



UCJCI UPDATE

MARCH 20, 2024 VOL. 11 NO. 9

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



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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.

EVANGELISM - TOP OF THE AGENDA

THE WORK OF EVANGELISM HAS NO EXPIRY DATE. IT IS THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH TO FAITHFULLY DECLARE THE GOSPEL MESSAGE AND TO INVITE PERSONS INTO RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, AND IN SO DOING, PURSUE THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST TO MAKE DISCIPLES. THIS ISSUE OF UPDATE FEATURES THE ACTIONS OF REGIONS IN EVANGELISM. IN CAYMAN REGION THROUGH WORSHIP, NORTHERN REGION THROUGH FAMILY EVANGELISM AND RE-ESTABLISHING THE WITNESS OF CHRIST IN THE CEDAR VALLEY COMMUNITIES, AND THE SOUTHERN REGION THROUGH EVANGELISTIC MEETINGS AND ENCOUNTERS IN COW PEN AND BANANA GROUND IN MANCHESTER. THERE ARE A VARIETY OF APPROACHES TO EVANGELISM. THIS UNITED CHURCH MUST NEVER TIRE IN THE WORK OF EVANGELISM AND CONTINUE TO PLACE IT AT THE TOP OF THE AGENDA OF OUR CHURCH.



CELEBRATING FAMILY AT MEADOWBROOK UNITED CHURCH

LENTEN FEATURE

DEVOTION - SEARCH ME O GOD

By Susan Dorward



Lent

Psalm 139: 23,24

***Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.***

David wanted to analyze his motives and behavior, asking God to guide him and help him see what thoughts or actions may not align with God's thoughts. Why would David ask God to do this? Because David knew that his way of thinking might cause a chasm separating him from God, and that was the last thing David wanted.

Many of us are motivated in Lent to ask God to forgive us for doing anything that has offended God. Sometimes, though, don't our attempts at doing this feel more like empty rituals or dutiful prayers? We say a quick prayer and soon end with "amen." Then, after the amen, how long do we usually sit around waiting for God to point out anything God found in his search? Do we do this because we are busy or because we fear what God will do after he completes his search?

David knew that he had nothing to fear in allowing God to search his heart. Not because he felt there was nothing offending there, but because he knew that our God is a loving, merciful, and gracious God.

Don't be afraid to allow God to explore your heart, mind, and spirit. God loves you and longs for a closer walk with you.

Pause. Ask God to search you. Then, sit and wait long enough for God to point out what you need to see and work on. God will lovingly help you transform and will lead you along the right pathway, bringing hope and joy to your journey through life.

Prayer: Lord, you know me better than I know myself. Search the deepest parts of my heart for anything that is displeasing to you. Examine my attitudes and actions. Show me what needs to be transformed and help me to change it so that I will not only be closer to you, but will also be able to go where you lead me and do what you are calling me to do. Amen.

Source: <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/prayer/a-prayer-for-lent.html>

NEWS FROM CIRMC

WORSHIP MISSION ACTION TEAM (MAT) SUNDAY



The Savannah United Church had its Worship MAT (Mission Action Team) Sunday ON March 10, 2024, a week after their Evangelism MAT Sunday.



WORSHIP MAT'S PURPOSE

- To support the Minister in the oversight of all worship- related activities.
- To ensure that corporate worship services meet the needs of the Congregation and are in alignment with the Mission and Vision of the wider congregational focus and the UCJCI.

WORSHIP MAT'S GOAL

To discern, organize, and implement, through the utilization of intergenerational involvement and the incorporation of different art forms/styles, worship experiences that are lifegiving, transforming, enabling, and dynamic.

NEWS FROM NERMC

WORSHIP CONTINUES AT THE CEDAR VALLEY MISSION



Rev. Donald West, Minister Carron Hall Charge preaching the word at the service held on Sunday March 17 at Cedar Valley Primary School.

