



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

March 10, 2021

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MEN ON A MISSION

Men's Fellowship of UCJCI

BAPTISMAL
SHOWER?

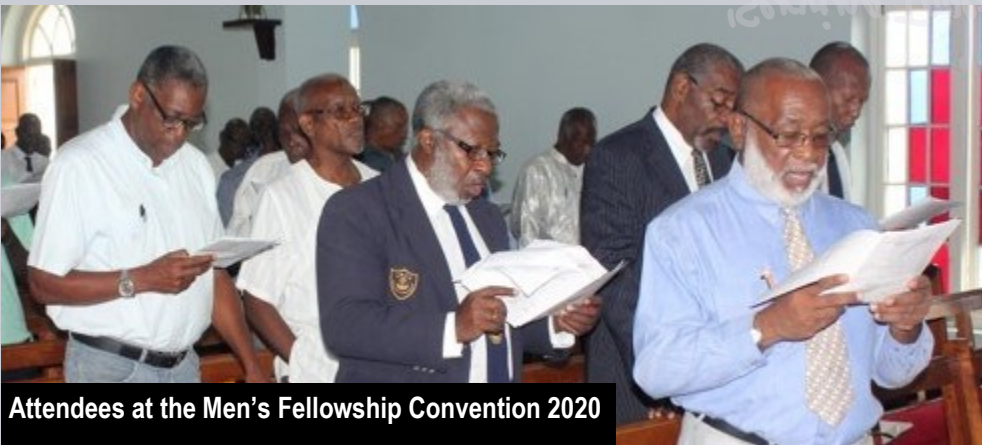
- THE PRACTICE
OF
MEDITATION

VOLUME 7
ISSUE 10

Our Vision: Touching Lives, Nurturing Disciples, Seeking Transformation through Christ

MEN ON A MISSION

'Serving Together in Christ's Name'



Attendees at the Men's Fellowship Convention 2020

Lift high the cross of
Christ!
Tread where His feet
have trod
As brothers of the Son
of Man
Rise up! O Men of
God!"

The United Church Men's Fellowship (UCMF) is an organisation of men—18 years and over—within the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands who aspire to live their motto, 'Serving Together in Christ's Name'.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

To unite the men who attend the Church to which the UCMF is attached in Christian fellowship and mission;

To promote spiritual birth and growth, particularly in relation to men;

To foster human development, particularly through spiritual, social, educational, economic and cultural activities;

To foster, identify, develop and utilize leadership potential and qualities in men and boys;

To assist in the establishment and development of the Boy's Brigade Company in the Church to which the UCMF is attached;

To provide Christian counselling, guidance and support for boys and girls, men and women of the church and community (whether individually or as an organization) in keeping with the paternal role of men;

To promote and engage in activities in response to the needs of the church as they arise from time to time;

To promote and engage in community service.

The faithful members of UCMF have embarked on several activities in fulfilment of its aims and objectives. Here are some of the initiatives that the UCMF undertook at the congregational, regional and national level.

MEN AT WORK

At the national level:

- Staging a National Health Fair at the Manchester High School in Mandeville. in partnership with the United Church Women's Fellowship,
- Building ramps at the Shortwood and Old Road United Churches to facilitate wheelchair access.
- The UCMF held its National Men's Convention in February 2020 with over 125 men in attendance. It was the best attended in over 5 years.

At the regional level:

In 2020, the UCMF of the Western Regional Mission Council, by joint agreement with the Synod, assumed the project of restoring the dwelling of retired Minister, Rev. Reid, in Green Island, Hanover.

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Joint efforts with the Women's Fellowship to stage a national health fair.

PLANS GOING FORWARD

The Men's Fellowship is acutely aware that there are several avenues for it to improve its organizational structure and, ultimately, its reach to all the men of the church. Those activities have already started. The internal communication structure has been improved, and it has already yielded significant benefits. Look out for the Men's Fellowship newsletter, which will be circulated in short order!



