



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

September 22, 2021

Volume 7 Issue 38

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

## REPARATIONS AND THE FAMILY

By Rev Dave Hazel

It is our considered opinion that in order to right the wrongs of an evil period in history there is the need for former European Colonizers to provide payment or other assistance to the former colonies such as the Caribbean nations.

We believe the demeaning system of chattel slavery that was maintained for centuries has left considerable damage to the state of race relations in the world and the psycho-social wellbeing of the descendants of the formerly enslaved Africans.

It is to that end that we are seeking to mobilize the Christian community, beginning with our own denomination, to be part of the movement to advocate for reparatory justice from the European nations. At the last Synod of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, a special reparations task force was established to explore how the United Church could more actively participate in the growing advocacy for reparatory justice for the descendants of formerly enslaved Africans.

*“Reparation is the action of making amends for a wrong one has done, by providing payment or other assistance to those who have been wronged.”*

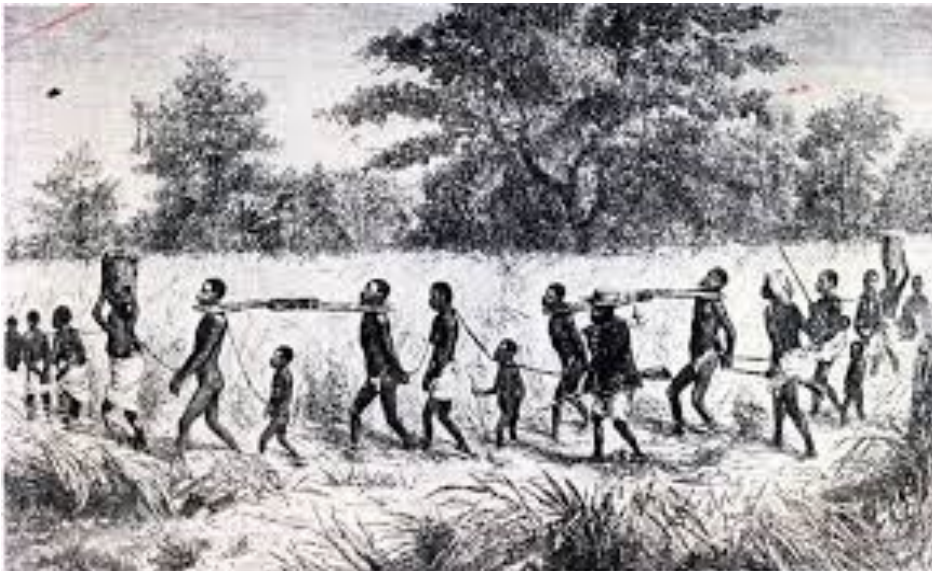


Photo retrieved from Daily Mail UK

## In This Issue

- Reparations and the Family
- Meadowbrook United Church 62nd Anniversary
- News From Cayman
- Remembering Rev Dr Norman Francis
- Updated COVID Protocols

Justice requires that the perpetrators of the wrong make a fair payment or contribution to levelling the social, economic and political landscape that has placed the nations of former enslaved Africans at a considerable disadvantage in the global marketplace.

The experience of slavery and colonialism with its notions and institutions of white supremacy and cultural superiority has contributed to features of the psyche of the Caribbean and other former colonies

### Reparation also means

“the action of repairing something”

that need mental social and economic repair. This too must become an important part of the agenda for reparations. Some of the repairs that need to be done are work that only we can successfully undertake. We must emancipate ourselves from mental slavery. There are features of our social and political life that continue to be in need of further emancipation and this is a part of the reparation agenda that we must commit ourselves to.

Jamaican society with its legacy of colonialism and slavery finds itself in this post-emancipation and post-colonial period caught between freedom and bondage. In many ways, the project of emancipation is not complete. In the words of Caribbean Theologian Kortright Davis, “Emancipation still comin”.

One of the areas of Jamaican society in which this tension between freedom and bondage exists is in family life. The freedom side of it is that despite the attempts during slavery to limit stable family formation among the enslaved population the Afro-Jamaican families survived. The bondage, however, is that the patterns of family that have evolved through the period of slavery have given rise to family forms that are unstable and are weakened institutions of socialization. This has contributed in no small way to some of the problems of social disorder, gender conflicts, and declining values and attitudes that we see in Jamaican society today. Family life has survived but not in its healthiest forms. So what are some of the ways that the legacy of slavery has impacted patterns of family in Jamaica today?

