



# UCJCI UPDATE

OCTOBER 18, 2023 VOL. 10 NO. 22

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

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PROUD RECIPIENTS OF HONOUR ON NATIONAL HEROES DAY IN JAMAICA - MRS MILLISTER JONES AND LAY PASTOR ESCAR WYNTER. P. 8

## 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

THE JAMAICAN NATIONAL PLEDGE INVITES COMMITMENT TO SERVE. WE ARE PROUD THAT THERE ARE PERSONS IN THIS UNITED CHURCH WHO HAVE ENGAGED THE SECOND GREAT COMMANDMENT, 'LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF' AS STATED BY JESUS HIMSELF, AND HAVE DONE SO BY GIVING OF THEMSELVES IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS. WE SALUTE THEM. WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAN MANY OFFER SELFLESS SERVICE AND HAVE NEVER BEEN ACCLAIMED FOR THEIR WORK. I URGE US TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO THOSE WE KNOW WHO SACRIFICE TO SERVE, WHO MAY NEVER BE RECOGNISED BY COUNTRY FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS. IT WON'T TAKE MUCH FOR US TO SAY 'THANK YOU'. (PAGES 8 AND 9)



THIS ISSUE OF UPDATE CARRIES THE SECOND SEGMENT OF AN ARTICLE ON THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT. PAGES 2-4

# BEYOND THE Pulpit

## THE ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN CONFLICT *PT. 2 OF 2*

by Rev. Dr. Roderick Hewitt

This article series was published in UCJCI Update in June 2021. It followed the killing of persons in Gaza and Israel. This represents a perspective on the conflict which hopefully, in light of current conflict, will initiate discussion.

### Blind addiction to a false and unjust ideology

It was the ancestors of many of these white Southern conservative Christians that used scriptures to support the enslavement of Africans and indigenous Indians. Therefore, it is paradoxical that Jamaicans, whose ancestors have also suffered from European misuse of the bible to support the evil system of slavery, have now joined forces with conservatives and fundamentalist evangelicals with their flawed theology to support the enslavement, imprisonment and oppression of Palestinians. Such Christians are addicted to supporting Israel for any reason because they believe that in doing so they are pleasing God and are storing up blessings for themselves.

### Contradiction within Rastafari

What is also of interest within the Jamaican context is that Rastafari hermeneutics (interpretation of scriptures) that is built on a strong anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and liberative ideology seems to be embedded in an ideological support of Israel because of its uncritical use of the scriptures. Rastafari use of selective Old Testament texts has further



compounded their situation. Their stated commitment to putting up resistance should have aligned them with the resistance of the Palestinian people against colonialist occupation of their land. But I am not aware of any of the songs of Rastafari critiquing the Israeli occupation policy as “Babylon” that Jah will overthrow. This issue must be addressed by Rastafari or else they stand accused of being a movement that is myopic and in support of injustice.

### Fullness of Life for all

This article argues that the position taken by many Jamaican Christians and church leaders that give uncritical support to Israel's conflict with the Palestinians is untenable and against the gospel of Jesus that offers “fullness of life for all”. If Israel does not regard or respect the Palestinians as human beings whose lands they occupy, as created in God's image just like the Jews and other people of the world, then neither will their human rights be respected by others whom they oppress. *Cont'd on p. 3*



*Cont'd from p. 2*

The full force of the Israeli government and its media allies has engaged in a systemic policy to dehumanize and demonise the Palestinians in order to legitimize the occupation of their lands.

The political, economic and military support for Israel in their historic oppression of Palestinians and the current unbalanced and violent assault on Gaza that has killed over 1,900 people, most of whom are civilians, is an untenable and morally repugnant situation. Church leaders must therefore be willing to ask uncomfortable questions about what is going on in Palestine and to use the lens of the God of life, justice, peace and love that is revealed in the ministry and mission of Jesus to take a stand. This should not be determined by the political agenda of powerful religious conservative and fundamentalist lobby groups that influence the USA policy towards Israel.

## **The land of Palestine was never unoccupied**

These fundamentalist evangelical Christians have promoted the myth that the land of Palestine was unoccupied when the Zionists occupied it in 1948. This is so far from the truth. Palestine has remained consistently occupied by Palestinian Christians and Muslims and other indigenous Arabs and Jewish communities from the time of the Romans through to the end of the Ottoman Empire when the British took control of the area. Therefore, any solution of the situation must be a win-win for both Jews and Palestinians.

We must not be tricked into accepting that Israel is fighting for its survival from hostile enemies, as it loves to claim. Neither Hamas nor any other State in the Middle East has the necessary military resource capacity to defeat Israel, which has the fourth largest

army in the world that is outfitted by the USA and Europe. It is Israel's policy towards the Palestinians that has created Hamas, whose despicable acts of kidnapping Israeli civilians and firing missiles on their cities are evil actions born out of desperation and hopelessness. The equation must be changed and it can only come from groups that can influence Israeli-American policy.

