easier to become a growing person if you're in a positive growth environment. Such environments have ten (10) characteristics:

Others are ahead of you.

You are continually challenged.

Your focus is forward.

The atmosphere is affirming.

You are often out of your comfort zone.

You wake up excited.

Failure is not your enemy.

Others are growing.

People desire change.

Growth is modelled and expected.

Much of your personal growth will come as a direct result of having the opportunity to spend time with growing people.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF. What you think about yourself determines the investment you will make in yourself. Benjamin Franklin said, "*Empty the coins of your purse into your mind and your mind will fill your purse with coins.*" Be willing to invest in yourself.

Source: "Leadershift" by John C. Maxwell

