



# A Weekly Update from The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

September 8, 2021

Vol 7 Issue 34

**SYNODICAL THEME:** "Rooted, Resilient: Responding in H.O.P.E. (Health - Opportunity - Peace Evangelism)"

## I am here

by Kimone Ferguson, Bryce United Church.

I care for you, more than you think I do.  
So, on those bad days, just remember that I do.  
I do, we do, and so should you too.

In the deepest darkest parts you'll feel alone oh, broken hearted, but  
always remember, never forget, that there is so much more than  
self-inflicted death.

Oh, beautiful souls, I hate to see you aimlessly roam.  
The hurt, the grief, the sorrow, the disbelief are too great to bear alone.  
You are not alone.  
Don't do it alone.

Come home to your friends, family, and loved ones. Let us help.  
Let us show through action, and even words, that you are the apple of  
God's eyes and ours.

Let us give you your flowers.

And to you my dear, when last have you checked on a loved one?  
Do it now by putting your thoughts into action.

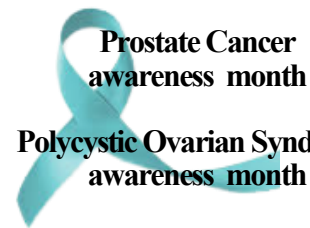
Give a hug, crack a joke, be compassionate to God's yoke.  
Let us be mindful and aware. Put action into care and show everyone  
that I... WE are HERE.



2021 Theme :

**"Creating Hope Through Action"**

"More than 700 000 people die by  
suicide every year. or each suicide, there  
are more than 20 suicide attempts. "



Prostate Cancer  
awareness month

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome  
awareness month



For initial counselling and appropriate intervention to  
mental health crises, including suicidal intent or  
attempts call the Ministry of Health's 24-hour toll  
free Mental Health and Suicide Prevention  
Helpline (888-NEW LIFE/888-639-5433)

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**Our Vision Statement: "Touching Lives, Nurturing Disciples, Seeking Transformation Through Christ"**



Photo taken from the Financial Times

## The Church humbly recognizes wrongs and boldly acts to repair

-Rev Dr Gordon Cowans, Chair of the Reparations Task Force

I wish to thank Mrs. Karen Francis for the comprehensive article, published in the August 25, 2021 Weekly Update grappling with complex issues relating to reparation for the centuries-long enslavement of African people.

This is a matter with which the Church has not always grappled openly and indeed there may be some who wonder why the Church would engage such an issue. Your treatment of the subject confirms that this is an issue whose time has come and that the Church should indeed bring the Kingdom values to bear on these significant historical, international matters.

By posing the question as “Seek reparations or forgive and forget?”, you challenge us to consider where on the continuum of potential responses would Jesus’ response be found. The Scriptures can tell us.

### Lest We Forget

Forgetting is not an option. Jesus did not go to dine with Zacchaeus, the tax collector in his house without causing him to be challenged by the truth that Zacchaeus’ lifestyle rested on the benefits received from his position and his work. To the extent that his work unfairly disadvantaged others, he had a duty to recognize it and respond. Zacchaeus did.

The Scriptures are replete with the significance of succeeding generations knowing, remembering, and honoring their history.

The freed Israelites were charged to ensure that from generation to generation their people would not forget their journey and the Lord who released them from bondage.

### Common suicidal signs

- Threatening to kill oneself.
- Saying things like “No-one will miss me when I am gone.”
- Looking for ways to kill oneself, such as seeking access to pesticides, firearms or medication, or browsing the internet for means of taking one’s own life.
- Saying goodbye to close family members and friends, giving away of valued possessions, or writing a will.

