



UCJCI UPDATE

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

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THE UNITED CHURCH IN
JAMAICA AND THE
CAYMAN ISLANDS

*Congregational
Disciples of Christ and
Presbyterian*

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OUR VISION: "Touching
lives, Nurturing Disciples,
Seeking Transformation
through Christ."

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PRAY FOR:



- Rev. Millard Edwards who lost his grandson
- Rev. Dr. Margaret Fowler
- Rev. Dr. Clinton Smith
- Mrs. Doris Longmore
- Rev. Astor Carlyle and his family,

UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAY- MAN ISLANDS TAKES A STAND

BY: PETA-GAY HODGES

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (UCJCI) is sending a strong message to both countries in which it is domiciled in declaring that it is taking a stand.

The message was a central plank of the recently concluded 40th Synod of the UCJCI which was held from April 24 – 27 at the Kendal Conference Centre in Manchester, under the theme "Renewal and Transformation: Discipleship for Life!"

The UCJCI has taken an approach to be missional by engaging with the issues that are glaring in both societies.

It believes that as a church it has a duty to be honest and true, especially in the face of recent cases where the church is at fault.

The church has identified six negative issues in society that it will stand against.

They are: 'Crime and Violence'; 'Corruption and Lawlessness'; 'Sexual Abuse and Exploitation'; 'Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking'; 'Injustice and Oppression' and 'Exclusion and Ostracism'.



Moderator,
Rt. Rev. L. Christopher Mason.

Evidence shows that these factors are destructive forces in the society. -The leadership of UCJCI believes that as a church it needs to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to stand against issues that destroy human lives and the things that devalue who we are in Christ.

Against this background the church wants to have a credible voice in the society which identifies these evils and says no to them.

At the same time UCJCI highlights the **positive things** in our society that it embraces and wants people to follow.

These include:

'Accountability and Responsibility'; 'Education and Industry'; 'Integrity and Truth'; 'Justice and Righteousness'; 'Love and Compassion'; 'Peace and Reconciliation'.

The UCJCI does not see these things as mere clichés

or words that should be banded about in society but things which it takes seriously, challenging people to accountability and responsibility whether they are parents, workers, or pastors.

The conversation about **Education and Industry** is expected to help to address some of the unemployment issues, which it believes forms a part of the root cause of crime and violence.

It wants people to be industrious and to have a sense of what it is to have good work ethic. It also wants people to be serious about their integrity and what it means to speak the truth.

The UCJCI believes the church must begin with truth and that people of the church must be known as people of integrity; Jamaica must be a place where natural justice is not just perceived but it is done.

As a denomination UCJCI is saying to the wider Jamaican and Caymanian public that **the church is not asleep**, but is militant and alive. In making sure that the sense of order in society is transformed, it embraces renewal and transformation.

(Continued on page 4)

THE 40th SYNOD STORY



UCJCI sends a clear message during its Opening Service of the UCJCI 40th Synod

OUTCOMES OF THE 40TH SYNOD

There was more than talk at the Synod about what we stand against and what we stand for.

Live demonstrations such as that listed above, were held to concretize the message and in addition, the issue was further emphasised by a public witness at the **Fesco Petrol Station in Mandeville** and surrounding areas distributing flyers and witnessing to the general public.

• **Workshops on Mission**, both local and overseas included sharing on a number of local missions including, **the Theodora Project** of the Western Regional Mission Council (WRMC), **the Bethesda Counselling Centre** of the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council (CIRMC,) **Bethel Project** of the North Eastern Regional Mis-

sion Council (NERMC) and the **Micro Financing Project** of the Southern Region Mission Council (SRMC).

There were stories from the Council for World Mission (CWM), CANACOM, as well as Nurse Joan Page-Bain on Haiti and a tribute to **Rev. H. Earl Thames** in whose memory the **Synod Mission Day** was held.

The aim was to stimulate and enable a missional focus at the local congregational level and to challenge those who may have a call to serve beyond our borders.

• **History was also created** by the fact that a **Youth Synod was held** for the first time. The Youth Representatives shared their issues and how the wider Church could partner with them in pursuing their mission.

The UCJCI also Commissioned **Miss. Faithlyn Stephens** of the Immanuel/Boscobel Charge as a mission partner

to the Guyana Congregational Union (GCU).

• **Publications** including that outlining the Child Care and Protection Policy, and associated Bible Study materials were presented to Delegates during the Synod .

• **Synod Awards** were presented for outstanding service to deserving clergy, lay pastors and Regional lay persons.

• **Resolutions** passed include an agreement by the Synod, to explore the possibility of establishing an educational institution in the name of the late **Rev. H Earl Thames**.

Others were: To establish a **Youth Commission** which will focus on our goals for young people 13-25, as well as to pursue the establishment of an **Adult Commission** to examine our ministry among adults. ■ (Photos on Page4.)

NERMC CELEBRATES

WE CELEBRATE:- Awards

■ Twenty-three persons from the **Webster Brigade Companies** and two from **Pretoria Road** received Bronze and Silver Awards under the **Duke of Edinburgh Programme**.

■ **Hope United** received medals at the Special Olympics held in July, 2015. Jonathan Lowe – gold in swimming

■ **Shereen Gordon** – silver in the individual bocce; **Shereen and Esther Lowe** – bronze in the doubles bocce and gold in the mixed doubles bocce.