When one considers the economic cost of the war in Gaza one can see the inhumanity that has pushed the already battered and besieged economy many years into the doldrums. When one compares the Palestinian condition with Israel getting over \$2billion in aid from the USA each year, it becomes clear that there exist little incentives for Israel to make peace with Palestine. The actions of Israel with the Palestinians suggest that they are using apartheid policies that were perfected in South Africa to construct separate development for the Palestinians that they demonize and make second class humans as they seize their lands.

## **What can we do?**

The Jamaica Government and people that included many conservative evangelical Church leaders took a stand against South African apartheid policies that belittled the human dignity of Africans. A similar case exists with the Palestinian people that demand all Jamaican people of goodwill to take a stand. Therefore, the only peaceful form of resistance, open to Jamaican Christians that value peace with justice for the Israeli and Palestinian people would be to lobby for boycott of companies that support Israeli government military polices and machinery, divestment of all forms of Jamaican trade with Israel and to network with other groups around the world that are advocating equal rights and justice for both Palestinians and Israelis.

*Cont'd on page 4*

Cont'd from page 3

The only just way forward is a two-state solution where each nation lives in mutual respect for each other. We need to march and protest and make our voices heard. We must educate our people, especially church leaders who misuse scripture to give uncritical support to Israel. They may be sincere in their belief, but they are sincerely wrong. The God of Israel is also the God of the Palestinians. This God of life, seen in the life and work of Jesus Christ, has no favourites, but will consistently defend victims who are oppressed by the powerful of this world (John 10:10).



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## PARTICIPATE IN THURSDAYS IN BLACK



### TAKE A STAND

Wear black on Thursday signifying your stance against violence. Take the opportunity to start a conversation on the topic with someone by explaining why you are wearing black

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# REMEMBERING REV. HYACINTH EDWARDS



*Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them."*

*Revelations 14:13 (NRSV)*

## Thanksgiving Service

**Tuesday  
November 14, 2023  
10:00 a.m.**

**Let us gather  
in person at Webster  
Memorial United Church  
53 Half Way Tree Road.  
We welcome those who  
wish to join online via  
the UCJCI YouTube channel**

## A Virtual Memorial

**Tuesday  
November 7,  
2023  
6 - 8 p.m.**

**Let us gather online via  
Zoom to remember and  
celebrate the life of our  
sister**

**Meeting ID: 813 8206 0566  
Passcode: 411300**

**YOU MAY ALSO LEAVE A WRITTEN TRIBUTE  
on UCJCI'S Memorial Page**

**<https://letusremember.ucjci.com/memorial.php> ...**

# NEWS FROM CAYMAN

## SAVANNAH YOUTH BASKETBALL NIGHT

In the early evening of Friday, October 6, 2023, people of all ages gathered at the Savannah United Church sports court for a friendly sports competition and fellowship.

The event organizer, the Savannah United Church Sports Committee, was not disappointed by the response to their invitations, as close to one hundred fifty (150) gathered for the occasion.

Those present included various Churches and youth organizations, such as the Savannah United Church, Elmslie Memorial United Church, John Gray Memorial United Church, Webster Memorial United Church (Bodden Town), East End United Church, Church of God Prophecy, the North Sound Community Team, Cays Foundation Boys and Bethel Refuge.



Four Junior and seven Senior teams participated in a basketball competition, with numerous family members, siblings, and friends enthusiastically cheering and enjoying the games. In the end, the Junior division was claimed by the Savannah United Church, while the North Sound Community Team won the Senior division. Congratulations to the teams, their leaders, the organizers, and all those who came out and supported the event!



## CAYMAN PREP AND HIGH APPRECIATION SERVICE



TEACHERS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF STAFF COLLECT THEIR BIBLES

The Annual Service of Appreciation for the Staff of the Cayman Prep and High School (CPHS) was held on Sunday, October 8, 2023, at the Elmslie Memorial United Church at 10:30 am. In addition to the congregants, over 100 staff members (administrative, academic, and ancillary) and their families attended the event.

After the service, teachers and staff members were presented with Bibles as tokens of appreciation for their dedication and contributions to the mission CPHS, summed up in the school's motto, "Let Your Light So Shine." This was followed by a fellowship meal in the Church Car Park.



FROM LEFT: REV. FORRESTER, REV. DR. BLOOMFIELD, MS. AMBER BOTHWELL AND MR. KARL MURPHY, CPHS - HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL)



On Monday, October 9, 2023, on behalf of the CIRMC, Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield (RDGS - CIRMC) presented five Bibles to the CPHS Library. The Bibles were received by Ms. Amber Bothwell, Head of English. Another five Bibles were presented to the Primary School Library by Rev. Rohan Forrester, Chair of the CIRMC.