On Sunday March 17, the revived Cedar Valley United Church ministry continued with a service at the Cedar Valley Primary School. Services will be held at the school until the church building is restored. The Carron Hall United Church was responsible for the service on March 17. Services will continue to be held each Sunday organized by different congregations and groups each week.

CONGREGATIONS ON DUTY FOR MARCH

PALM SUNDAY - MARCH 24

Portmore United Church

EASTER - MARCH 31

Meadowbrook United Church



Mrs Jennifer P. Martin, Chairperson of Council doing the time with the children.

Congregations responsible for a Worship Service are required to plan and prepare for every aspect and provide all that will be needed.

NEWS FROM NERMC

WORSHIP CONTINUES AT THE CEDAR VALLEY MISSION Cont'd from p.4

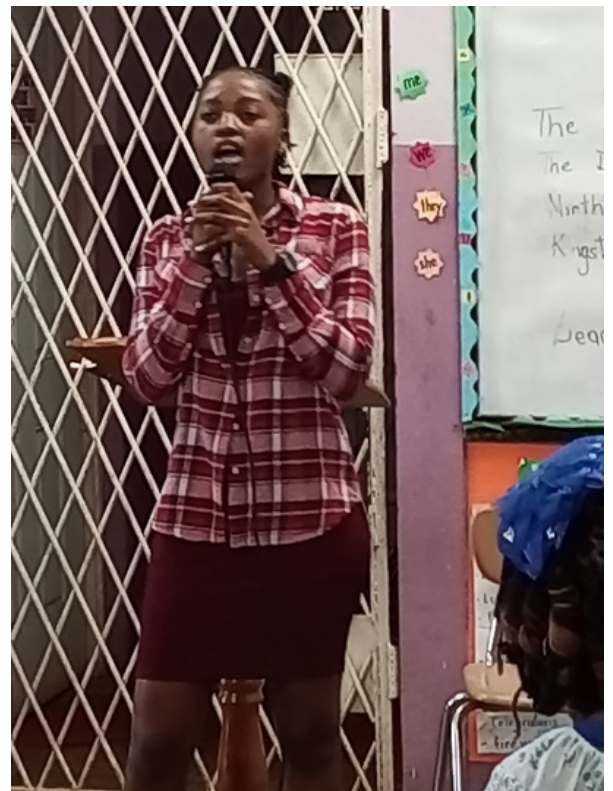


Elder Venesha Roberts from Seafield United leading the Praise in Worship

How can you support the Mission?

- Pray that the Mission will grow and prosper to the glory of God and the enhancement of His Kingdom as people find a welcoming Church home there; and that the Church building will be restored in short order.
- Promote all the activities in your congregation using all means possible.
- Offer your support to the Team through your gifts and talents.
- Support the services by organizing a bus or car load from your congregation to attend even if your congregation is not responsible for the worship.
- Submit your returns towards the Ash Wednesday Ingathering for the Mission **by March 31, 2024** if you have not already done so. The funds should be submitted to the Council Office or lodged directly to Account # 371069089 at NCB Matilda's Corner Branch with the notation Ingathering and the name of your congregation.

Let us work together to rebuild this mission



Miss Jade Pilarche, ministering in song. Miss Pilarche recommitted her life to Christ during the recently held crusades in Cedar Valley

FAMILY FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY AT MEADOWBROOK UNITED

Contributed by Shaun Battick



Keturah Rowe receives the tribute to her family.

On Sunday, March 17, the sanctuary burst with vibrant hues as families flooded in, proudly adorned in their distinctive family colours. It was a day of jubilant anticipation, where hearts were brimming with gratitude and joy. As the echoes of praises reverberated through the sanctuary and overflow rooms, one thing was unmistakable—the palpable presence of the Lord amidst a community, indeed families, united in celebration and thanksgiving for His abundant blessings.

FAMILIES UNITED IN CELEBRATION AND THANKSGIVING



Mrs. Michelle Ashwood Stewart delivers the charge.



Families in praise.

Rev Lembe Sivile, Minister of the Meadowbrook charge of United Churches, invited family members into a time of prayer for the restoration of families and the establishment of Godly families.

