



UCJCI UPDATE

JULY 12, 2023

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

UCJCI UPDATE WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED ON JULY 19 AND 26, 2023. PUBLICATION RESUMES ON AUGUST 2, 2023



A SECTION OF THE 2023 GRADUATING CLASS OF IONA HIGH SCHOOL POSE WITH SENIOR TEACHER MRS. STACEY RICKETTS.

ON THE INSIDE

- UCJCI CANDIDATES TO BEGIN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
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- WORSHIP AND PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES
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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 BIBLE STUDY, ACTIVITIES FOR PARTICIPATION AND PRAYER, AND SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES OF PUBLIC CONCERN.

FEATURE ARTICLE

AS PART OF THE REFORMED TRADITION, THE UNITED CHURCH BELIEVES IN THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS. SO MEN AND WOMEN WHO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO BE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST ARE UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE WORK OF MINISTRY. IN THE UNITED CHURCH THIS WORK IS CARRIED OUT BY ORDAINED AND LAY PERSONS. UPDATE FEATURES TWO YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE BEGINNING PREPARATION FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY. **READ PAGES 2 AND 3**



MISSION WEEKEND IN CIRMC P. 10

UCJCI CANDIDATES FOR MINISTRY ON THEIR WAY TO UTCWI

TWO CANDIDATES FROM UCJCI WILL BEGIN THEOLOGICAL TRAINING FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY IN SEPTEMBER 2023

Mrs. Debesha Grant Roberts and Mr. Stephen Usher are on their way to Golding Avenue to embark upon theological education for the Academic Year 2023-2024 at The United Theological College of the West Indies. Both members of the United Church have been engaged in a series of important conversations with their minister, region and Church and Ministry synodical committee and accompanied on a period of discernment as they reflected on God's call on their lives to engage in ministry on a full-time basis.

In subscribing to the understanding of 'the priesthood of all believers' which means 'every person who embraces salvation through Jesus Christ is automatically enlisted in the service of God' (*UCJCI Ministerial Formation Unit brochure*), the United Church receives individuals who have expressed understanding of God's call on their lives. An ordained minister in the UCJCI is a servant who seeks to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and normally does so as his or her primary vocation.



Mrs. Debesha Grant Roberts and Mr. Stephen Usher will pursue theological studies in September.



MEET DEBESHA GRANT ROBERTS

Which is your home congregation?

My home congregation is Seafield United Church, which is in the Carron Hall charge in NERMC.

How have you served the church over the years?

I have been privileged to be exposed to service from my days at youth fellowship. I was elected to serve as President, Vice-President, and Secretary at various points and this laid the foundation for my years of service to the church.

Currently I serve as an elder at church, where I lead worship and share the Word of God.

Meet Debesha Grant Roberts cont'd

Regionally I have been a part of UCYPF and UCYAAM bodies. From these experiences I have been better equipped to work with diverse types of persons and to broaden my understanding of Christ's vineyard.

At the Synodical level, I currently serve as the Synodical President for Young Adults. I have also been invited to journey alongside different individuals on Synodical committees.

I also serve ecumenically as Caribbean representative for Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM)

How do you feel about arriving at this moment?

I never envisioned that I would be a minister, I just thought I would be doing "church work" most of my life. Despite this, I feel humbled and privileged to have been called to serve in this way.

What are your hopes for UCJCI?

That we have adequate ministers so that our congregations can benefit from more focused pastoral guidance. Also, I hope we will be involved in increased societal advocacy; have greater support of our ministries at the congregational level and that our church would remain anchored in Christ within an ever-changing society.

What kind of leadership do you aspire to offer to UCJCI?

Leadership which is open to learning and developing while offering all of my skill sets and experiences.

Is there an aspect of ministry in which you are particularly interested?

Although I am interested in ministry to the whole people of God I have always felt drawn to youth ministry. Working in camp ministry has helped me to observe the need for greater involvement in this area.

Debesha is married and has one child.



MEET STEPHEN USHER

Which is your home congregation i

Webster Memorial United Church in NERMC.

How have you served the church over the years?

I've served as Sunday School teacher, Young Church teacher and coordinator. I've also been a part of the discipleship Bible study team where I create the Bible reading plans and plan and lead the Bible reading panel discussions. Additionally, I serve as an elder and a Synod delegate for the NERMC region.

How do you feel about arriving at this moment?

I am a bit anxious and curious to see what it will be like to serve in another context. I'm also looking forward to learning from seasoned Pastors and theologians.

What are your hopes for UCJCI?

That it will be a Church where people are disciplined and nurtured. Where they will find meaningful fellowship and community and where Christ and His Word are the centre of life so that people can connect scripture to their way of life.

What kind of leadership would you like to offer to UCJCI?