### How to Prevent Suicide

- Find an appropriate time and a quiet place to talk about suicide with the person you are worried about.
- Let them know that you are there to listen.
- Encourage the person to seek help from a professional, such as a doctor, mental health professional, counsellor or social worker. Offer to accompany them to an appointment.
- If you think the person is in immediate danger, do not leave him or her alone. Seek professional help from the emergency services, a crisis line, or a health-care professional, or turn to family members.
- If the person you are worried about lives with you, ensure that he or she does not have access to means of self-harm in the home.
- Stay in touch to check how the person is doing.

Cont’d on pg 3

*“These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deuteronomy 6vs. 6 - 7)*

That was what the heart of Rt. Ex. Marcus Mosiah Garvey meant when he said “A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.”

We should take seriously what the philosopher George Santayana meant when he wrote “Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it.” Rather than fear the pain of recollection of this challenging time in our history, we should seek to set right the historical record for our generation and for those yet to come. Rootless trees are easily uprooted.

Secondly, Reparation and Forgiveness are not polar opposites of a debate. In the presence of Jesus, Zacchaeus’ experience was a mix of reparation and forgiveness. The beauty of their coexistence is revealed when the Scriptures record that which Jesus said to him: *“Today salvation has come to this house.” (Luke 19vs.9)*

### **Reconciliation**

Too often we confine salvation to an individualistic and solely personal experience. Jesus makes it clear that His reconciling work on earth is also to reconcile people to people. It is to build and bind community. Jesus’ forgiveness of Zacchaeus, and Zacchaeus’ repentance and reparation provided for his reconciliation with his community.

There is a lot of reconciliation to be done in our world.

Indeed, reparation and repair share the same root. Reconciliation is the repair of relationship. The Church has a unique opportunity to bring the spirit of reconciling forgiveness into the current reparation discourse and actions directed at urging reparatory justice for Africans and their descendants.

Both locally and internationally, the Church is courageously coming to grips with the lasting legacies of slavery that impact the lives of so many until this day.

The Council for World Mission (CWM) has boldly studied its past and named its historical complicity with empire, enslavement and racial injustice. It apologizes for this complicity and in a bold act of reparatory justice, has set aside a substantial portion of its own assets to contribute to anti-racism projects and activities inspired by descendants of the victims of slavery. These courageous actions are not to be taken lightly and its stance could prove a compelling motivation to other institutions, both religious and secular, to join the movement for repair. The work of reparation (repair) has begun.

### **Reparation Task Force**

The United Church’s Synod Reparation Task Force is keen to advance and deepen this discourse at all levels within our Church. They look forward to engaging in a series of releases, publicized through this medium and others, to hopefully link reparation to today’s reality. Slavery legacy and reparation will be linked to Education, Health, Crime and National Security, Agriculture and Food Security, Family and Identity.

We urge readers throughout the Church and beyond to join the discourse. Together we will be able to grapple with hard questions and emerge stronger.

### ***Please pray for:***

- Rev. Garwell Bacchas and family with the passing of his brother, Mike and sister-in-law, Marcia.
- The climbing number of COVID 19 infections in Jamaica.
- Patients, families and workers in the health sector in Jamaica
- Members of staff with relatives affected by COVID 19.
- The people of Haiti and Afghanistan
- Rev. Dr. Norman Francis in hospital

### ***A Prayer at this time***

Lord, teach me to be generous, to serve You as You deserve, to give without counting the cost, to fight without fretting at my wounds, to labor without seeking rest, to spend myself without looking for any reward other than that of knowing that I do Your holy will,  
Amen.

***Let us Pray Together Every Wednesday 12 noon-1:00 pm***



# News from Cayman

## Tribute to Lay Pastor Ormond Williams

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council wishes to extend profound thanks and appreciation to Lay Pastor Ormond Williams for his sterling leadership as Chair of the Board of Governors of the Cayman Prep and High School. Pastor Williams succeeded Mr. Bryan Bothwell MBE as Chair in September 2013 and after serving for eight years, he tendered his resignation as Chair of the Board of Governors effective July 28, 2021. Pastor Williams built on the legacy he received and in both 2019 and 2021, the school obtained 'Good Report' from the Office of Education Standards, and this is a testimony to the caliber of the leadership of the Board of Governors, the Administration and the Staff. Mrs. Sheena Thompson, Governor and Deputy Chair has been appointed to act as Chair until a new Chair is retained. We thank the parents and guardians of the children of CPHS for their continued support and for entrusting our school with their children's education.



