



UCJCI UPDATE

JULY 5, 2023

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



AS MEN GATHERED AT KNOX COLLEGE FOR THE UCJCI MANIFEST, GOOD TIMES OF FELLOWSHIP WERE EXPERIENCED.

ON THE INSIDE

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UCJCI UPDATE

UPDATE IS PUBLISHED BY THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS. THE PUBLICATION PROVIDES INFORMATION ABOUT THE DENOMINATION, NEWS OF HAPPENINGS IN REGIONS, MATERIAL TO FACILITATE WORSHIP AND THE BIBLE, ACTIVITIES FOR PARTICIPATION AND PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES OF PUBLIC CONCERN.

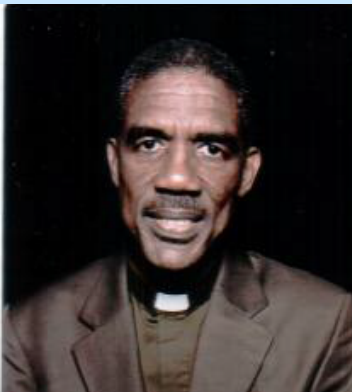
FEATURE ARTICLE

UCJCI HOLDS WITNESS AS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY. THIS MEANS WE HIGHLY VALUE AND WILL PURSUE WITNESSING FOR CHRIST. THIS WEEK UPDATE FEATURES ADVOCACY AS A MEANS OF WITNESSING. THE SPOTLIGHT WILL BE PLACED ON PARTNERSHIP ACTION WITH COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION, AND THE INITIATIVE OF CHURCHES REPARATIONS ACTION FORUM (CRAF). **READ ABOUT THESE ON PP. 2 AND 3**



UCJCI DOING THE WORK OF ADVOCACY

WITNESS is one of the strategic priorities of UCJCI. In the following article, **ADVOCACY** as a means of witnessing to the life of Christ is demonstrated in the work of advocacy in the matter of reparations for transatlantic slavery.



Rev Dr Gordon Cowans



Rev Dr Collin Cowan

UCJCI MINISTERS PART OF A DELEGATION TO UK CHURCHES

An editorial in the Jamaica Gleaner published June 17, 2023 states that the movement for reparation is gaining momentum. "Voices from CARICOM's Reparations Commission, the UWI Centre for Reparations Research, various academics, researchers, legal luminaries, political leaders, institutions and grass-roots representatives have gained deep resonance

REPARATIONS TALK

in all parts of the world". Among those voices is the Church Reparations Action Forum (CRAF).

CRAF, whose co-founder is Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans, was established in 2019 according to another Gleaner article (June 16, 2023) 'to be the voice of the church in Jamaica on reparations'.

A delegation including Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans and Rev. Dr. Collin Cowan met with representatives of The Quakers, Churches Together in England, the Evangelical Alliance, the Church of England, the New Testament Church of God, and the National Church Leaders' Forum between June 16 and 27, 2023 in the United Kingdom.

The article continues, 'Among the arguments the Jamaicans are seeking to advance is a justification for UK church denominations involved in the transatlantic slave trade to consider making financial restitution to black communities still experiencing the harmful effects of enslavement'. Co-founder of CRAF, Rev. Bruce Fletcher, is reported as stating, "It's CRAF's hope that whilst in Britain, we will move the case for reparations forward."

Rev Dr Gordon Cowans, indicated that it was not simply a matter of money. "It entails Christians also seeking to redress the emotional and psychological harm enslavement caused within black communities."

UCJCI DOING THE WORK OF ADVOCACY

SUPPORT FOR TAIWAN

*"You are not forgotten,
and you are not alone."*

ADVOCACY as a means of witnessing to the life of Christ is demonstrated in UCJCI's collaborative work with partner Council for World Mission in standing with the people of Taiwan experiencing oppressive structures which are life-denying.