■ Twenty five persons from **Lincoln Kirk** went to **Canada** to minister in the performing arts. They were well received. They left with the people wanting more and are awaiting their early return.

■ The **2016 Church School Quiz** saw NERMC placing 1st in the 4-6 and 7- 9 age groups, 2nd in the 10-12 age group and 3rd in the 13-15 age group.

■

VIEW FROM THE WEST.

Last week, as we took an in-depth look at our Regional Reports, focus was given on the Cayman perspective, as they reported to the UCJCI 40th Synod.

This week we examine the social context of the Western Regional Mission Council, as related by Regional Deputy General Secretary, Mrs. Maureen Henry. Here her story begins.....

"Once upon a time, in the tourist capital of Jamaica, there was the evidence of peace and tranquillity, security of family home 'down a country', respect for life and property and a holy reverence for God.

Many will tell you that the temperature of political outcomes could be relied upon. **The West was included in the national concern which centred around providing sound education, training opportunities, marketable skills and jobs for youth and young adults;** which included an unmistakable call for the young to get back to working the land. Even as church and state engineered programmes to address the perceived needs, we could not have envisioned that the efforts of the well intentioned could be so easily overtaken by the present societal evils.

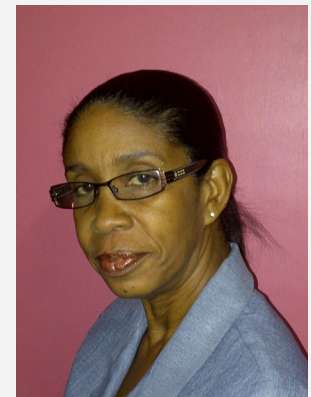
Today, '*nobody nuh wah run go a country again.*'

The new stories in quiet districts are no longer about the homecoming of Miss. Evelyn's doctor daughter, or Mass Leslie's pilot son. Instead, the hushed tones are about the affluence of **Mr. and Mrs. Stone's grand mansion, built with their son's blood money,** and the large contribution they place in the offering bag in the hope that '*God wi gi dem a bligh.*'

Then there is the flash of extravagance; several new high-end cars being driven, albeit recklessly by young boys whose underpants is most prominent and whose jewellery is a loud statement of ill-gotten wealth.

The Western Mirror is riddled with accounts of **gruesome crimes, — stories of hate and greed occasioning murders, abductions, dismembering of body parts, domestic disputes and yes, the creative abilities of those who gained their certification in the art of scamming.**

And yet, the Region continues to attract **record tourist arrivals. Some schools and social institutions continue to receive funding from local and international organizations** who have not withheld their investments and interests in the people of the West.



Mrs. Maureen Henry


REACTION OF THE CHURCH

How then, in the face of all that is gruesome, could the people of God who live and work, worship, and witness in the Western Region of this beautiful island of Jamaica abandon our faith in the God who is in control.

The people of God have resolved to continue to partner with our brothers and sisters within the Christian fraternity to keep hope alive by being **faithful to the Mission of Christ** through visible and resolute missional stances, making a hopeful sound, being the only alternative to the eradication of greed, hatred and laziness.

We make it known that, we are overcomers; 'we are not a people who look back and become discouraged, but instead; a people who look ahead and are encouraged.' (Hebrew 10:39).

CHILD ABUSE FORUM



Hosted By:
Webster Memorial United Church

Thursday
May 11th 2017
6:00pm

Webster Memorial United Church
53 Half Way Tree Road

LISTEN TO A REVIEW OF THE SYNOD ON RJR 94 AT UNITED IN FAITH: 6:30 AM, SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2017.

**WHEN ELAINE COMMISSIONG
REVIEWS THE 40TH SYNOD WITH**

GENERAL SECRETARY, REV. NORBERT STEPHENS!



SYNOD PHOTO-STORY



70:
Pastor Emeralla Forde
 April 27 (belated)

Rev Dwayne Johnson
 &
Rev. Rohan Forrester
 May 7

Rev. Dr. Dave Hazle
 May 10.

40th SYNOD...
Page 1 story contd.



The 40th Synod of the UCJCI saw the Rt. Rev. L. Christopher Mason being installed for a second term as Moderator.

Rev. Mason, a long-standing minister of the gospel, has served as pastor for several congregations, including **Portmore United Church**, where he currently leads the flock.

Happily married to Anmarie, with whom he shares a daughter, Chrysannae, Rev. Mason is also a member of the **Portmore Ministers' Fraternal** and is a past Chairman of the **National Prayer Breakfast Committee.** ■



UCJCI 40th Synod: - The Theme:
"Renewal and Transformation: Discipleship for life": was reflected in the events of the **40th Synod.**

ABOVE: Photo #1: Symbols of Salt and Light; Underscoring the Sub Theme of the UCJCI 40th Synod

Photo #2: Moderator of Synod Rt. Rev. L Christopher Mason being installed by the immediate Past Moderator Rev, Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield.

Photo #3 - Portmore United Church Choir Ministering in song during the Opening Service of The UCJCI 40th Synod

Photo#4 - Youth Representative Sharing in the Contextual Presentation of The Western Regional Mission Council (WRMC)