To begin with, the forced migration of Africans mainly from West Africa to work as slaves on the sugar plantations of Jamaica meant that large

numbers of Africans were forcibly separated from their traditional practices of family and in their new environment at times were actively discouraged, during the period of enslavement, from forming stable family units. Moreover, our enslaved ancestors could be moved from one plantation to another without any regard for whether they were in intimate unions that might have led to a family.

There is however some evidence that some plantations might have allowed limited accommodation of families among the enslaved population that developed out of unions that were formed between couples on the same plantation. It is likely too, that encouraging family formation might have become more prevalent after the abolition of the slave trade when supplies of Africans were stopped and planters found alternative strategies to replenish their labour force. Nevertheless, for the most part, the enslaved Africans were treated just like cattle and so another practice that planters used to expand the population of enslaved Africans was for some of the more robust male slaves to serve as ‘studs’ to impregnate various female slaves. It is practices such as these that might have contributed to the *tendency to form unions with multiple partners*. This is prevalent among many Afro-Jamaican men today.

These practices may also have given rise to the matrifocal character of so many Jamaican households that revolve around the strength and constancy of a mother’s presence and for which the father is often absent. What is more, the enslaved Africans were not permitted to be formally married and so visiting and common-law unions became the predominant forms of conjugal unions and these have persisted down to the present time.

Yet, another feature of family life that might have been influenced by the hardships of slavery, is the *harsh parenting practices* with the common use of *corporal punishment and verbal abuse*. The obvious racism and discrimination associated with chattel slavery as well as the self-hatred triggered by colonialist’s notions of superiority could be at the heart of these harsh parenting practices. In too many instances, discipline and correction have morphed into physical and verbal abuse.

End Violence Against Women and Children



Share your **Thursdays in Black** photos on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Use the appropriate hashtags!

In July of this year, a 7-year-old and a four-year-old died because of blunt forced injuries sustained from getting beaten by their parents and step-parents in Jamaica. Since then, there have been several cases of corporal punishment and child abuse highlighted through the media reminding us that this is a common feature of family life in Jamaica.

The unstable patterns of family life in Jamaica that were evident during slavery and have remained in some form down to the present age, might have been generated by the conditions of slavery and colonialism. However, they have been preserved partially due to the combined effects of several other factors in the post-slavery society:

- the declining influence of the Church
- persistently harsh economic conditions,
- changing attitudes globally to sexual relationships and marriage as divorce and separation continue to rise and as gender dynamics change with more women entering the workforce and advancing their education.
- the growing acceptance of the pre-emancipation patterns which have become ingrained in the cultural psyche of the majority of our people.

The liberation of family life from patterns that do not optimise human relationships and do not foster the welfare and upliftment of society must become a part of our quest for a fuller experience of emancipation as a people.

We must free ourselves from family slavery by:

- Investing more in teaching skills for relationship enrichment and conflict resolution.
- Promoting the benefits of strong marriages which remain the most stable form of union around which strong families can be built. More premarital preparation for couples thinking of marriage and greater support for marriages through enrichment events, and support groups for married couples must become a standard part of every congregation's pastoral care ministry.
- Doing more to teach parents alternative forms of discipline and helping them develop more affirming ways to interact with their children.

- workers to attend school events to support their children without fear of jeopardizing their employment.
- Talking more about the benefits of father presence and less about the ills of father absence.
- Making time for family devotions where God is not just an unseen guest but the ever-present host of the household.

As we work to build awareness of the need for reparatory justice and mobilise the Christian community to become active advocates for reparation from our former colonizers, we need to also take stock of the mental and cultural slavery that we need to emancipate ourselves from. In this regard, we must take stock of our patterns of family and commit ourselves to ways of living that will enrich relationships between spouses and between parents and children. We need to commit to patterns of family that foster stable unions and stable forms of family that will preserve the welfare and advancement of all our people and play its role in creating a just equitable, loving and God-fearing society in which the vulnerable are cared for and all are equal at the foot of the cross.