Meeting under the theme "Break Down the Walls of Division", in their recent Annual Members' Meeting, CWM has indicated its solidarity and support with the people of Taiwan including the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

The following statement of support was published by CWM.

"CWM actively listened to the voices of the Taiwanese people. Caught in the escalating geopolitics between competing Empires, Taiwan is living under the constant threat of war. Empire-policies have created deep divisions not only within Taiwanese society, but also in the entire Asia-Pacific region. The situation has been intensified in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war, with Empires taking more aggressive actions than in the recent past. Taiwan has experienced increased military exercises (simulations and provocations), and the Taiwanese people feel increasingly vulnerable.

Taiwan has been one of the most isolated nations in the world during the Covid-19 Pandemic, primarily because of its exclusion from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Health Regulations (IHR). Taiwan was not allowed to participate in the global response to the pandemic, including accessing information and resources, sharing data and best practices, and participating in international discussions and decision-making. CWM has been working closely with the PCT and other ecumenical partners through the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum (TEF), advocating for the rights of the Taiwanese people to "self-determination", including religious, political, and economic freedom, and in pursuing peace in the region.

CWM affirms Taiwan's right to rise to life through the pursuit of justice, peace, and reconciliation. It acknowledges the resilience of the people of Taiwan in resisting the oppressive structures which threaten to destroy peace in their communities and limit their opportunity to flourish. CWM commends Taiwan's generosity in contributing to the welfare and wellbeing of other nations, even in the face of its own challenges—including assistance for Ukraine, financial support during Covid, and standing in solidarity with Hong Kong. CWM calls for greater global cooperation within and beyond the CWM family to support Taiwan in its struggle for peace, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. It urges global multinational and ecumenical organisations to hear the voices of the Taiwanese people, to speak out against the military hostilities being suffered by Taiwan, and against the injustice of Taiwan's continued isolation.

Christian wisdom reminds us that we are all connected, and "if one member suffers, all suffer together with it" (1 Cor 12: 26); CWM affirms its solidarity with Taiwan and its people, and says, **"You are not forgotten, and you are not alone"**.

OMISSION - 50 YEARS OF ORDAINING WOMEN

In an article in last UCJCI Update, women who had been ordained by the United Church were identified as we celebrated 50 Years of Ordaining Women. **Rev. Sadekie Lyttle Forbes**, who was **ordained in 2007** was omitted from this list. Also Rev. Dr. Margaret Fowler's ordination was in **1994** and not **1984**. The Editor of UCJCI Update apologises for the omission and the error.

COUNCIL NEWS – WRMC



The Commissioner of Police in Jamaica, Major Antony Anderson, in updating the nation, reported that crime resulting from interpersonal conflicts has increased. UCJCI is collaborating with the Ministry of Justice in preparing persons to advance conflict resolution which could impact the incidence of such crimes. 14 participants from Western Regional Mission Council completed a two-day training June 14 and 24, 2023. The venue was St. Paul's United Church, Montego Bay, St. James. Above a presentation is made to express gratitude to resource person Cheryl Bebbington, the Regional Manager for the Ministry of Justice in the Western Region who conducted training.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE TRAINING IN THE WEST

COUNCIL NEWS – CIRMC

It's Graduation Season!

CAYMAN PREPARATORY AND HIGH SCHOOL



**CLASS
OF 2023**



Ms Annabella Voaden being presented with awards including UCJCI Ethics Award by Rev Forrester.

The Annual Year 11 Graduation Ceremony for the Cayman Prep and High School was held on Wednesday, June 28, 2023 at the school's auditorium. Over four hundred family members, friends and well-wishers, along with CPHS Governors, Members of the CIRMC, the Department of Education Services and Premier Hon Wayne Panton and Mrs Panton, attended the ceremony. Guest Speaker, Mr Dean-Paul Wallace encouraged and challenged the graduates to live in such ways that enable them to make a difference in the lives of people and in the world.