Lay Pastor Ormond Williams

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## Cayman Prep & High School

The Cayman Prep and High School received an overall 'Good Report' from the Office of Education Standards in May this year, with the High School being given an 'Excellent Report'.

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands wish to express profound appreciation to the Governors, Administrative leadership and the Staff of the school for the tremendous work being done, the witness of which is borne not only in the results of the inspection but in the excellent external examination results over the years. Truly, the school endeavors to fulfil the motto 'Let Your Light So Shine'



We extend a warm welcome to the new teachers who joined the staff in this 2021-2022 academic year and we do look forward to the continued excellent work being done at CPHS.



On Tuesday, August 31, 2021, the Council presented gift baskets to the staff as a way of showing our appreciation for a job well done. A special token was also presented to the Director Ms. Debra McLaughlin.

## Celebrating Rev. Dr. Derik Davidson's Ministry at the Meadowbrook United Charge

The Meadowbrook and St. Paul's Maverley United Church Family bade farewell to Rev. Dr. Derik Davidson and Mrs. Davidson in a special Sunday Morning Worship Service on August 29, 2021.

Expressions of appreciation and tributes came through music, dance, citations and the sermon, "Christ the Earnest Worker", as the different arms of the church celebrated the impact of the Davidsons on members and outreach ministries in the Meadowbrook, Havendale, and Maverley communities. Having served a second time as interim Minister, Rev. Davidson, with the full support of Mrs. Davidson, has been instrumental in providing diligent leadership to Meadowbrook/St. Paul's Charge during the last two years and seven months.

Rev. Davidson, in his usual manner, was appreciative and encouraging in his response. He reminded the



Rev. Dr. Davidson delivering his response to the expressions of love from members of Meadowbrook/St. Paul's Charge

congregations of the big task and responsibilities ahead, especially in these unusual times. He urged members of both congregations to focus on Christ, instead of focusing on self. Charging members to be Christ-like, in order to experience unity, humility, joy and peace, Rev. Davidson also advised of the importance of prayers and the need to support the new pastoral team and one another. His final words:

*"To try to live without a sense of God's presence, is to try to live a day without the sun."*

The new *Minister* for Meadowbrook and St Paul's Maverley United Church is Rev. Lembe Sivile and his wife, Pastor Cynthia Mwita Sivile, is the Lay Pastor. Both Council for World Mission, CWM, mission partners from the United Church of Zambia entered office on September 1, 2021.



Rev. Dr. Davidson and Mrs. Davidson displaying the framed citation presented to Rev. Davidson.



Members of Meadowbrook United Church Youth Music Ministry and Youth Fellowship with the Davidsons. (L-R) Kashief Barton, Joel Battick, Floyd Cassanova - Youth Music Ministry Leader, Mrs. Davidson, Daniel Battick - Youth Fellowship President and Rev. Dr. Derik Davidson.

# COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

## AFFECTING CONGREGATIONAL LIFE IN JAMAICA

-From the Office of the General Secretary

The Government of Jamaica, on September 1, 2021, announced an extension of provisions under the Disaster Risk Management Act.

These provisions are for the period **September 3 to September 17, 2021**. We wish to share with you the ones which will affect congregational life from September 5, 2021:

**1. Church Services- Two Sundays are included in the 6 ‘no-movement days’, these are September 5, and September 12, 2021.**

- The number of persons allowed in the sanctuary for worship on these Sundays will be a **maximum of 20 persons**. Each person is required to have a **place of Worship Authorization Form**.

