



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

May 12, 2021

CHILD-FRIENDLY CHURCH

WHAT WILL WE DO TOGETHER?

UCJCI Post-Synod
Plans for Action

Greetings from
Guyana

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WOMEN

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VOLUME 7
ISSUE 19

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

UCJCI is a Child-Friendly Church

Spotlight on Church School Ministry

Perhaps the most familiar expression of ministry with children for most persons is Sunday School. During this time the Christian education and nurture of children take place either while the worship service is attended by the adults or in the afternoon on a Sunday. Many Jamaicans and Caymanians were sent to Sunday School even if parents did not go.

This means of engaging children remains at the heart of children's ministry in the United Church. Although the name transitioned to 'Church' School instead of 'Sunday' School the purpose is the same—nurturing the church in the Christian faith, especially the children.

Guided by the principles outlined by the Children's Commission, the Church School ministry undertakes a number of deliverables with scripture as the focal point for all children's ministry activities:

- Develop a UCJCI church school curriculum in two modalities (hard copy and virtual)
- Host a children's conference
- Execute a bible quiz
- Expose children's gifts and talents in the performing and fine arts
- Plan and execute a church school leaders conference
- Train church school leaders in the use of technology and in teaching children effectively
- Provide bi-monthly resources for church school leaders

The following is the text of an interview with Chair of the Children's Commission highlighting Church School ministry.



**Mrs. Cheryl Shaw—Chairperson,
Children's Commission**

Update: What are the ways in which we engage children in the United Church?

Cheryl: We engage children in a number of ways including Vacation Bible School in July each year, Children and Junior Camp Link-up in July and August, through regional ultimate bible quiz challenges, through church school lessons on Sundays and a Child Month special called 'Dynamic Kids in Action' on 3rd and 5th Sundays in May.

Update: What have we done differently given the challenges of COVID 19?

Cheryl: In 2020 due to the COVID-19 challenges, we hosted our first Virtual House Church School Lessons and 'Dynamic Kids in Action' in Child Month—an avenue for children to express themselves, as well as a virtual Vacation Bible School in July. Our summer camp was a Virtual Link Up and we have distributed devotional books as an intervention strategy for children who are unable to view our programmes virtually.

Update: How does the Church School Ministry structure provide help and support for congregations undertaking this ministry?

Cheryl: The Church School Ministry structure at Synodical and Regional levels supports congregations through/with

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programmes that are children friendly at the regional level such as sports day, children's rally and Kidsquake. Support is provided through material resources and training of staff and volunteers. We access resources through organizations such as The Child Evangelism fellowship.

What are the needs of Ministry?

Cheryl responds without hesitation:

Children—without children there is no Church School. Since the pandemic a number of our children have not been to Church School because of the government and restrictions. Many live in rural areas where access to the internet is limited or non-existent; so we need to reach our children wherever they are NOW!

Volunteers—we need more persons volunteering to become Church School Superintendent (we need those organizational skills), teachers and regional and synodical representatives.

Training—we need to equip our children's ministry leaders with technological skills.

Devices—teachers and church school students need devices.

Access to the internet—internet connectivity is needed to access online resources.

Funding to:

- expand and execute programme offerings,
- equip leaders with the knowledge and skills to effectively employ the UCJCI Child Care and Protection policy in local congregations,
- train new staff and volunteers in first aid, the use of fire extinguishers and universal precautions;
- purchase first aid kits, fire extinguishers and smoke detectors
- purchase video-editing software to enhance the virtual experience



*Encourage your
child to tune in
for
Games, Bible
lessons and
talent showcase!!*

EARTH DAY RECOGNISED BY SAVANNAH AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMME



On Thursday April 22, 2021, the children from the Savannah After - School Enhancement Programme (SASEP) were engaged in painting tires for the Green Project, an initiative by Mr. Charles Watler in loving memory of his sister, the late Mrs. Evangeline Moler nee Watler.

The project concluded on Wednesday April 28, 2021 with the planting of peppers, pak choy and callaloo plants by the children. The garden will be a special care project for the children as each child will water their personalized tire daily.

