



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

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

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

IN THIS ISSUE

- Thanksgiving Service for Rev. A. Smith 1
- Reaping What We Sow (Part 2) 2
- Standing Committees & Commissions 2
- Leadership Corner 3
- Family Ad Corner & COVID-19 Feature 4

PRAY FOR:



*The family of the **Hon. Rev. Ashley Smith, OJ, CD, JP**, who has passed on.

***Revs. Harry Boddan and Lloyd Reid, Pastor Joel Cameron, Ms. Ronique Hewitt** (daughter of **Rev. Ranford Hewitt**), **Mona Cowan** (daughter of **Rev. Dr. Collin Cowan**) who are ill.

Volume 6: Issue 29

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

A Righteous "Root" is Celebrated!

A righteous "root" states, "though dead, still and a passionate speaks". "plant" from God's vineyard, the life and ministry of the Honourable Rev. Ashley Alexander Smith, OJ, CD, JP was celebrated on July 24, 2020 by the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.

In the Synodical Salute, **Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary, UCJCI**, shared that Rev. Ashley Smith commemorated his 65th anniversary of ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments this year. He saluted Rev. Smith as "pastor, social activist, ecumenist, denominational loyalist and scholar, who, as the writer of the book of Hebrews

Sharing the Prologue, **Rev. Raymond Coke, Acting Minister of Hope United Church** expressed, "The plant has been uprooted; the physical tree has been removed from its earthly environment: yet today we gather to remember his 'flourishing' and to celebrate the 'fruitfulness' of a noble man – a devout husband; a devoted father; a faithful shepherd. We have come to pay tribute to an educator and historian, a preacher and a priest; a colleague and a friend, and so much more. Ashley Smith will forever flourish in the collective soil of our memories. He will still bear fruit in the garden of our hearts."

Further, in delivering the

sermon, **Rt. Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans, Moderator, UCJCI**, shared his personal experience with Rev. Smith: "The truth he lived and taught did set me free... (Rev. Ashley Smith taught that) every life mattered to God; even mine. He debunked for me those shackles of mental slavery which predispose so many of us to self-disparagement... He taught us that it was our right and our duty to think for ourselves, to theologize for ourselves, to claim our identity as a person made in the image of God."

Thus was the impact of a beloved, mission-focused servant of God... gone, but by no means forgotten. May his soul rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon him.



Pallbearers carry the coffin.



Rev. Ashley Smith



Rev. Ashley Smith's children pay tribute. From left: Dr. Faith Smith, Miss Grace Smith and Mr. Bertrand Smith

CELEBRATIONS!

70.

Rev. Harry Bodden
August 2

A Righteous “Root” Is Celebrated!

Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary, UCJCI, and Mrs. Rose Wedderburn, RDGS, SRMC, deliver the Synodical Salute. *Seated from left:* Rev. Gary Harriott, Minister of the Bryce Charge of United Churches and Rt. Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans, Moderator, UCJCI.

STANDING COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS OF SYNOD**Reaping What We Sow (Part 2)**

The ministry and mission of the **United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands** is undertaken through the work of **Synodical Committees**. These committees are made up of representatives from each Area Council, as well as individuals with experience and expertise in particular areas. Committees meet to carry out the plans approved by the Synod, and to make reports on the progress of their work.

There are **5 Standing Committees: Constitution and Doctrine, Church and Ministry, Finance, Property, and Strategic Planning for Mission.**

The **Children’s and Youth Commissions** give focused attention to discerning the times and determining the UCJCI’s Children’s and Youth Ministry direction, in response to the need to be contextually-relevant and impactful. They provide direction to the setting of goals in the Church’s ministries to persons between 0 and 12 years (Children’s Ministry), and 13 to 25 (Youth Ministry).

The **Education Commission** is responsible for the management of our schools, and ensuring that the polity and ethos of the UCJCI are reflected in our schools.

A spiritual person reflects **Integrity**. Paul is actually saying, act with integrity as a spiritual person, be true to your identity and to yourself, be responsible and maintain this responsibility by realizing and acting with the knowledge that you are accountable to others as you are accountable to yourself and ultimately to God.

When we glance in the mirror of life, what stares back at us? Are we faithful in our promises and commitments, the vows made at marriage, at our swearing in ceremonies, at our ordination, at our commissioning, at the installation service, at our conversion, at the baptismal services, membership, are we parents or predators, faithful partners and servants, honest Christians, faithful members? *We reap what we sow...*

Fourthly, a spiritual person facilitates **Instruction**. Paul shares in Galatians 6:6 that the one who receives instruction in the Word should share all things with their instructors. This was an appeal to affirm the teaching of the word among the community of faith, by placing a priority on it and equally, by paying for it. Those who are spiritual will ensure that the ways of the spirit are taught to all, as a means of guiding and encouraging deeper faith.

The issues here are not so much paying the instructors, but that of ensuring those in the faith are guided to a deeper walk so that they too could be labelled as those who are spiritual.

What priority do we place on the instruction of the faith through the Word of God? The Psalmist says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path”. We reap what we sow...

I hope that by now you have gotten what Paul meant when he says in verse 7, “you reap what you sow”. It was not so much a general saying about sowing and reaping as it was specific to those who had the identity of being spiritual. If you sow a spiritual seed, you will reap a spiritual harvest. Alternatively, if you sow a fleshly seed (unspiritual) you will reap a flesh-like harvest.