Where persons are required to travel to the sanctuary on Sundays, a completed **Place of Worship Authorization Form is necessary**. Please do the following prior to the service:

- i. Print and fill out all sections of the Authorization Form
- ii. Insert the name of the person who will participate in the service (use one Form for each person who will participate, do not exceed 20 persons)
- iii. Each Form should be signed by the Minister or Lay Pastor, including her/his own Form
- iv. Place your Church Stamp/Seal where indicated on each completed Form. This is a critical requirement (if you do not have a Church Stamp, visit your regional office and have them stamp each document)
- v. Ensure that each participant in the worship service has her/his copy of the Authorization Form, along with a valid form of identification, for presentation to the police at a checkpoint

- We encourage congregations to record or stream their services where possible. We also invite you to **use the weekly House Church Liturgy and/or listen to LOVE 101 FM on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.** for a broadcast of a recorded service from one of our congregations.

**2. No crusades, conferences or conventions** will be permitted.

**3. No funeral services (whether at a place of worship, chapel, funeral home or any other place) shall take place.**

**4. Burials** will be allowed for **30 minutes** on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays between **9 am and 4 pm** with a **maximum of 15 persons** at the graveside. We have been advised of some burials which were not compliant with these regulations and wish to remind ministers/lay pastor that you are the person who will be charged with breaching the regulations of the Disaster Risk Management Act.

**5. Weddings** – maximum of **20 persons** allowed.

**6. Physical Gatherings** are limited to **10 persons**.

**7. Stay at home** – **persons 60** years and over. Fully vaccinated persons are exempt.

Please note that the wearing of masks, hand sanitizing and social distancing are still required for public spaces and gatherings.

We invite you to comply with these provisions.





## Haiti Relief

The earthquake, which had its epicenter near Haiti, on Saturday August 14, 2021, has been devastating for that nation. The severe physical, economic and social impact on Haiti have been made more challenging as shortly thereafter they experienced the passage of Tropical Storm Grace. All of this follows the recent assassination of their President.

At the last count, the death toll was 2,207, with 344 people still missing. Additionally there has been significant damage to, or the destruction of, homes and other buildings. Many persons are now homeless and desperate and the livelihood of others is severely threatened.

As part of our initial response as a church, we wish to offer financial support to the relief efforts in Haiti, through our established contacts there. We are aware of the restrictions on attendance in worship in Jamaica and would suggest that, where possible, congregations make a contribution from their own funds.

## How to Donate

### Cayman Islands:

Send your contributions to your local congregations, which will then remit the same to the Cayman Regional Office

### Jamaica:

**Bank:** National Commercial Bank Jamaica Ltd

**Address:** 90-94 Slipse Rd. Kingston 5

**Account Name:** United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

**Account #:** 234297392

**Type of account :** Savings

## Home Liturgy

Sep 12, 2021

Theme: Selfless service

Putting the interests of others before ours and going an extra mile to alleviate other people's suffering, is a serious measuring stick of our faith in the God of Justice.

### Scriptures:

Isaiah 50:4-9; Psalm 116:1-9; James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38

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Sep 19, 2021

Theme: Greatness redefined

In a world where fame and power coupled with the unquenchable desire for decorated and highlighted lives. There is every need to keep in Check the values and demands of the kingdom.