Prostrate screening was a feature of the health fair. The Men's



Rev. Anthony Chung (left) Minister of Ridgemount United Church participates in a ministry of healing and anointing at Men's Fellowship Convention 2020. In the background is Mr. Markel Virgo, Communication and Marketing Officer UCMF.



President-General Carlton Rodney (right) being anointed at the Men's Convention 2020.

At the congregational level:

- Webster Memorial United Church successfully staged "Mancave", a men-only gathering to sit, eat food, enjoy libation and talk frankly about issues that relate to them. Guest speaker was Dr. Henley Morgan.
- St. Andrew's United Church launched its Boys' Brigade company in 2020, under the leadership of Brother Eaton Haughton and Rev. Walter Russell.

Markel Virgo
Communication and Marketing Officer, UCMF



Baptismal shower innovation at Lowe River United Church.



SEEING AN OPPORTUNITY IN THE CRISIS AT LOWE RIVER UNITED

The Covid19 Era has, among other things, brought the thought of “*seeing an opportunity in the crisis*” more of a reality than ever before. This phase of life has provided a platform for **critical thinking, innovation, creativity, flexibility** and the possibility of developing **new models** of doing things differently and still achieve the same objectives, if not better. The fact that the whole-human fabric of living has been impacted, those who are to remain relevant and, in the game, must strive to discern new ways compatible with the demands of the season in which we live.

Fortunately, the Church is not left out of the space of finding new ways of keeping the mission wheels turning. The restrictions brought by this pandemic especially on social life have had a significant impact on the way we plan and execute many of our mission and ministry activities which includes, among other things, worship and celebration of our Sacraments.

For the past eleven months we have seen the Church making great adjustments for instance, in the celebration and dispensation of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The question which begs for an answer is, how do we maneuver around other very essential components and elements of our faith without contact or touch as per our tradition? This is the background which gave birth to the baptismal shower derived from the act of sprinkling and yet safe and in keeping with protocols.—*Rev. Lembe Sivile*

BAPTISM AT THE BEACH—SAVANNAH UNITED CHURCH:

Ten (10) persons were baptized by immersion at the Spotts Beach on Sunday, February 28. Pictured here with Rev. Euthman Wray (far right) are the 5 adults and 5 children who made a public declaration to follow the Lord.

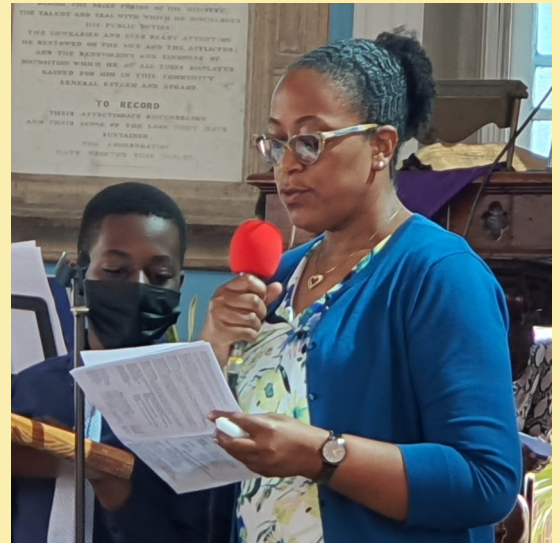




END CHILD SEX ABUSE—SAVANNAH UNITED CHURCH hosted a training session focusing on child sex abuse facilitated by Darkness to Light a non-profit organization committed to empowering adults to prevent child sexual abuse. The training session was facilitated by Ms. Brenda Dawkins on Saturday, February 27. Twenty (20) persons from various United Churches and community organizations took part in this training session which was held at the SUC Hall.



REMEMBERING- Members of the community pay tribute to loved ones at the Annual Memorial Service at ST. ANDREWS' SCOTS KIRK in February.