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands  
Evangelism Ministry presents  
**VIRTUAL CRUSADE**  
THEME:  
**HOPE IN JESUS CHRIST**  
September 19-26, 2021 | 6 PM  
Log on and be encouraged through The Word by Dynamic Speakers, versatile Praise in Worship and Testimonies  
UCJCI CHANNEL  
*Have you been tuning in to our Virtual Crusade??*



# Meadowbrook United Church

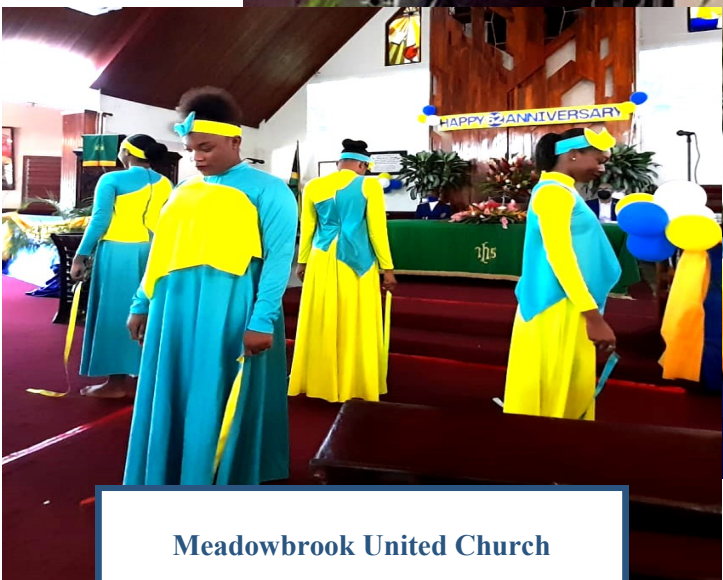
## 62nd Anniversary

September 19, 2021



The Rt Rev Gary Harriott, Moderator of The UCJCI, delivering the word for the day.

Newly Appointed Minister of Meadowbrook United, Rev Lembe Sivile, served as the Liturgist for the anniversary worship service.



Meadowbrook United Church  
Dance Ministry



Left to Right:

Rev Sivile, Rt. Rev Gary Harriott and Lay Pastor Lucein Reid after the anniversary service.

# News From Cayman

## Back to Church Sunday

On September 12, 2021, Back to Church Sunday Services were held throughout the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council.

Laity and clergy prepared enthusiastically for this special occasion. Preparations were in their final phase when on last Friday a Covid-19 positive case was confirmed in one of our communities, raising alarm island-wide. Some of the congregations scaled back on their plans, shortening their service or cancelling the fellowship meals altogether.



*Packaged meals at Elmslie Memorial UC*

It is our hope and prayer that despite the last-minute changes, the message of HOPE reached the hearts of many.

We would like to express our appreciation and extend special thanks to all those who willingly and happily gave their time, talents and resources to make this Back to Church Sunday Service happen.

## Savannah Afterschool Enrichment Programme (SASEP)

On August 30, 2021, the Savannah Afterschool Enrichment Programme (SASEP) reopened its doors to the children of the Savannah community. The

programme run by the Savannah United Church has been an integral part of the ministry for a number of years.

Programme Coordinator Monique Anderson-Coke addressing the parents and students in a recent publication said, “It is exciting to be part of a community of great students, parents, and teachers. We at S.A.S.E.P pride ourselves in being a “Community of Learners” where our students and staff look for opportunities to learn from each other in our daily lives. We are committed to high academic expectations, mutual respect, social responsibility, and spiritual enrichment.”

The afterschool programme runs from Monday through Friday during the regular school year from 3:00pm to 6:00pm and includes devotion, homework, literacy, and numeracy, snack time, free and organized playtime, cleanup projects, and outdoor games. The current enrollment is 28 primary school students under the care of two administrative staff, five teachers (three each evening), and five volunteers.



*Programme Coordinator Monique Anderson-Coke*



# Remembering Rev Dr Norman Francis

M  
E  
A  
D  
O  
W  
B  
R  
O  
O  
K

UNITED



“This is an extremely hard task that must now be done, as saying good bye to someone who played such an integral part of my adult life is not something I warmly embrace. Rev. Dr. Norman Francis' work in introducing to the world of pastoral ministry is a memory that I will forever be etched in my heart. From the assignments he guided me through, the support given to myself and family through many chapters of our lives, the defence he put up when my efforts were unduly scrutinised by others, to the prayers we exchanged for each other when vicious storms blew and tested our commitments to remain steadfast in rendering service to God's kingdom. The journey wasn't always an easy one, but God guaranteed support when he paired me with Rev. Francis. I will unreservedly say that if I had this life to live again, then there would be no omission of his presence in it, due to the value he added. I will miss him and I pray that one day the sting of his passing will subside and the joy of him being in the presence of God fully embraced. I pray now for the peace of God to saturate the lives of Karen and his boys, as they grapple with the very numbing void caused, the loss of this great man. May the memories we have all created with Rev. Francis, be sufficient to sustain our longing for his presence, till we see him once again.”