Ms Annabella Voaden was the recipient of the 2022-2023 United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands Ethics Award. She was also the top performing student in Physics and Drama. Rev Rohan Forrester, Chair of Council, presented the award to Ms Voaden.

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Ms Emily Ch'Ng received the subject prizes for Biology, Chemistry, French and Economics. She was also the recipient of the Dart Award for Excellence in STEM and Emily also received the Ernest and Young Award for the Top Academic Achiever.



Mr Dean-Paul Wallace- Guest Speaker

Send news of your congregation and region for UCJCI Update to citc@ucjci.com

COUNCIL NEWS – CIRMC

CTLT CELEBRATES SIXTH GRADUATION CEREMONY

The Centre for Theological Leadership Training (CTLT) held its sixth graduation ceremony at the Church of God of Prophecy Victory Tabernacle on Sunday 25 June. The institution provides tuition in all aspects of theology and pastoral care, at Certificate and Diploma, Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate level. It was begun by Director of CTLT Rt. Rev. Dr. P. J. Lawrence, who has much experience in beginning new theological learning institutions since graduating, and being ordained in Bangalore, India, 52 years ago and through experience with UCJCI's Institute for Theological and Leadership Development, forerunner of the International University of the Caribbean.

CTLT Certificate, Bachelors and Masters students marched into the church, to the tune of "I'm marching upwards to Zion, the beautiful City of God," while their families, came to cheer them on their path.



The graduates' degrees are conferred.



Mrs Yolanda Whittaker is ordained into the new Ministry of Sports Chaplain during the CTLT graduation.



Masters Graduate Janet Durran is sashed by Bishop Dr Clayton Martin, with Rt. Rev. Dr. P.J. Lawrence looking on.

One by one each of the graduates was called onto the stage to receive their certificates, beginning with the Certificate programme. Next came the Bachelors, and finally, the Masters students, many of whom have been with CTLT for four years.

During the ceremony, too, Rev. Christopher Mason of the Elmslie Memorial Church was present to confer on one of the Bachelors graduates from last year, Yolanda Whittaker, the newly established ministry of Cayman Islands Sports Chaplain.

Prepared from an article by Rt. Rev. Dr. P. J. Lawrence published in CIRMC Weekly Update

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'Men, do the Work of Ministry'

Moderator of the Synod of the United Church, Rr. Rev. Gary Harriott, challenged the men gathered at UCJCI Manfest to commit to do the work of ministry especially work among other men and boys. He said, "It is of critical importance that we have a vibrant ministry in meeting the needs of our men, as well as facilitate their ministry engagement. Our men are gifted; resourceful and must be meaningfully engaged in the Ministry and Mission of Christ. I hope to see more of our men participating in the public witness of the church".

Manfest was held on Saturday July 1, 2023 at Knox College in Spalding. Achieving 80% of the target attendance, Manfest attracted 120 men of varying ages across regions who gathered for worship, fellowship, food, discussion and fun.



Moderator's encouragement:
"Step forward and share in the leadership of families, congregations and wider UCJCI."



SCENES OF WORSHIP



PHOTOS:

- Moderator gives the opening challenge.
- A section of the gathering of men.
- Even the chef, Brother Wallace, takes a break for worship
- Markel leads the men in praise

UCJCI MANIFEST



Who colt di game?

Rev. Dr. Henry Samuels, Minister of Hope United Church led devotions in the morning and Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary brought greetings from the Synod. He noted that the Synod had concerns about men's ministry but is also committed to ensuring the men's ministry is revived in a wholesome way.

Mr. Carlton Rodney, President of Synodical Men's Fellowship welcomed the men. Noting, "The spirit of our Brothers were electrifying, the atmosphere was great, the presentations were well received and caused many to contemplate 'Wellness Visits' to the doctors, rather than emergencies.



Fellowship and 'Reasonins'



COMMENTS ON THE DAY

An attendee stated, "The conversation among men is the best we have had".

