



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

December 14, 2022 || Volume 9 Issue 48



UCJCI Women's Fellowship 30th Anniversary

by President General, Mrs. Cheryl Shaw

On December 13, 2022, the UCJCI Women's Fellowship celebrated 30 years of union between the former United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman Women's Guild and the Disciples of Christ Christian Women's Fellowship. We give thanks to God for His help and faithfulness: "The Lord has certainly helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12). God has indeed been very good to us over these last 30 years that we have been established as a Union. Thirty years signify a pearl anniversary which speaks to wisdom, love and purity. This is the very essence of our 30 years of existence as a united group of women embracing the wisdom, love and purity of God in every aspect of our ministry and this is reflected in our motto: *'By Love Serve'*. We have experienced challenges but, the Lord was with us and we were able to weather the storm and kept united throughout these 30 years.

Over the 30 years, we have been able to cast our Vision and Mission Statements so that we can work together to achieve these. We have begun the process of working towards realizing our vision: *'The Women's Fellowship to be a relevant, dynamic, growing and caring Christian organization with empowered women enabled to offer their skills and abilities in strengthening the Ministry and Mission of the Church.'*

Relevant

We remain relevant these 30 years as we respond to the needs of young ladies by empowering them to achieve their tertiary educational pursuits through our annual scholarship funds; produced and circulated a video to express our intolerance of domestic violence and held a collaborative workshop on domestic violence in Guyana. Our affiliation and work with our mission partners such as Church Women United, Council for Voluntary and Social Services, and the Men's Fellowship continue to address needs both locally and internationally. As a Fellowship we were proactive. While the world was locked down during the pandemic, doors closed and gatherings suspended, we took the initiative to take our meetings to the virtual space and this attests to our ability to pivot and adapt quickly to changes as they occur.

Dynamic

This organization has been blessed with dynamism to have unearthed 11 President Generals who came from both antecedents and who served the organization with distinction. We use this medium to express our gratitude and appreciation to all who have served the Fellowship. We remember especially our two (2) directors: Rev. Dr. Adlyn White (deceased) and Joy Walker-Edwards who worked tirelessly and selflessly to ensure the Women's Fellowship remain vibrant and relevant. To all the Executives that worked in supporting roles at the various levels of the organization, we owe a depth of gratitude for the fine trail they have blazed that we benefit from today.

The organization is always open to taking on new

challenges and working in partnership with other groups in the church to fulfil Christ's ministry. As such, our women have demonstrated leadership in a variety of roles as Superintendents, Elders, Pastors, and Lay Leaders and have attended to infrastructural needs in the support of the Ministry and Mission of the Church. Also, in the Church's trust for Renewal and Transformation, the women adjusted its operation to the new structure, sensitized its membership, identified part-time staff support and continued its ministry in the new paradigm. Additionally, in celebrating our 25th anniversary a recognition and award ceremony was held and 170 members across the three regions were awarded for 25 years of dedication and commitment to the work of the Women Fellowship. Our dynamism can also be seen in the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding and the launch of the Men and Women in partnership.

Growing

The organization has grown over the last thirty years as new branches were commissioned, dormant ones revived and the enrolment of many new members. The developing and equipping of our women in evangelism, counselling, technology and the Word through the annual devotionals, prayer and fasting and Bible study. The Cayman Regional Mission Women's Fellowship has weathered some of their challenges, remained a part of the Women's Fellowship and participates in activities, attends meetings and is in constant interaction and communication with the Synodical Women's Fellowship.

They grew through the constant interaction, keen and astute guidance of the Leadership in Jamaica.

Caring

Our motto '*By Love Serve*' embraces all women and is lived out in compassion, care and the comforting presence of our women engaging and meeting the needs of: our children in Girls' Brigade, Walkers Place of Safety, The Pringle Home for Children and the Mount Olivet Boys' Home; seniors at the Senior Citizens' Home and women in crisis at the Margaret's

Home, the Women's Centre and the Prison Ministry in Cayman and Jamaica. The Men and Women in Partnership also organized and executed a Health Fair and retrofitted two churches with ramps to be accessed by members of the disabled community. Support is also given to women who have been in ministerial training and in recognizing the widows of deceased ministers, wives of retired ministers, as well as retired female ministers and full-time commissioned workers, in a special way at Christmas. These and many other love initiatives have proven to impact and touch the lives of women at various levels.