ECUMENICAL YOUTH LINK UP

On Friday, April 30, 2021, the Savannah United Church in collaboration with the Youth Leaders National Executive hosted an open-air fellowship event called 'Youth Link-Up'. The event was attended by the local youth, accompanied by members of the Bodden Town, East End-Gun Bay, and Elmslie youth groups as well as youths from Triple C High School Yes Club, the Child Evangelism Fellowship, the Church of God Chapel Youth Group, and the Girls' Brigade. The evening opened with praise and worship led by Savannah and Generation 412 to set the atmosphere, singing upbeat worship songs and setting expectations. This was followed by a programme rich in spiritual content which included testimonies and special items such as dance and song presented by the Girls' Brigade, Elmslie's Dance Ministry, and guest performer Michelle T. The message based on Daniel ch. 3 was brought by guest speaker Pastor Cassius Feare from the Church of God Prophecy, Victory Tabernacle challenging the children and youth to put their trust in God. All in all, this event was a great opportunity for the children and young people to come together and hear the Gospel message.

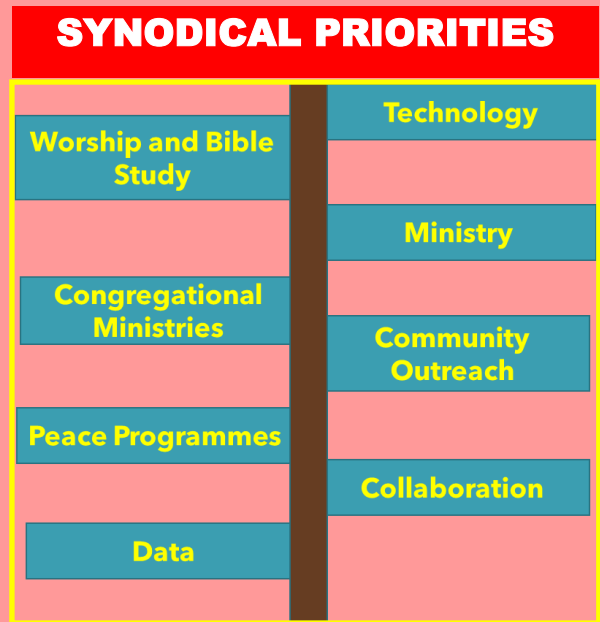


- Contributed by Camille Watt

UNITED CHURCH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2021

What has the United Church targeted for action in 2021 arising from the 42nd Synod?

Synodical priorities are the areas of focus which have been identified from the leading of the Holy Spirit through reflection on the reports tendered at the Pre-Synod Consultations in regions, the deliberations in groups and plenary during Synod, discerned through worship, prayer, bible study and sermon challenges during the week of Synod, all impacted by the contextual realities of Cayman, Jamaica and the wider world. In the coming issues of Update, these priorities will be featured, and the channels indicated through which they will be pursued. Please pray for our church, pray for our congregational leaders, leaders of institutions and auxiliaries, members of Commissions and Synodical committees, the staff and general membership, that we will be diligent and faithful in taking on these challenges and will experience the favour of God in accomplishing them.



WORSHIP



LEVEL	Worship Priorities
Congregation	<p>Continue to engage in life-giving worship</p> <p>Evangelism</p> <p>Congregational life (assess worship and leadership needs, review age-specific ministries, evangelism, maximize training opportunities)</p> <p>Discipleship</p>
Regional Mission Council	<p>Technology Team - assessment, networking and training for worship and nurture</p> <p>Ensuring availability of Discipleship Resources</p>
Synodical	<p>Worship resources (quarterly themes, House Church liturgy)</p> <p>Virtual bible studies</p> <p>Assessment instrument</p> <p>Definitions and practices</p> <p>Training</p> <p>Discipleship model</p> <p>Evangelism webinar</p>

UNITED CHURCH MEN TAKE A STAND AGAINST VIOLENCE

The United Church Men's Fellowship has noted the recent spate of violent attacks on our population, especially our women and girls. We believe that such acts of violence cannot continue, and that they must STOP!

We denounce the many instances of violence meted out against each other.

We denounce the culture of silence that feeds the acts of violence.

We denounce the notion of men believing that they own women or that they are above women. God has called us as partners to co-exist as partners with one another.



