



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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CAN FAITH SURVIVE COVID 19? *Built to Bend—UCJCI Learning Opportunities*

OUR VISION: *“Touching
Lives, Nurturing Disciples,
Seeking Transformation
through Christ”*

SYNODICAL THEME:
**“Renewal and Transfor-
mation: Discipleship for
Life”**

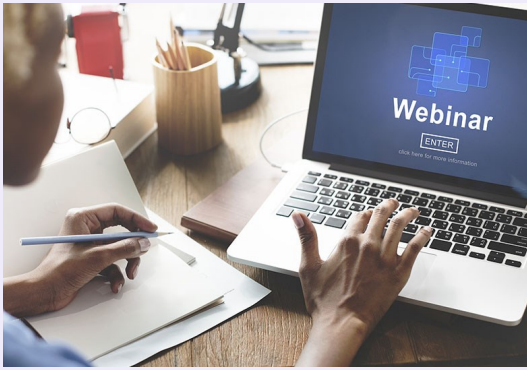
UCJCI VALUES

**Discipleship and
Holiness**

The intentional and
relational develop-
ment of believers to
become mature
followers of Jesus
Christ

(1 Peter 2:2,
Colossians 3:1-17)

Can faith withstand a crisis such as COVID 19? The United Church responded with a resounding, ‘Yes!’ and took steps to provide members with the tools to build resilient faith through a series of Learning Opportunities in October and November 2020.



Titled, ‘Built to Bend’, the learning opportunities were rooted in the conviction that resilient faith is nurtured by prayer, worship and bible study and enables a believer to bend in the winds of challenge, and not break under the pressure. So, the learning opportunities were meant to equip United Church charges to continue to facilitate worship, evangelism and discipleship.

Rev. Kraig Deleon Diedrick, Minister of Torrington United Charge of churches helped webinar participants understand the key tasks involved in **Livestreaming Worship Services** as well as the possible costs of such an endeavour.

The strategy used was to increase the capacity of congregations to use virtual spaces to remain connected to members who may not be able to attend worship services in the church building due to restrictions on gathering or their own health challenges. Four webinars were organized.

Resilient faith is nurtured by prayer, worship and bible study and enables a believer to bend in the winds of challenge, and not break under the pressure.

The webinar—**Navigating the Digital Space**—introduced Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Tik Tok and highlighted their strengths and potential in areas such as evangelism, discipleship and worship. Zoom was also introduced as a means of connecting for meetings, bible study, fellowship and worship.

The final webinar in the series was **Producing Services for Livestreaming** in which Ms. Marlene Thomas, Production team leader at Webster Memorial in Kingston, outlined important elements of preparing services to be livestreamed including preparation of content and participants.

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Developing and Assessing Social Media Content webinar focused on the messages and audiences which could be reached using Facebook, Tik Tok, Instagram and Snapchat. Both webinars were ably led by Mrs. Heneka Watkis Porter—podcaster and author.

If you were not among the 156 attendees, you may access the webinars via the UCJCI YouTube channel and presentations are available through your regional mission council office.



NEWS! NEWS! NEWS!

BREAKING NEW GROUND

The United Church Appoints Performing Arts Minister



Rev. Kevin 'Nana Moses' Calvert

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands has appointed a Minister for the Visual and Performing Arts. He is Rev. Kevin Calvert. This is the first time such an appointment has is being made by UCJCI.

Recognizing the changing nature of the ministry landscape, and the need to strategically employ non-traditional, creative and innovative ways to engage multi-generations in worship; the leadership of UCJCI deployed personnel to lead in utilizing communication technology and art forms in a needs- specific manner to reach the unchurched and churched in both virtual and non-virtual spaces.

It is anticipated that digital film making will also be used to augment worship, evangelism, discipleship, advocacy, youth engagement, and training and development strategies of the UCJCI.

Rev. Calvert, whose stage name is 'Nana Moses', holds a Bachelors degree in Theology, is a writer, director, producer, social advocate and artiste. Among his work in social advocacy are musical play, 'Where is Melissa' and docudrama 'Rescue' both of which focus on Human Trafficking. Kevin has partnered with the Ministry of Justice in Jamaica and Council for World Mission in .building awareness of human trafficking.

The new Minister of the Visual and Performing Arts has been tasked to create content for the church's use on social media platforms, design and produce a multi-generational documentary of the UCJCI's 'Our Church' publication, produce short films and testimonials to support the work of the church and develop and deliver a training module for youth and young adults in the use of the creative arts and media technologies for ministry and mission.