We salute and pay tribute to some of our stalwarts who have left us a legacy of faithful stewardship, commitment, selflessness and love. Well done good and faithful servants, your contribution to the development and growth of the women's fellowship is timeless and priceless.

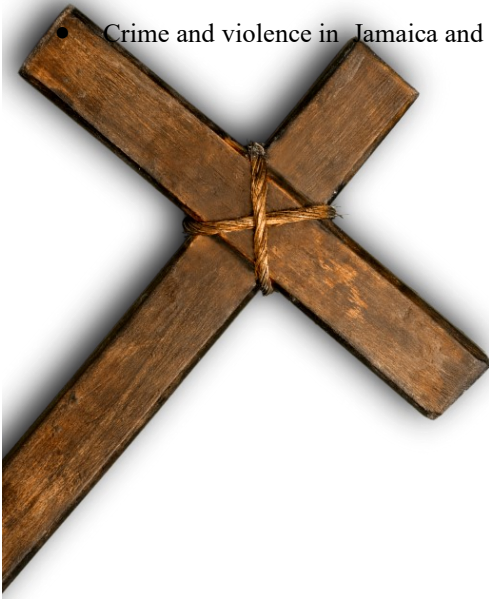
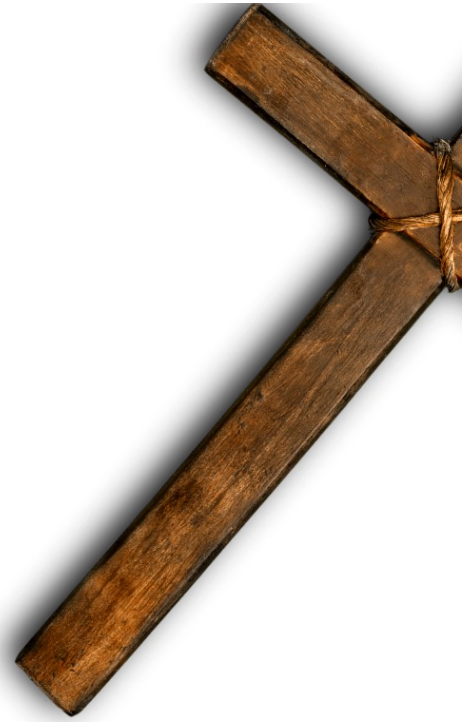
As we begin the journey to the next milestone, we invite our younger sisters to come with your youthfulness, visions, ideas, technological prowess, strength and creativity. Join us as we embrace evangelism in our programmes, advocate for the rights of women and girls, establish support groups to meet various needs, and implement empowerment or training sessions to address spiritual, social and emotional needs. Come join us younger sisters in our mission to become a more inclusive organization, establish sustainable leadership models, implement relevant programmes and advance in technology.

I close by thanking all who have served and are serving and ask that you will continue to avail yourself to be used by the Master, "May all who come behind us find us faithful...and the footprints that we leave will lead others to believe". May we remain faithful until Christ returns –By Love Serve.

Happy 30th Anniversary!

PRAYER *Corner*

- Rev. Wendell McKoy who lost his father
- Ms. Joy Williams who lost her brother
- The family of the victims of the fatal car accident on Palisadoes Road
- Rev. Raymond Coke, whose sister, Mrs. Hyacinth Bernard, passed on
- Rev. Dr. Cephas Stern whose mother, Rena Stern, passed on
- Pastor Edward Williams who lost his brother, Charles Williams
- Ms. Heather Thompson who lost her aunt, Ms. Annis Freeman
- Students, staff, parents and other members of the Oberlin High School community
- Members of staff with relatives affected by COVID-19
- People affected by the war between Ukraine and Russian
- Crime and violence in Jamaica and the security force and government as they respond