The Practice of Meditation

Rev. Nicole Ashwood

Outside of Catholic circles, many Christians view Meditation with much suspicion, thinking that it is a New-Age practice. Yet meditating on God's Word is Biblical; and in Psalm 1, it is a guarantee for blessings from God.

Throughout the psalms, one meditates on God's Word,

- as an expression of love;
- at all times;
- when wronged and persecuted by enemies
- for insight;
- to contemplate on God's wonders

Meditation most frequently refers to the following:

- **Contemplation**; utterance:-- babbling (repetition), complaint, meditation, prayer, talk; (**Ps 104:34**)
- **To murmur** (in pleasure or anger); by implication, to ponder:- imagine, meditate, mourn, mutter, roar (**Ps 1:2**);

- **To ponder, converse** (with oneself aloud) or utter:-- commune, complain, declare, meditate, muse, pray, speak, talk (with) (**Ps 119**); and was practiced by Isaac, Joshua, Hannah, David, Anna, Mary and Jesus

During Lent, as we are more intentionally focused on God, and practising new and/or different spiritual disciplines, let us consider practising Biblical Meditation.

BASIC MEDITATION

- ◆ Begin with Prayer.
- ◆ Select your text— read through silently or aloud.
- ◆ Pause – allow the text to speak to you
- ◆ Read again slowly (preferably aloud); taking time to note what speaks to you as you read
- ◆ Ask why the word(s) caught your attention; listening to your response to figure out its importance
- ◆ Pray about it
- ◆ Read one final time
- ◆ Write the scripture out (or in your own words) for consideration throughout the rest of the season.



- ◆ Pray for wisdom to respond appropriately to the text
'LECTIO DIVINA' (DIVINE READING)

Traditionally, the Catholic Lectio Divina has 4 parts: Lectio - Meditatio - Oratio - Contemplatio (Read - Reflect - Respond - Rest). The scripture is read slowly and repeatedly, for instruction, comfort or challenge. To pray Lectio Divina, you will need a Scripture verse/passage; a pen and notebook and a place that is free from distractions. This usually takes about half an hour. The steps are as follows:

Lectio (read)

In this first step, slowly read the selected Scripture passage aloud. Place yourself into the story. Note what you see and feel. What are you experiencing? Pause and reflect on the experience. Record your reflections.

Meditatio (Reflect)

Read the passage aloud again and pray that the Holy Spirit will guide your understanding as you ponder the text. Pay close attention to any word or phrase that strikes you. Underline, circle or highlight it. Consider carefully how God is speaking to your spirit using this word or phrase. Pause, and then reflect and record your thoughts.

Oratio (Respond)

Read the passage aloud once again using the words as your prayer, or a response to God for specific situations in your life. Pause again.

Contemplatio (Rest)

Read the prayer aloud one final time. Listen to the words and rest in the love of God. Contemplative prayer allows us to listen to God.

Remember that meditation is about focusing on God. Allow the Scripture to remain with you and commit the lessons to memory.

Resources

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/bible-verses-about-meditation/>

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/10-things-you-should-know-about-christian-meditation.html>

<https://bustedhalo.com/ministry-resources/lectio-divina-beginners-guide>

<https://www.unleashthegospel.org/2020/07/a-guide-to-the-lectio-divina->

WORSHIP DURING LENT

THEMES FOR HOUSE WORSHIP LITURGY

THEME FOR MARCH:

**Rooting our Spiritual Health in
God brings us Hope**

MARCH 14

**How do we nurture the spiritual health of
those who belong to the Church?**

Numbers 21:4-9 □ Ephesians 2:1-10 □ John
3:14-21 □ Psalm 107:1-3, 17- 22

MARCH 21

**The importance of confession and repentance
on the journey to spiritual health**

Jeremiah 31:31-34 □ Hebrews 5:5-10 □ John
12:20-33 □ Psalm 51:1-13 □ or Psalm 119:9-16

**Liturgies are available from the Minister/Lay
Pastor, Communication Officer of your
congregation and from your Regional
Mission Council Office.**

**The liturgies developed by the House Worship
Team reflect the
Synodical worship themes.**



Spotlight on UCJCI 42nd Synod

Rooted, Resilient, Responding in H.O.P.E.