REV. FORRESTER SEEN HERE PRESENTING A BIBLE TO THE HEAD GIRL, MS. SCARLETT AKIWUMI. THE HEAD BOY, DEPUTY HEAD GIRL, AND THE DEPUTY HEAD BOY ALSO RECEIVED BIBLES.

# NEWS FROM WRMC

## REWARD FOR GOOD WORK

Western Regional Mission Council is celebrating as Pell River United Church's Mrs. Millister Jones, and Lay Pastor Escar Wynter received awards from the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission and the Hanover Municipal Cooperation on National Heroes' Day. The awards were in recognition of their service in the parish of Hanover in the areas of Education and Community Service respectively.

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Mrs. Millister Jones (left) of Pell River United and Mrs. Escar Wynter, Lay Pastor, display their awards received on Natinal Heroes Day.

# NEWS FROM NERMIC

## CELEBRATING MERITORIOUS SERVICE

**Mrs. Casilda Allen**, member of Carron Hall United Church received the Badge of Honour for Meritorious service (BH (M) for contribution to Education and Community Development.

**Mrs Julia Bonner Douett** of Hope United received the Badge of Honour for Meritorious service (BH (M) for contribution in the field of Standardisation at the Bureau of Standards Jamaica.

*"When you are in the service of your fellow beings you are in the service of God." Anonymous*



# NEWS FROM SRMC

## RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING SERVICE



**Jermaine Porter** was recognised by the St. Elizabeth Municipal Department for outstanding contribution to Community Service and Volunteerism.

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### THE JAMAICAN NATIONAL PLEDGE

*Before God and all mankind.*

*I pledge the love and loyalty of my heart*

*The wisdom and courage of my mind.*

*The strength and vigour of my body  
in the service of my fellow citizens.*

*I promise to stand up for justice.*

*Brotherhood and Peace. To work diligently and creatively.*

*to think generously and honestly, so that*

*Jamaica may, under God, increase in beauty, fellowship  
and prosperity, and play her part in advancing the welfare  
of the whole human race.*



THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA  
AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS  
and  
THE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
OF THE CARIBBEAN

# LAY LEADERS' GRADUATION 2023

Sunday November 12, 2023  
3:00 p.m.



Hope United Church  
221 Old Hope Road, Kingston

**THEME:**

**Upgraded and Available**

**GUEST SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Oral Thomas**  
President, The United Theological College of the  
West Indies



PHYSICAL ATTENDANCE IS WELCOME AND VIRTUAL VIEWING IS  
AVAILABLE VIA THE UNITED CHURCH YOUTUBE CHANNEL.



**MODULES  
2 AND 3  
BEGIN IN  
NOVEMBER**

## **TRAINING LAY LEADERS - A NEW BEGINNING**

### **UCJCI LAY LEADERS CERTIFICATE COURSE - MODULES 2 AND 3 COMING**

**The Training of Lay Leaders for specialised ministries in the United Church will be advanced through the addition of Modules 2 and 3 to the offerings of UCJCI Lay Training Institute in November 2023.**

Modules 2 and 3 will begin in November 2023. It is planned that both will run concurrently with the early topics in Module 3 being those without a corresponding pre-requisite in Module 2.

Topics will include Ministry with Children, Evangelism and Discipleship; Ministry with Youth and Communication. Both modules will include periods of practicum.

Module 2 will end in March 2024 and Module 3 will end November 2024.

**For more information**

**Email:**

**[ucjci.karen.francis@gmail.com](mailto:ucjci.karen.francis@gmail.com)**

# MINISTERS AND LAY PASTORS

## LET'S SHARE RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Can we work together to bring the Word to those who are thirsting for it?

Let's reach beyond our communities by sharing the links to our online bible studies, with **DATE, TOPIC, TIME, LINK**

Ministers and Lay Pastors, if you want to participate, please send information to [ucjci.karen.francis@gmail.com](mailto:ucjci.karen.francis@gmail.com)

### MEADOWBROOK UNITED CHURCH WEEKLY WEDNESDAY ONLINE BIBLE STUDY

### FOCUS: THE BOOK OF ACTS

6:30 P.M.

JOIN VIA ZOOM

MEETING ID: 882 3148 7638

PASSCODE: 028540

OR VIA MUC YOUTUBE CHANNEL

### RIDGEMOUNT UNITED CHURCH WEEKLY WEDNESDAY ONLINE BIBLE STUDY



### TOPIC: THE HOLY SPIRIT WITHIN

5:30 P.M.