Dear God,

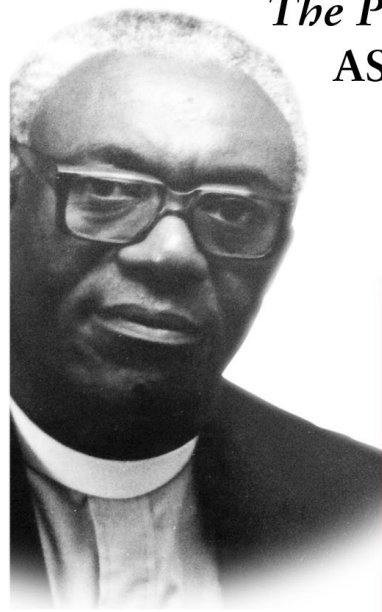
Words cannot describe the wonderment that You sent Your only begotten Son to come to earth as a Man - and to live a life of rejection and sorrow, and to suffer and die for me on the cross of Calvary - so that I might be forgiven of all my sins and live with You eternally in heaven.

Thank You Father that although I was unworthy to approach Your glorious throne, and enslaved in the kingdom of darkness, yet in Your mercy and grace You stooped down to me and lifted me out of the Satan's bondage and from the cesspit of sin, and seated me together with Christ in heavenly places and showered me with Your undeserved grace and favor. Thank You that I am now one of Your redeemed children, in Jesus' name I pray,

Amen.

CARIBBEAN *Prophet*

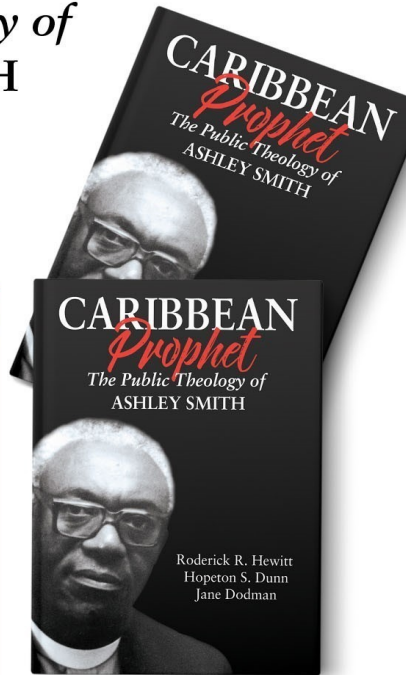
The Public Theology of ASHLEY SMITH



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Ashley Smith was a reformed Jamaican theologian and minister of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. Well known for his unapologetic, anti-imperial, Afro-centric interpretation of scriptures, Smith's contribution in shaping the post-independence theological discourse in Jamaica is significant. Without fear or favour, Smith acted as a critical voice on church and society from the 1950s to the time of his passing in 2020. Deconstructing the Western myth of hierarchical concepts of human races in which self-interest placed White Europeans at the top and Black Africans at the bottom, Smith argued relentlessly for a restructuring of the world away from a European interpretation and understanding to an incorporation of the worldviews of other cultures. A major public figure in the 1970s, Smith's prolific writing on theology and development set him apart as a pioneering theologian from the Reformed tradition contributing greatly to the development of a Caribbean theology.

In *Caribbean Prophet: The Public Theology of Ashley Smith*, the contributors – leading scholars within Jamaica from different faith traditions – articulate the different ways in which Smith's public theology utilized the experiences of African-Jamaicans to redefine their humanity and identity focusing on their resilience to build agency. The result is an exposition of Ashley Smith, the pioneer, his speaking truth to power, his contribution to Caribbean theology as an educator and scholar and his enduring legacy.

Roderick R. Hewitt is professor in systematic theology and lectures in African theologies in the diaspora, ecumenical theology, and missiology.

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Jane Dodman is a retired educator and a commissioned lay minister of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.

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Liturgy for Worship

Isaiah 7:10-16 || Psalm 80:1-7 || Romans 1:1-7 || Matthew 1:18-25

Emmanuel – Our Visible Hope
December 18, 2022

During times of crises, to whom do we turn? God's sign to Ahaz was fulfilled despite Ahaz' fear and apparent disobedience. Joseph's faith in the long ago promise allowed him to stick with Mary when it seemed she had forsaken him.

- What are the visible signs of God's promise being fulfilled in our lives?
- Will we trust God when life (seems to) fail us?

Possible Song 'O Come O Come Emmanuel'

Theme song 'Jesus Christ our Living Hope'



A fraction of the 2022 Lay Leaders Module 1 graduating class.

“WE DID IT!

WE ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING AND WE ARE PROUD!”