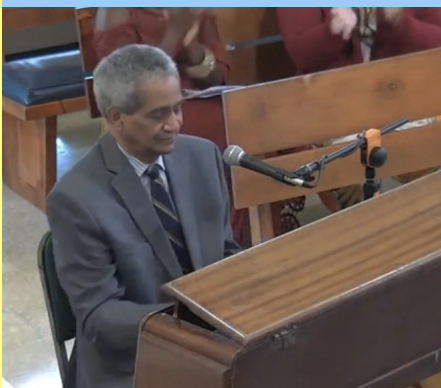
An all male praise team leads praise and worship at Lucea United Church on Mother's Day 2021.

We denounce the evil men who prey on our children and rob them of their innocence.

We embrace peacebuilding initiatives that will assist us to build healthy communities.

We embrace healthy and constructive conflict resolution, where disputes are resolved without resorting to physical violence.

We embrace the men who guide and protect those who are poor and vulnerable. To show the nation these things that we denounce and embrace, the United Church Men's Fellowship stands behind the Moderator, the Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott, in supporting the Thursdays in Black initiative.



Renowned Jamaican tenor, Lt. Commander John McFarlane performs a musical tribute to mothers at Hope United Church on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9, 2021.

We encourage all our members, as far as possible, to support the initiative in your own congregations and contexts.

Photos: Men's Fellowship groups at Lucea United, Webster Memorial in Kingston, and Hope United, demonstrated appreciation for women in Mothers' Day tributes through music.



Webster Memorial Men's Chorale renders an item for Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9, 2021.

The United Church in Jamaica and The Cayman Islands
supports



THURSDAYS **IN BLACK**

Let's Make an **Islandwide** Statement
on THURSDAY May 13, 2021
along with the Jamaica Council of Churches & UWI
to show that we do not support gender based violence.

Turn on your
headlights

WEAR
BLACK

Stand in front of a
Church, Courthouse or
Parish Council Office
in groups of 10 or less
between 9:00 a.m &
12:00 noon



TAKE A STAND WITH US!
TELL A FRIEND TO TELL A FRIEND

*Speak out for those who cannot speak,
for the rights of all the destitute.
Speak out, judge righteously,
defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

Proverbs 31: 8,9

PRAY ♦ PRAY ♦ PRAY PRAY

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)

LET US BE DILIGENT IN PRAYER

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

- ◆ Rev. Hyacinth Edwards, Minister of the Salem charge in SRMC, has lost her mother Mrs. Melvina Edwards.
- ◆ Families and communities broken by tragedy and violence.
- ◆ The Clarendon College community.
- ◆ Members, leaders of the United Church and the wider communities in Cayman and Jamaica who have experienced bereavement
- ◆ Children in Jamaica and other parts of the world dealing with uncertainties in their education.
- ◆ Persons struggling with the impact of COVID 19 on personal, family, community and work levels.
- ◆ The people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
- ◆ The people of India.

PRAY FOR CHILDREN ACROSS THE WORLD

KEY FACTS

- Greenhouse gas emissions leading to climate change and ecological degradation existentially threaten the lives of all children.
- Children are vulnerable to adverse health effects from indoor and outdoor air pollution which causes an estimated 7 million deaths per year (2016).
- Over 250 million children are at risk of not meeting their development potential (2017).
- There are 124 million children and adolescents affected by obesity (2016).
- Children are frequently exposed to commercial marketing promoting addictive substances and unhealthy commodities.
- Road injury is the leading cause of death for children and young people; more than 1 billion children are exposed to violence every year.

Children (aged 0 to 18 years) today face a host of new threats linked to climate change, pollution, harmful commercial marketing, unhealthy lifestyles and diets, injury and violence, conflict, migration and inequality. Their very future is uncertain. and urgent action is needed to address these threats.



Source: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/children-new-threats-to-health>

Pray for our Partner in Mission in Guyana

FAITHLYN STEPHENS

Greetings from Guyana

My UCJCI family! I greet you with holy love.