Others expressed joy at seeing brothers they have not seen in many years and noted that men were armed with quality information.

"We now have a better understanding of the needs of women which will lead to better relationships".

"We left that lecture hall far more appreciative of the many opportunities that we have to change our life and health circumstances. We need to be healthy to do the work of ministry."



A deep discussion on who gets the last stalk of cane.

Our Homes are Places of Worship



JULY - REALIGN THE HEART

It is when our hearts are realigned by the Holy Spirit that we can truly discern God's will and purpose for our lives.

Theme this Week:

The Realigned Heart is Blessed

Suggested Scriptures:

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Psalms 45:10-17

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

- Abraham's servant Eliezer understands God's purpose and God's plan for Abraham's life. God has already shown God's capacity to bless and prosper those who remain faithful. Eliezer reiterates the list of God's blessings and, by his action and faithfulness, he secures a wife for Isaac.
- Paul reminds the Roman Church that living for Christ is difficult, but by God's grace, we can live righteously, and we can, thereby, experience God's blessings.
- Perhaps the Matthew text best helps us to understand how blessed we are in Christ- 11:28 "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The heaviness of the burden of life is lifted in and through our response to Christ. Yoke and burden no longer have the potential to destroy us as Christ invites us to lay down our burden and take His burden, which is easy, hence our blessing!

Let us pray for

- Rev. Donald Williams who lost a brother
- Rev. Dr. Collin Cowan who lost a brother.
- Camp ministry in the United Church which begins on Saturday July 8
- Vacation Bible School and other special activities planned for children for the summer that many will receive salvation and all will be safe from harm.
- Wisdom, discernment and understanding in the face of changing technologies.
- That all who choose to take time away from work during the summer will experience restful and refreshing times.
- Our preparedness and safety during the current hurricane season.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS



REV. CLIFTON BAILEY

JULY 7, 2023

REV. DR. CEPHAS STERN

JULY 7, 2023



MS. LORRAINE HOWELL

JULY 11, 2023

30th 
**CHURCHES'
EMANCIPATION
LECTURE 2023**

Emancipation:
The Lesson and The Legacy

Human Trafficking

A Recent Chapter of an Old Story

Presenter

Elizabeth Thomas-Hope

Professor Emerita, The University of the West Indies



BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
6 Hope Road, Kingston 10
Sunday, July 30, 2023 at 4:00pm

Savanna-La-Mar United Church
Presents

SUNDAY
JULY
30
2023
4pm

An evening of

ELEGANCE

With The Jamaica Constabulary Force Band
in Concert

Proceeds are in aid of the church's outreach programs

Featuring

Robert Ewart (Digicel Rising Star 2nd Place Winner)
Joan Dixon & Pete Manbode: Cabaret Singer & Musician

Admission: Adults \$2,500 | Children \$1,000 (at the gate)

UPCOMING EVENTS

MT. OLIVET CHARGE OF UNITED CHURCHES
Presents

CRUSADE & CONVENTION 2023

Under the theme: **SET US ON FIRE LORD! St. Luke 12:49**

JULY 9-16, 2023

MT. OLIVET UNITED CHURCH

CRUSADE-JULY 9-14 @ 6:30 PM NIGHTLY



Rev. M. Knight
July 9



Rev. K. Davis
July 10



Rev. R. Bryan
July 11



Rev. K. Montaque
July 12 & 13



Rev. T. Phiri
July 14

CONVENTION-JULY 16 @ 10AM



Morning Session: Rev. R. A. Kong
Host Minister



Evening Session: Rev. D. McPherson
Eltham United



SYNODICAL THEME:
Rooted, Resilient: Re-ignited by the Spirit
(Return, Reconnect, Realign, Re-ignite)

OUR VISION

*Touching Lives, Nurturing Disciples, Seeking Transformation
through Christ*

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

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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
Mrs. Janet McConnell

Western Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Mauleen Henry