UCJCI has a rich legacy of gifts in the area of the performing arts with many

congregations employing drama, music and dance over the years to minister to and with youth. This includes the cultural group N.O.T.C.H.—Narrators of the Christian Hope which, during the 80s and 90s, operated as a roving theatre group and comprised members from various congregations across the United Church. .

Rev. Calvert will work in partnership with the 30-member Lincoln Kirk Performing Arts Ministry which consists of a choir, praise team, acapella group, instrumental band, drama and dance groups.. They have shared in worship in a number of congregations and recently launched a Media and Communications ministry in light of the restrictions of COVID 19.



A member of the dance team of the Lincoln Kirk Performing Arts Ministry



Rev. Kevin Calvert using his film-making skills



Instrumentalists in the Lincoln Kirk Performing Arts Ministry.

CELEBRATIONS!



*Rev. Carlington Keen
December 15*



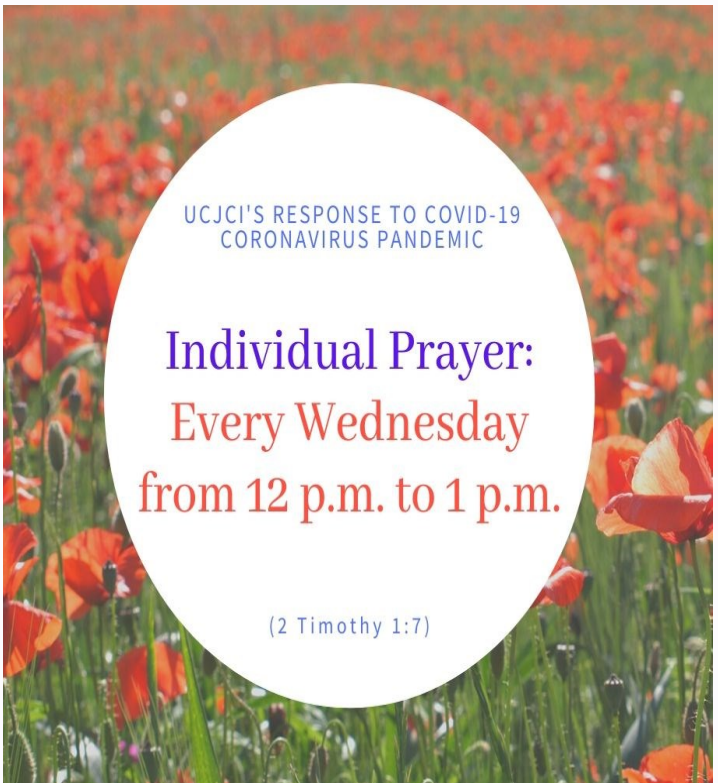
PRAY WITHOUT CEASING:

LET US PRAY ABOUT:

- ◆ Plans for safe experiences in education for children, teachers and administrators in Jamaica and Cayman.
- ◆ Persons for whom Christmas season is difficult due to recent bereavement or memory of loved ones, illness, relationship or financial challenges.
- ◆ Rev. Donovan Myers, Minister of John Gray Memorial (Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council) and his family
- ◆ The family, colleagues and friends of Lesley Hare.
- ◆ Frontline workers and their families in Cayman, Jamaica and across the world .
- ◆ Communities still wresting with the effects of flood rains
- ◆ Rising crime rate in Jamaica during the Christmas season

*IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF
UCJCI UPDATE...*

**IS COVID 19 A
SIGN OF THE
ENDTIMES?**





The Season of Advent reminds us of the importance of spiritual preparedness, of the readying of our hearts and minds for the life transforming presence of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. On the 1st Sunday in Advent we lit the candle of Hope in our churches as a reminder that as followers of Jesus Christ we are the people of hope.

On the 2nd Sunday in Advent we lit the candle of Peace. Jesus' birth was announced by a great company of angels saying "Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:14) But knowing all too well our sinful nature, we may wonder if peace is possible at all. Wars, fights, conflicts, anxieties and stresses of all kinds mar our human existence on every possible level and there seems to be no respite from their destructive force.

Today we are reminded that there is peace that transcends all understanding and that it is available to all of us through faith in Jesus Christ (Philippians 4:7).

It is the kind of peace that the world can not give, a peace that is more than simply the absence of conflict, worry and stress. It is God's peace that brings a sense of contentment and gratitude; a sense of clarity and purpose; a sense of responsibility and mission even in the worst of circumstances.

Let us open ourselves today for Jesus and for the peace He offers to us. Let us do this for our own sake and for those around us who need it so desperately.

Rev. Otto Menko

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even in the worst of circumstances.**

*"And the peace of
God, which trans-
cends all under-
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Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 4:7)*