I would like to offer sacrificial leadership in my church. I am particularly drawn to the area of discipleship and teaching, as it concerns daily Bible reading, frequent Bible studies and the development of a healthy devotional life for myself and the wider United Church, and I hope to cultivate the writing skills that would enable me to lead in this way.

Is there an aspect of ministry for which you are passionate?

I have a passion for discipleship, preaching and teaching.

Stephen is married and has two children.

CELEBRATING UCJCI STAFF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

This month, the Southern Regional Mission Council celebrates with our Programme Secretary, Ms. Sheree O'Connor!

On Sunday, July 2, 2023, Ms. O'Connor graduated from the Regent College with a Bachelor of Arts in Theology with a minor in Counselling.



Ms. Sheree O'Connor – Programme Secretary, Southern Regional Mission Council.

Ms. O'Connor was the co-valedictorian, as well as the recipient of the college's award for outstanding academic performance.



Chair of SRMC, Rev. Anthony Chung and Moderator, Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott shared in the celebration.

IONA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Iona High School In Tower Isle, St. Mary graduated 120 Grades 11 and 13 students on Wednesday July 5, 2023 on the school grounds.

The ceremony was attended by the Honourable Errol V. Johnson, Custos Rotulorum of St. Mary, Mr. Robert Montague, Member of Parliament for Western St. Mary, Mrs. Rose Wedderburn, Regional Deputy General Secretary, NERMC, Mrs. Hughtette Grant Watson of the Iona Past Students Association, all of whom brought greetings.

The guest speaker was Mr. Dwight Holett, Education Officer - Region 2. He challenged the graduates using the theme of the graduation 'Continued Pursuit of Excellence'. In his address he told the graduates that they all had the power to fulfil their potential and to achieve excellence and pointed them to the keys to success using the acronym K.E.Y. Mr. Holett pointed to three keys to unlocking success as follows:

Knowledge – He charged the graduates to know themselves and what they are able to do in order to be successful. They were also to know their subject matter and be specific in aiming to achieve their ambition instead of trying to know everything.

Extraordinary – graduates were encouraged to be extraordinary, they were to demand from themselves the highest standard, as average was not good enough.

Yearning – the graduates were challenged to always have a yearning to be a better version of themselves.



The graduating class of 2023 of Grade 13 students with Mrs Stacey Ricketts, Grade 12 Coordinator and Senior Teacher.



Mr. Dwight Holett, Education Officer, Region 2 addresses the graduates.

IONA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION *Cont'd*



Principal, Mrs. Melva Humes Johnson who has served the school for over 20 years, indicated she would be retiring and would be proceeding on pre-retirement leave as of September 1, 2023. She shared some of the achievements of the school in sports and in achieving 100% passes in a number of subject areas. She thanked the Staff, Board of Governors, Ministry of Education, Parents and Students for their support and encouraged parents to receive the staff who will be serving them as of September 2023.

Iona High School was started by the late Rev. Dr. Herbert Swaby, former UCJCI minister, and Mrs. Gwendolyn Swaby, his wife, in 1949. The school continues to serve the community of St. Mary and beyond under its motto 'With God All Things Are Possible'.



Mrs. Hughette Grant Watson of the Iona Past Students Association

BOSCOBEL UNITED WELCOMED YOUTH FROM THE JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE



Lay Pastor Norma Marriott with members of the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF). She offered prayer and encouragement.



These are the young men and women from the Jamaica Defence Force who worshipped with us on Fathers' Day at Boscobel United Church. We had prayer time with them and showed our hospitality. We are expecting them back very soon.

CONGRATULATIONS!!



REV. CARLENE WALFORD COMPLETES MASTERS STUDIES

Rev. Carlene Walford, Acting Minister of the Goshen charge of United Churches in NERMC, has completed Master of Arts in International Community Development. Rev. Walford's studies were sponsored through Council for World Mission's Academic Accompaniment Programme.



A number of United Church ministers and members have received educational support for graduate and post-graduate study through Council for World Mission, a worldwide family of churches of which the United Church is a part.

For information on the process of application, contact the Human and Mission Resource Manager of UCJCI
Email: hmr@ucjci.com

NATIONS UNITED FOR CHRIST

The annual Elmslie Charge Mission Weekend made its return this past weekend following a hiatus, as a result of the COVID pandemic. The event was blessed to have two speakers from Operation Mobilization (“OM”). Mr. Paul Wheatley is the Caribbean Executive Director of OM. Paul is from England and currently lives in the US. Mrs. Keitra Vilma, accompanied by her husband Jude, is from the Bahamas. Keitra is the OM Regional Director for the Northern Caribbean.



Youth Night – Zimbabwe



Youth Night – Philippines

The weekend opened with a service at 7:00 on Friday evening. Keitra shared her testimony about leaving banking to go into full time mission. Paul spoke about “Mission in our Backyard”. Youth Meeting followed immediately with an introduction to mission, including a rich cultural experience of Saudi Arabia and India.