-Lucien Reid, Lay Pastor

*The above comment was taken from the UCJCI's virtual Memorial Book.*

## **HOW TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS IN THE VIRTUL MEMORIAL BOOK (VMB):**

1. Type in or use the link [letusremember.ucjci.com](http://letusremember.ucjci.com) in your browser. This will take you to the Memorial Book
2. Go to the bottom of the page and type in your name and thoughts
3. Press **SUBMIT MY THOUGHTS**

Cayman  
Islands  
Regional  
Mission  
Council

Rev. Dr. Norman Francis during his visit to the CIRMC for the launching of the Lay Leadership Programme in November 2019.



## Webster Memorial United

Rev. Dr. Norman Francis came to Webster Memorial United Church as a 'Graduate Intern', in September 2000, and quickly got the attention of the worshippers at Webster.

His manner, and mode of delivery from the pulpit, did reflect the experience and poise of a trained and focused Minister of the Word, who was convinced that he was living his calling.

Describing his decision to become a pastor, he recalled:

*"It happened many years ago. In fact, in my early years as a Christian, I became sensitized to the possibility that God was calling me into full-time ministry and this initial sensitization came from the community, where persons there saw in me the potential to pursue this noble path. But I was not convinced, until I had my Damascus Road experience with God, many, many years after that, and God had me where He wanted me, and I had no choice at that point, but to simply lay aside my lofty plans and to respond in obedience to God.*

*And since doing that, I have had a tremendous amount of satisfaction and a feeling of fulfilment. There is nothing else that I would rather be doing now."*

When Webster celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Rev. Norman Francis was one of Webster's special guests, returning as one of the Church's former **Associate Ministers**, - a position he had assumed at Webster, after ordination; marking the second Minister to have served Webster in that position.

His message to Webster on the celebration of its 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, in May, this year, (2021), spoke of God's "Amazing Grace". He commented, *"You have won many a battle, withstood many a challenge, and weathered many a storm, yet you remain a refreshing source for many... all because of God's Amazing Grace!"*

We of Webster, are blessed to have been a part of the growth and development of a Minister, the **Rev. Dr. Norman Francis**, who heard the call and answered and served his God, with excellence; - Preaching and Teaching of the Word.

# COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

## AFFECTING CONGREGATIONAL LIFE IN JAMAICA

The Government of Jamaica, on [September 15, 2021](#), announced an extension of provisions under the Disaster Risk Management Act.

These provisions are for the period [September 18 to October 28, 2021](#). We wish to share with you the ones which will affect congregational life from September 5, 2021:

**1. Church Services – Sundays have been designated No Movement Days, however, Church Services are allowed under the following conditions:**

- **The number of persons allowed in the sanctuary for worship on 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:

- Print and fill out all sections of the Authorization Form**
  - 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)**
  - Each Form should be signed by the Minister or Lay Pastor, including her/his own Form**
  - 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)**
  - 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 your 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. Funeral services will be allowed with a maximum of 20 persons within the place of worship or facility.**

**4. Burials will be allowed for 30 minutes Mondays to 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.



# Prayer Corner

- ◆ Mrs. Karen Francis, whose husband Rev. Dr. Norman Francis has passed on.
- ◆ Rev. Delia Picard-Hibbert whose mother, Mrs. Escelene Picart passed on.
- ◆ Rev. Garwell Bacchas and family with the passing of his brother, Mike and sister-in-law, Marcia.
- ◆ Mr. Eugene Kong, father of Rev Rohan Kong who passed away.
- ◆ Healing for Pastor Meggan Brown Henry.
- ◆ The climbing number of COVID -19 infections in Jamaica and the violent anti-vaxxers' protests.
- ◆ 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.

## A prayer :

Loving God, I pray that you will comfort us in our suffering, Give us confidence in the power of your grace, that even when we are afraid and hurting, we may put our whole trust in you; through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

# At Home Liturgy

September 26, 2021

## WHEN OUR CONSCIENCE IS PUT TO TEST

“When God gives us an opportunity to sit in places of advantage, we should never miss the chance to affirm and bring others along”

## Scriptures:

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22 || Psalm 124

James 5:13-20 || Mark 9:38-50



*Tune in to Our  
United in Faith  
Programme*

*Every Sunday on  
RJR 94 FM at  
6:30 am .*

## **In next week's update!!**

## Understanding Vaccines

with Our Moderator, Rt Rev Gary Harriott and Dr Delroy Fray, Clinical Coordinator of the Western Regional Health Authority.