PRE-SYNOD EVENTS

Pre-Synod Consultations

Pre-Synod consultations are a series of meetings held before Synod to discuss the reports from Committees, Commissions and UCJCI Institutions. This space provides opportunity to review, raise questions and express views and perspectives on the work accomplished by the UCJCI over the last synodical period (2019-2021). The consultations will take place in regions and will be attended by delegates representing congregations of UCJCI and ordained and commissioned ministers. This will also be an opportunity to gather and impart information on the 42nd Synod—business process, events and worship services. Consultations will be held between March 17 and 25.

March 17 – WRMC

March 18 – NERMC

March 20 – CIRMC

March 25 – SRMC



Synodical Children's Rally

Rallies are held in each region in the period leading up to Synod. These gatherings are intended to celebrate UCJCI's ministry with children. It is also an opportune time to help children to understand and interpret the Synod theme as well through various artistic expressions. Rallies will be held on the following dates:

SRMC - March 28, 2021 at 3 p.m. (virtual)

CIRMC - March 28, 2021 at 5 p.m.

WRMC - April 1, 2021 at 9.30 a.m. (virtual)

NERMC - TBD (virtual)





COVID-19

UPDATE

The UCJCI COVID-19 Response Team now meets every month. Consequently, updates will follow the scheduled meetings. The following are decisions and reminders taken by the Team which met on March 2, 2021 in relation to Congregational Life..

Congregational Life

Given the rise in cases in Jamaica, the Government has issued new regulations under The Disaster Management Act, which will affect churches as under:

- ◆ **For the period March 1-22, 2021, only online worship services are permitted.**

A maximum of 10 persons are allowed in the sanctuary to facilitate the execution of the online worship service. We encourage you to use other means, such as recorded worship/sermons/studies using social media or the weekly House Church Liturgy to meet the worship and nurture needs of your congregation(s).

- ◆ **Funeral Services and burials are not permitted** from March 8-22, 2021.
- ◆ **Weddings are permitted with a maximum of 25 persons.**
- ◆ **Public gatherings are restricted to 10 persons.**
- ◆ **Persons 60 years and older are to stay at home.**

We expect you to comply with these regulations as we seek to play our part in seeking to reduce the number of infections on the island. Let us set an example for others to follow.

We encourage you to listen for updates or amendments to these regulations from the legitimate state authorities.

May we together continue to depend on God, *who has not given us a spirit of fear, but of love and of power and of a sound mind* (2 Timothy 1:7).

PRAY PRAY PRAY PRAY

Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.- 1 Chronicles 16:11

LET US BE DILIGENT IN PRAYER FOR

- ◆ The 42nd Synod of the United Church
- ◆ The upcoming general elections in Cayman on April 14.
- ◆ Prayerful discernment, good judgement and decision-making in relation to the COVID-19 vaccine.
- ◆ Increasing crime and instances of civil disobedience in Jamaica
- ◆ Rev. Danny Russell who lost his aunt.
- ◆ Mrs. Jeanette Rose-Bryan and her family at the loss of her only son.
- ◆ Ms. Ceta Rose who recently lost her brother
- ◆ Rev. Christopher Mason and family at the passing of family member Raphael Mason.
- ◆ Healing for Rev. Dr. Elsa Clarke
- ◆ Mrs. Doreen Barnett and family who grapple with bereavement and family health challenges
- ◆ Healing for members of the United Church and the wider community who have contracted COVID 19.
- ◆ Seniors who are not coping well with the challenges of isolation and reduced social engagement.
- ◆ The recovery and healing of Mrs. Ruth Coke