Saturday morning started with breakfast, followed by two workshops – the first on Mission was led by Keitra, while the second seminar on Everyday Evangelism was led by Paul. The sessions were well attended, including invited guests from various nations and other churches across the island.

Paul spoke at our Sunday morning service while Keitra shared with our children and showed a video on the OM Ministry. The closing service was a grand finale as we worshipped with our invited guests from Zimbabwe, India, Philippines, Nicaragua, Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba and many other nationalities who are a part of our congregation and community. We were challenged, as Paul spoke on “Ordinary believers involved in God’s plan for the nations”.

(Cont'd on following page)

NATIONS UNITED FOR CHRIST



Youth Night - India



Youth Night - Saudi Arabia

Fellowship continued in the courtyard as we enjoyed music and food from the various nations, many in their cultural dress. A feast of Cayman-style dishes was prepared by Elmslie's ladies (even though the conch stew was prepared by a Texan). There was an undeniable Christian union as the Nations worshipped and shared together, many expressing their appreciation of the blessing, inspiration and challenge they received over the weekend. To God be the Glory!

**THEREFORE, GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES
OF ALL NATIONS,; BAPTIZING THEM IN
THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF
THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,
AND TEACHING THEM TO OBEY
EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED
YOU."**

MATTHEW 28: 19, 20

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 Prayerful and Fruitful

Suggested Scriptures:

Genesis 25:19-34

Psalms 119:105-112/Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

- You who answer prayer- to You, all flesh shall come (Psalm 65:2) The Psalmist captures the essence of why we pray. We have a God who answers prayers. The realigned heart knows the power of prayer, and the soul is drenched with the presence of the Spirit when we come to God in prayer.
- In the Gospel reading, it is a prayerful, committed life that bears fruit. Prayer deepens the roots of our faith. We are not easily tossed to and fro; the hardships of life do not scorch our faith; the thorn and weeds cannot choke who we are in Christ because we are firmly grounded.
- Paul reminds us, "But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him". Our life of prayer enables us to dwell richly in Christ and produce the fruit of faithful living.

Let us pray for

- The family of the late Mrs. Helen Webley, widow of the late Rev. Stanford Webley. Mrs. Webley died on Tuesday July 11.
- Mr. Mike Bowerman of CIRMC who recently suffered a stroke and for his wife Mary as she cares for him.
- For vulnerable groups who are seriously impacted by the intense heat.
- The safety of children in our care through Camp ministry, Vacation Bible School and other summer activities.
- 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.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



**REV. TAMARA SMITH
COLEMAN
JULY 14**



**REV. CARLENE
WALFORD
JULY 19**



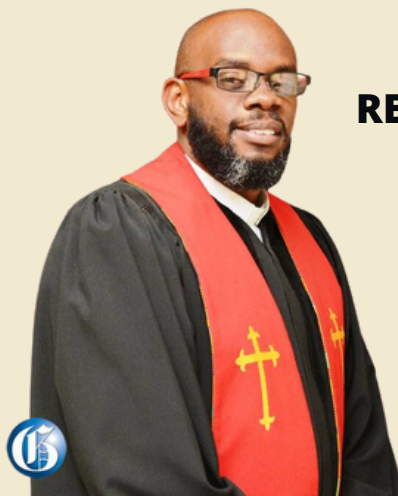
**MS. DERRICA ELLIS
JULY 20**



**REV. LOUIS SULLY
JULY 21**



**REV. SELVIN GRAY
JULY 25**



**REV. ASTOR CARLISLE
JULY 23**



**REV. HYACINTH EDWARDS
JULY 26**



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

St. Paul's United Church (LA)

presents

PRAYER

PRAISE

**"The Power of Prayer and
Praise!"**

SUNDAY

JULY 23, 2023 @ 6:00PM

3 LOCKETT AVE, KINGSTON 4

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

OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE



JOIN OUR AMAZING TEAM

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT NORTH-EASTERN REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

Job Summary: To perform a variety of administrative/secretarial duties in supporting the Deputy General Secretary in order to maintain and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Regional Mission Council.

✓ Drafts letters, official and routine correspondence and memoranda

✓ Maintain the financial records for the Council

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

-Diploma in Business Administration or another related discipline OR

-Five GCE O'Level or CXC/CSEC subjects at the General Proficiency Level, including English Language with three years related work experience

Send your resume to
synodhr@ucjci.com

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, JULY 28, 2023



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)

12 Carlton Crescent, Kingston 10 Jamaica, W. I.
Tel: 876 9268734; ♦ E-mail: synod@ucjci.com ♦ Website: www.ucjci.com

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