This was the declaration of one of the graduates at the recent United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (UCJCI) Module 1 Lay Leaders Certificate Course graduation in Mandeville Jamaica.

The excitement and sense of accomplishment were palpable on Sunday, November 13, 2022, at Ridgemount United Church. Dressed primarily in white with their corsages and boutonnieres, the proud graduands processed into the church and took their place in history as the 2nd cohort of Module 1. The Lay Leaders Certificate Course is offered in collaboration with the International University of the Caribbean (IUC).

The graduating class consisted of 67 persons - 11 males and 56 females - representing all regions of UCJCI and 29 congregations. The Module was offered from February to August 2022.

The Moderator of UCJCI, Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott, heralded a call to learners to put their gifts and training to use by joining in the intervention and transformation of institutions, communities and nations of Jamaica and

the Cayman Islands. “To whom much is given, much is required and expected. We need many more hands on deck. Our communities and institutions need transformation,” declared the Moderator. Noting that the church needs to respond to the lawlessness and anti-social behaviour in both societies ‘with greater intentionality’, Rt. Rev. Harriott stated the United Church’s belief that God has gifted lay persons as well as clergy to play roles in the ministry and mission of Christ. He urged the graduates to see this training of lay persons as further equipping for service.

President of IUC, Professor Roderick Hewitt commended the action-reflection mode of learning and noted that the UCJCI Lay Training Institute, through which the modules are offered, continues the work begun by The Institute for Theological and Leadership Development (ITLD) in equipping the people of God for the work of ministry and mission. ITLD is a constituent college of IUC, now branded – College of Leadership and Theological Development (CLTD). He urged the gathering to be ‘lifelong learners’ seeking an informed faith and making use of opportunities for mutual learning.

The main address and challenge came from the speaker for the event, Rev. Dr. Collin Cowan, minister of the Immanuel/Boscobel charge, who drew

on Jesus’ proclamation of his ministry in Matthew 4:17, to establish the Kingdom of God. Dr. Cowan stated that Jesus’ followers are called to join in ministry which opposes kingdoms that threaten life. Congratulating the graduates for offering themselves to be trained to be better equipped to serve, he asked “Are we attuned to what is going on around us, and are we ready to respond?” He said the Lay Leaders Training provides means to understand Christ’s ministry as part of a programme of ongoing discipleship. He issued two challenges.

“We must re-commit ourselves to the mission of Jesus seeking life-flourishing community where we seek the good of each other, honour and protect the dignity of others... advocate and act for the freedom of those on the margins of community.”

His second challenge was to “reclaim our calling by returning to the first apostles’ approach – teaching and fellowship, prayer and breaking of bread, responding to the needs of one another.” Dr. Cowan urged “discontent with the impact of our voice and presence”, and called the gathered community to remember the accounts of the early church where “... day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”

NOTICES



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Welcome to the Season of Advent

The beginning of the Advent season signals the coming of Christmas and so our preparations begin. There are gifts to buy, cards to send, menus to plan for, people to see. The four Sundays – and weeks - of Advent remind us of the importance of the spiritual aspect of this preparation, the reading of our hearts and minds, not only for the celebration of Jesus’ birth (1st coming) but also for His future return in glory (2nd coming) when He will set up His kingdom, judge His enemies, and reward the faithful, both living and dead.

Advent is full of symbolism and meaning. These are expressed by the themes of the four Sundays/weeks.

- 1st Sunday - HOPE
- 2nd Sunday - PEACE
- 3rd Sunday - JOY
- 4th Sunday - LOVE



THE ADVENT JOURNEY:

- HOPE** BECOMES PEACE
- PEACE** BECOMES JOY
- JOY** BECOMES LOVE
- LOVE** BECOMES **CHRIST**

R. Schuller

End Violence Against Women and Children



Share your Thursdays in Black photos on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and tag us @ucji

#WCC, #UCJCI #evgw #ThursdaysinBlack #endviolenceagainstwomen



*Tune in to United in Faith Sundays on **RJR** 94 F.M at 6:30 a.m.*

HAPPY Birthday



Rev. Carlington Keen
December 15



Rev. Nicole Ashwood
December 21



Mrs. Jeanette Rose-Bryan
Director of Pringle Home
December 21

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

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