JOIN VIA ZOOM

MEETING ID: 894 9305 3068

PASSCODE: RIDGEMOUNT

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Rev. Walter 'Danny' Russell  
OCTOBER 21



Rev. Herbert Redway Snr.  
OCTOBER 22



Rev. Norbert Stephens  
OCTOBER 22



Rev. Dr. Richmond Nelson  
OCTOBER 23



**SERVICE OF  
ORDINATION  
TO THE MINISTRY OF  
WORD AND SACRAMENTS**

Ordinands  
Pastor Donald West  
Pastor Elce Junior Lauriston

Thursday November 9, 2023  
Ridgemount United Church, Mandeville  
2 p.m.

# Worship Together

PRAYER THEMES FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH tTO  
USE IN OUR HOMES AND FOR GATHERING IN  
OUR CONGREGATIONS

## RE-IGNITE FROM THE ONLY TRUE SOURCE



Rekindling begins when we yield to the Power of God's Spirit and recognize that nothing else matters. Nothing and no-one else should be allowed to take God's place in our lives.

**EXODUS 33:12-23**  
**MATTHEW 22:15-22**

## We Pray together for

- Rev. Sandra Collins, whose mother Mrs. Annette Grant-Foster. has died
- Rev. Karlene Thomas-Barnes who is recuperating from illness
- Mrs. Debesha Grant Roberts (UCJCI ministerial student at UTC) whose father has been hospitalized
- Rev. Thomas Phiri, whose father is very ill and has been hospitalized in Zambia
- The family, friends and members of the Salem charge at the death of Rev. Hyacinth Edwards.
- Rev. Dr. Richmond Nelson who is unwell.
- Miss Sasha-Kay Rutherford (Accounting Clerk, Synod Office), whose uncle suffered a heart attack and has been hospitalized
- Ms. Annisea Bremmer (Human and Mission Resource Manager) whose aunt, Ms. Jackie Reynolds, has died.
- Those impacted by the heightened conflict between Israel and Palestine



# For Your Health

## WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR BREAST CANCER RISK



Do not smoke

Breastfeed



Control your weight

Be physically active



Limit or avoid alcohol

Avoid exposure to radiations



World Health Organization

#Cancer

## BREAST CANCER SYMPTOMS



Early diagnosis of cancer generally increases the chances for successful treatment.



Nipples changes



Bloody discharge



Lump in the breast



Change in breast color



Pitting of the breast skin



Breast or nipple pain



World Health Organization

#Cancer



# EVENTS PAGES



## SUPPORT WITH PRAYER AND PRESENCE

The following pages carry notification of events. Please send your posters and flyers in pdf, j-peg or png format to [citc@gmail.com](mailto:citc@gmail.com) for promotion in UCJCI Update.



WEBSTER MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH

# WOMEN'S *Conference*

**21**  
oct



**START**  
**4PM**

## WHEN ROOTS RUN DEEP

COME & BE ENCOURAGED BY TESTIMONIES  
AND WHAT THE WORD SAYS ABOUT YOU

*Our Speakers*



**REV. EVON  
BLAIR**



**MRS. DANELLE  
PINNOCK**



**MRS. ERICA  
MACDONALD**

*Our Host*

**MS. CLOVER  
ANDERSON**



53 HALF WAY TREE ROAD, KINGSTON 10

**SEE YOU THERE!**

# YOUTH NEWS

Lincoln Kirk United Church Youth Fellowship Presents

**YOUTH CONVENTION 2023**

Under the theme

**"TEK IT TO DEM"**

**October 22, 2023 9am - 9pm**

**3 Sessions for the Day**

**Morning Worship Midday Praise Evening Gospel Service**

Refreshments and Lunch will be on sale

For More Details

**1-876-468-7143 - 1-876-848-5209**



# CANACOM:

CARIBBEAN AND NORTH AMERICA COUNCIL FOR MISSION

## “TRAINING OF TRAINERS FOR MEN”

 **Castleton United Church**

 **October 28, 2023**

 **11:00 am**

A programme to address Sexual and Gender Based Violence



HELLSHIRE UNITED CHURCH

30<sup>TH</sup>

ANNIVERSARY

# HARVEST Concert

STARTS AT  
5:00 PM

**SUNDAY**

**OCTOBER 29, 2023**

VENUE :

HELLSHIRE UNITED CHURCH  
379 BOULDER CRESCENT  
UPPERMOST "B"  
HELLSHIRE  
ST. CATHERINE

**ADULTS: \$2000.00**  
**CHILDREN: \$1000.00**



**MARKLAND  
EDWARDS  
MASTER OF  
CEREMONY**



**FEATURING  
JAMAICA  
CONSTABULARY  
FORCE BAND**

*An Evening of Praise*



+ (876) - 675 - 6513



hellshireunitedchurch@yahoo.com



379 Boulder Crescent, Hellshire



**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**