UCJCI responds to the
COVID-19 pandemic as a
community of faith

A Call to Prayer

**Every Wednesday
12 noon—1:00 pm**

**"Do not be anxious about
anything, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with
thanksgiving, present your
requests to God."**

Philippians 4: 7 (NIV)

**UCJCI LAY TRAINING
INSTITUTE
LAY LEADERS
CERTIFICATE COURSE**

**SATURDAY
MARCH 13, 2021**



**THE LEADER
AS
EVANGELIST
DISCIPLE-
MAKER
AND
MENTOR**

9:00 AM - 4:00 P.M. VIA ZOOM

Interested persons may join this session even if not registered for the whole programme. Please contact your Regional Mission Council

LECTURER - REV. SYLVAN HINDS

Upcoming Events




**International
University
of the
Caribbean**

**The International
University
of the Caribbean
invites you to**
*The Installation Ceremony
for
Mrs. Irene Walter O.D.
The Chancellor
&
Prof. Rev. Roderick Hewitt
The President*


**on Thursday March 11, 2021
at 2:00 p.m.**

<http://bit.ly/iucyoutube>


RSVP 876 3601120



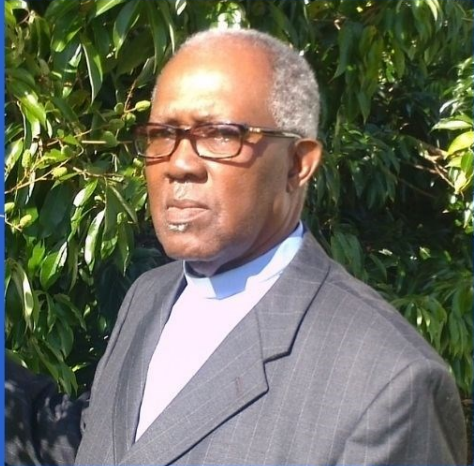
HAPPY BIRTHDAY



March 10
REV. J. OLIVER DALEY



March 11
REV. EGBERT HARVEY



March 16
REV. EDMUND FOLKES



Meadowrest Memorial Gardens is located in Whittaker Mountain off the St. John's Road in St. Catherine. The Gardens has been developed on 55 acres of rolling countryside and magnificent views which serve as a perfect final resting place.

Applications are invited for the post of **ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT**

Core Functions:

The Assistant Superintendent is responsible for planning and supervision of the daily operations, the maintenance of the Gardens and the management of the workforce.

- SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE:**
- * Cemetery Operations
 - * Cost Management
 - * Proficient in use of Computer Applications

- QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:**
- * Bachelor's Degree in Operations Management
 - * 3-5 years' leadership experience

Meadowrest Memorial Gardens is committed to providing equitable opportunities to all qualified persons. Applicants are requested to email their resume with a cover letter identifying strengths relative to the requirements no later than March 19, 2021 to: humanresource@ucmeja.com

UCJCI VALUE S

“In seeking to live out our calling, we particularly value :

The Work and Worth of All People:

Displaying unconditional love to all people, acknowledging all in the ministry of Christ, affirming the priesthood of all believers, embracing the gifts of the Spirit, and enabling each person to participate to the fullest extent possible (Matthew 12:28-31, 1 Peter 2:4-10, Ephesians 4:7-13, 2 Corinthians 1:12-14).

**IN THE COMING
ISSUE...**

**NOW IS THE
TIME TO SERVE!**

THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA

Congregational, Disciples of Christ ,Presbyterian

12 Carlton Crescent, Kingston 10

Tel: 876 926-8734

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

Moderator

Rt. Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans

General Secretary

Rev. Norbert Stephens

Regional Deputy General Secretaries

Cayman Regional Mission Council
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield

Southern Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Rose Wedderburn

North Eastern Regional Mission Council
(Interim)
Rev. Norbert Stephens

Western Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Mauleen Henry

SYNODICAL THEME:

“Renewal and Transformation: Discipleship for Life”