### Scriptures:

Jeremiah 11:18-20; Psalm 54; James 3:13 - 4:3, 7-8a; Mark 9:30-37

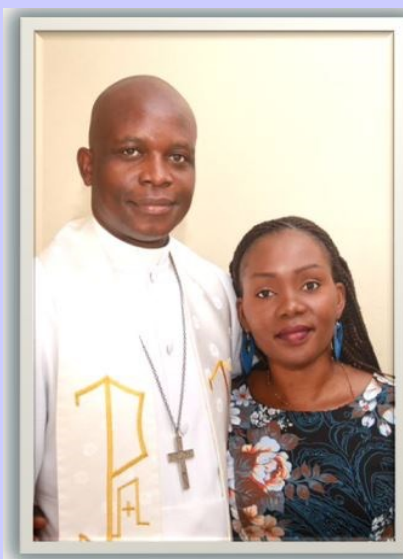
## Upcoming Events

### ⇒ **Back to Church!**

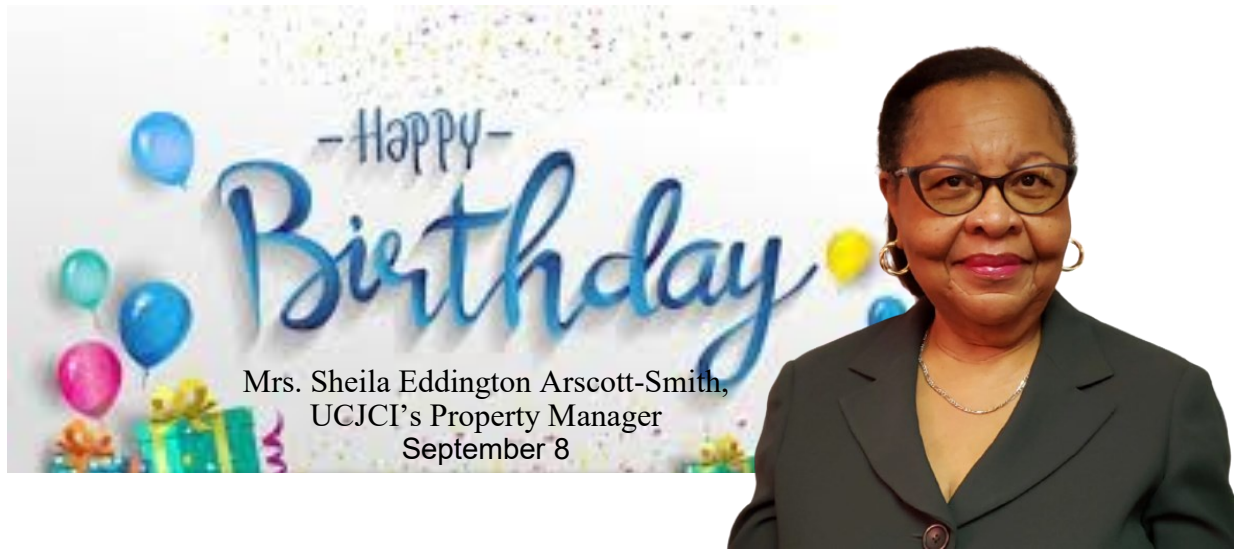
All are invited back to church in **The Cayman Islands\*** come **Sunday September 12, 2021.**

⇒ **The Synod Reparation Task Force** is inviting you to join in a discussion about ***Reparations and Family led by Rev. Dr. Dave Hazle*** on **Next Thursday, September 16, 2021 at 6pm.** We crave your participation on either the **UCJCI's YouTube channel** or our **zoom platform.**

The links will be made available in next week's issue.



The North Eastern Regional  
Mission Council  
of the  
UCJCI  
Invites you to  
The Introduction &  
Commissioning Service  
of  
Rev Lembe Sivle &  
Pastor Cynthia Mwita  
To The Meadowbrook Charge  
On Sunday, September 12, 2021  
at 10:00 a.m.



**The United Church in Jamaica and The Cayman Islands**  
Congregational, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian

**Moderator**

Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott

**General Secretary**

Rev. Norbert Stephens

**Regional Deputy General Secretaries**

- ◇ Cayman Regional Mission Council-  
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield
- ◇ North Eastern Regional Mission Council -  
Mrs. Rose Wedderburn
- ◇ Southern Regional Mission Council-  
Rev. Norbert Stephens (Interim)
- ◇ Western Regional Mission Council-  
Mrs. Mauleen Henry

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