# Sign Up!!

The Jamaica Diaspora Behavioral & Mental Health Task Force  
& the Jamaica Diaspora Worldwide Organizations Taskforce (JDWOT)  
PRESENTS



## Faith & Mental Wellness

Register for sessions at [bit.ly/jdtan-faithmh](http://bit.ly/jdtan-faithmh). Zoom login will be sent upon registration

Saturdays Sept 11 - Oct 30 @ 10 AM ET / 9 AM JA Time

Week 1

Saturday, Sept 11, 2021

Intro to Mental Health & Mental Illness  
Presenters: Henry Lewis & Joshua Smith

Week 2

Saturday, Sept 18, 2021

Engaging & Motivating the Youth Population  
Presenters: Melanie Baker & Nia Jones

Week 3

Saturday, Sept 25, 2021

Understanding Trauma & Its Effects on Mental Health  
Presenters: Lauren Capel & Tierra Sydnor-Diggs

BREAK

Week 4

Saturday, Oct 16, 2021

Coping with the Stress of Congregational Isolation Before & After Quarantine  
Presenters: Lauren Capel, Nia Jones, Feona Kerr & Henry Lewis Jr.

Week 5

Saturday, Oct 23, 2021

Healthy Grieving While Maintaining Spiritual Faith  
Presenter: Joshua Smith

Week 6

Saturday, Oct 30, 2021

Selfcare for Leaders: Learning to Put Your Mask on First  
Presenters: Lauren Capel & Tierra Sydnor-Diggs

PRESENTERS



Lauren Capel, LCSW  
Co-founder Keys of Hope Consultants



Tierra Sydnor-Diggs  
LCSW-C, Director Keys of Hope Consultants



Joshua P. Smith, LPC  
CEO J.P. Smith LLC



Melanie S. Baker  
M. Sc. Special Education  
A best-selling author, speaker, entrepreneur and life/ministry coach, Joshua has worked in the mental health field for 12 years and serves in a pastoral capacity.



Henry Jason Lewis Jr.  
Executive Coach & Author



Nia Jones  
Licensed Social Worker & Consultant

A licensed social worker with over 13 years experience, with experience in trauma informed care. She provides services to children, adults and families and serves in ministry.

A speaker and trainer, Tierra has over 19 years of experience as a Restorative Practices Practitioner and certified trainer. Tierra serves in ministry.

A best-selling author, speaker, entrepreneur and life/ministry coach, Joshua has worked in the mental health field for 12 years and serves in a pastoral capacity.

Melanie Baker is a Grant Writer, Curriculum Development Specialist and Special Education Teacher, with over 20 years experience working with students, parents, educators and families.

A trained teacher and mental health therapist, Henry has worked in education and serves in a pastoral capacity. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Organizational Psychology.

Podcast co-host, Nia has worked with youth for 15 years. A mental health advocate, she has been recognized for her work with NAMI, Baltimore through the "Always Forward" yearly fundraiser.

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE WILL BE GIVEN FOR ATTENDING AT LEAST FOUR OF THE SIX SESSIONS

The Jamaica Diaspora Taskforce Action Network (JD TAN) is a worldwide network of sectoral-focused Diaspora Taskforces with members across 30+ countries. Taskforces have been operating since 2013 as a collaborative approach to engage and mobilize the Jamaican Diaspora to join forces and support national development. It started with Education followed by Agriculture and has expanded to cover over 15 sectors.

Our behavioral and Mental health Taskforce has coordinated a series focused on increasing mental health awareness for the Faith Community in Jamaica. The series will be presented by individuals who are licensed professionals in varying capacities as is evident by their biographies. The attached flyer outlines the topics that were developed in collaboration with persons living in Jamaica who identified specific present-day issues and concerns in their communities.

The series is designed for multi-denominational pastors, ministry staff and volunteers.

- 1 **the commitment** of CWM to "chant down Babylon" and its shitstems in order to allow all life (not just humans, but creation and the planet) to flourish;
- 2 **the call** upon church and community agents, biblical critics and theologians, to practice and perform our trades in public places;
- 3 **the agonies** that current endemics (esp. racism, sexism, covid) bring which require collaborative theological, biblical, and missional responses.

**REGISTER NOW!**

<https://edare.cwmission.org/register>

## 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 Slipe Rd. Kingston 5

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

**Account #:** 234297392

**Type of account :** Savings

## 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)

## Contact Us

### Address:

12 Carlton Crescent, Kingston 10

### Telephone No:

876 926-8734

### E-mail Address:

synod@ucjci.com

### Website:

www.ucjci.com

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