As we traverse this new synodical period, embodied by the theme, *“Rooted, Resilient: Responding in HOPE (Health, Opportunity, Peace and Evangelism),”* I encourage all of us to pay keen attention to our holistic health, seize every opportunity to demonstrate Christ’s unconditional love to each other (within and without the church), agitate in word and deed for peace to reside in the heart and mind of every human being, as we allow the Holy Spirit to direct all our thoughts and activities while we fulfill the great commission to evangelize the Word to everyone in every nation.

When I landed on the shores of Guyana, in spite of being duly briefed on the content of my mission assignment, I had no idea of the nature or extent of the task which awaited me.

I quickly learned that church is a creature of its culture and context, so I first and foremost had to adjust to serving in a ‘different kind of church.’ After imbibing a panoramic view of the terrain, with a blank page and pen in hand, I went down on my knees in fervent prayer and got to work. No journey is without its challenges; but God is forever faithful, so long as His children remain obedient to Him. Zechariah 4:6 remains a constant source of strength and encouragement for me: *It is not by human might or power, but by His Holy Spirit that God accomplishes His purpose.*

In my role as Administrator/Executive Assistant, I helped the Guyana Congregational Union (GCU) to upgrade the church’s administration and operations functions, as well as, trained the Administrative Assistant to assume the role of Administrator/Executive Assistant at the end of my tenure. An integral component of the assignment comprised coordinating capacity development training for leaders and members in the church’s various areas of ministry. The critical need for transformation of the clergy and mission focus of the church were also identified and highlighted for action.

I am currently engaged in a new role as Programme Coordinator for GCU’s Mission Support Programme (MSP), funded by Council for World Mission (CWM). The aim of the programme is to transition GCU from operating in the mode of maintenance ministry to ‘missional congregations.’ This encompasses delivery of leadership capacity development training for the whole people of God for holistic mission, and managing the logistics for construction of a new secretariat and renovation to the retreat centre and Clarkson Congregational Church. Oversight of mission projects which fall within the ambits of the MSP, and ensuring that the entire programme is completed on time and within budget are also elements of my work.

On behalf of the GCU family, I express sincere gratitude for the various ways in which UCJCI has been journeying with your sister church in the CWM Caribbean Region, as she treads the path of transition from maintenance ministry to “missional congregations.” GCU could not have done it without you. “Thanks in abundance!”

I am personally grateful for the privilege you have afforded me to serve in the GCU context and the different modalities in which you have supported me in my mission engagement here. “Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

May God bless you, sustain you and cause His divine Countenance to brighten your vision, as each of us diligently pursues the ministry and mission task to which He has called us. May we abide in that space of **HOPE**, so that when this COVID shall have passed we will rise to new life in Christ, for a new season in our Master’s Service.



Guyana Congregational Union (GCU) Developing Missional Congregations Resource Team. Faithlyn is fourth from right.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



May 14
Rev. Kevin Calvert



May 15
Rev. Delroy Johnson



May 17
Rev. Dr. Lorna Letts Jones



Certificate in Community Development



MAY 6-JULY 29, 2021

Fee: \$30,000

Topics:-

Community Safety & Security

Building Resiliency & Wellness

Peace Building & Conflict Resolution

Sports & Culture

Planning For Community Based Enterprise

Project development and Management

& More !



For more information or inquires send us an email at foundation@iuc.edu.jm or Visit us at 47 Old Hope Road or call: (878)-319-4310/754-1921

THEMES FOR HOUSE WORSHIP LITURGY



SUNDAY MAY 16

Theme

That we may be ONE

United in harmony and love to accomplish our mission

Acts 1: 15-17; 21-26; Psalm 1;

St. John 17: 6-19

UCJCI VALUE S

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

The Bible:

The preaching, teaching, studying, and obeying of God’s Word, as the supreme rule of faith and life (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Matthew 4:1-11, Ephesians 6:10-17).

IN THE COMING ISSUE...

**Our Ministry
with Children
- Our Children’s
Homes**

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Regional Deputy General Secretaries

Cayman Regional Mission Council
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield

Rev. Norbert Stephens (Interim)
Southern Regional Mission Council

North Eastern Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Rose Wedderburn

Western Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Mauleen Henry

SYNODICAL THEME:

“Rooted, Resilient: Responding in H.O.P.E. (Health - Opportunity - Peace - Evangelism)”