May I challenge you in this COVID-19 situation to sow a spiritual seed?

Sow a seed of **Intervention** – support and admonition; a call to order.

Sow of seed of **Introspection** – humility and sensitivity.

Sow a seed of **Integrity** – faithfulness and commitment, offering credible witness.

Sow a seed of **Instruction** – prioritize the Word; read the Word, teach the Word, live the Word.

- Contributed by: Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary, UCJCI

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

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Be Better Tomorrow Than You Are Today

I've met a lot of people who have destination disease. They think that they have "arrived" by obtaining a specific position or getting to a certain level in an organization. When they get to that desired place, they stop striving to grow or improve. What a waste of potential!

There's certainly nothing wrong with the desire to progress in your career (or calling), but never try to "arrive". Instead, intend your journey to be open-ended. If you keep learning, you will be better tomorrow than you are today, and that can do so many things for you.

The better you are, the greater your value today; and the better you are, the greater your potential for tomorrow.

Benjamin Franklin said, *"By improving yourself, the world is made better. Be not afraid of growing too slowly. Be afraid only of standing still. Forget your mistakes, but remember what they taught you."* So how do you become better tomorrow? By becoming better today. The secret of your success can be found in your daily agenda. Here is what I suggest you do to keep growing:

LEARN YOUR CRAFT TODAY. On a wall in the office of a huge tree farm hangs a sign. It says, *"The best time to plant a tree is twenty-five years ago. The second best time is today."* There is no time like the present to become an expert at your craft. Maybe you wish you

had started earlier. Or maybe you wish you had found a better teacher or mentor years ago. None of that matters. You may not be where you are supposed to be. You may not be what you want to be. You don't have to be what you used to be. And you don't have to ever arrive. You just need to learn to be the best you can be right now. As Napoleon Hill said, *"You can't change where you started, but you can change the direction you are going. It's not what you are going to do, but it's what you are doing now that counts."*

TALK YOUR CRAFT TODAY. Once you reach a degree of proficiency in your craft, then one of the best things you can do for yourself is talk your craft with others on the same and higher levels than you. Guitarists talk about guitars. Parents talk about raising children. Golfers talk about golf. They do so because it is enjoyable, it fuels their passion, it teaches them new skills and insights, and it prepares them to take action.

Talking to peers is wonderful, but if you don't also make an effort to strategically talk your craft with those ahead of you in experience and skill, then you're really missing learning opportunities.

PRACTICE YOUR CRAFT TODAY. The only way to improve is to practice your craft until you know it inside and out. At

first, you do what you know to do. The more you practice your craft, the more you know. But as you do more, you will also discover more about what you ought to do differently. At that point you have a decision to make: *Will you do what you have always done, or will you try to do more of what you think you should do?* The only way you improve is to get out of your comfort zone and try new things.

People often ask me, "How can I grow my business?" or "How can I make my department better?" The answer is for you personally to grow. The only way to grow your organization is to grow the leaders who run it. By making yourself better, you make others better. Jack Welch said, *"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."* And the time to start is today.

Source: *"The 360-Degree Leader"* by John C. Maxwell



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UCJCI FAMILY AD CORNER



UCJCI CAMP MINISTRY presents

Virtual SUMMER LINK-UP for

Children and Junior Campers

SUNDAY
AUGUST 9, 2020

THURSDAY
AUGUST 13, 2020

Time: 3:00pm - 6:00pm

Theme: **CONNECTED**

Activities:

- ✓ Supper Bible Story
- ✓ Face Time
- ✓ Cyber Cafe
- ✓ Tik Tok for Jesus
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Virtual Games
- ✓ Voice Out
- ✓ Cross Talk
- ✓ Beach Day
- ✓ Kids Praise

Designed by: @racardorowe.designs



UCJCI CAMP MINISTRY presents

Virtual SUMMER LINK-UP for

Teens and Youth Campers

SUNDAY
AUGUST 9, 2020

THURSDAY
AUGUST 13, 2020

Time: 10:00am - 1:00pm

Theme: **CONNECTED**

Activities:

- ✓ Praise and Prayer
- ✓ What about the WORD?
- ✓ Breakout Groups
- ✓ 3 day Challenge (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok)
- ✓ Commitment Service
- ✓ Advocacy Raising the Prophetic Voice
- ✓ What's Up Deep Down!

GET CONNECTED AND SUBSCRIBE TO GOD

Designed by: @racardorowe.designs

REGISTER AT: <http://ucjci camp form.manageyourchurch.com/>

When completing the form, please do not place spaces between the digits of your telephone number, or use commas, apostrophes, etc.

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS FEATURE

UCJCI'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Individual Prayer:
Every Wednesday
from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

(2 Timothy 1:7)

UCJCI'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

POINTS FOR PRAYER

- * A stop to the spread of the disease.
- * Healing for those who are infected with the disease.
- * Strength, comfort and peace for the loved ones of persons who have died from the disease.
- * Encouragement for the children who are confused and fearful during this time.
- * That persons will draw closer to God, and families draw closer to each other, during this time.
- * That all persons will take this matter seriously, and responsibly take the necessary precautions.
- * Support for our healthcare systems and workers who are on the frontlines.
- * Safety of all elderly persons, those with comorbidities and our tourism workers.
- * Provision for the needy and those who have lost, or will lose, their jobs.
- * Our local and world economies.