“REPENTANCE, RECONCILIATION REJOICING RESPONSIBILITIES”

Pastor Michelle Ashwood-Stewart gave a charge of repentance, reconciliation, rejoicing and responsibilities of families from the very familiar, and poignant story of the prodigal son and his brother.

Cont'd on p.7

FAMILY FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY AT MEADOWBROOK UNITED CONT'D



The celebrations continued throughout the day with Praise and Worship in various forms, fun activities, many prizes, a variety of food choices including jerk chicken, hot dogs, snow cones, jelly coconut, pastry treats & family favourites.

The Praise team prepares to lead.

Two families were honoured for their commitment & service to the work & ministry to the church and community at Meadowbrook. They were the Coke family & Keturah Rowe & family.



The Coke family receiving a tribute.



An altar call was given & several persons gave their hearts to the Lord. Families left in the early afternoon with takeaway lunches and hearts full of gratitude. And some, for the first time, left with Jesus!

This was a pioneering event, charting a new course in family evangelism. No one said it would be easy but we thank the Lord for His abundant grace that He poured out on us...

NEWS FROM SRMC

TAKE THE CITY FOR CHRIST COW PEN, BANANA GROUND, MANCHESTER



Members of the team and community worshipped together.

Under the leadership of Rev Clifton Bailey, Vice-Chair for Evangelism in the SRMC, the initiative seeks to support congregations in creating a new evangelistic thrust in the communities they serve.

The team consisted of people from other areas of Manchester as well as individuals from Clarendon. They began their work on Saturday, March 9, 2024 at 10am to witness to people in the community walkthrough. Donned in their sweaters, jackets, scarves and hats, they returned the following night for a street meeting which featured robust praise and worship, the sharing of impactful testimonies and an invitation for commitment to Christ.

Rev. Khureen Wilson-Bailey explained at the street meeting that they "did not go to play but to

The Bethel United Church along with a team of individuals from across the council answered the call to action for another instalment of the Take the City for Christ initiative, this time in Cow Pen in Banana Ground, Manchester.



Members of the team conducting the community walkthrough on March 9, 2024

deliver God's people from bondage under the gumption of the Holy Spirit."

From the initiative 2 young ladies stepped forward to accept Christ. Additionally, the members seemed to have yearned for a spiritual movement in the area.

TAKE THE CITY FOR CHRIST...

The leadership at Bethel United and Rev Bailey expressed sincere thanks to all who supported the Take the City event. A special thanks was expressed to Rev. Rohan Kong and the volunteer from Bailieston, Rev Khereen Wilson-Bailey and the Ebenezer/ Andrews volunteer group, the Mineral Heights ministry group, and musicians Oliver Johnson and Edward "Junior" Reid for providing technical and musical support.

As we seek to grow God's Kingdom, we must continue to place great emphasis on evangelism. As God's people we were specifically commissioned for this work. The next Take the City event will take place in April in the Longville Park community. We invite all those who are willing and able, to join the movement and lend your support. Together we are stronger. It must be Evangelism!



Oliver Johnson (in white) and Edward "Junior" Reid (in blue) provided musical accompaniment



The street meeting featured a time of spirited praise.

JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

PALM
SUNDAY

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

FOCUS FOR THE MONTH:

DEEPENED FAITH

**ALL PRAISE KING JESUS, RIGHTEOUS
KING WHO CAME TO SAVE:**

Not only does Palm Sunday represent the beginning of the countdown to the Passion of Christ, but it also underscores the fulfilment of prophecy, where Jesus is clearly venerated as King and Messiah. The colt, the palm branches and the clothes strewn across the road were all symbols of His ascendancy [Spreading garments before a dignitary was a symbol of submission. Palm branches were employed also as token of victory - some Jewish coins from the first century had palm leaf engravings with the accompanying inscription, "the redemption of Zion." Note, also, the "palm" symbolism that is portrayed in the book of Revelation (7:9)] The Jewish disciples were doubtlessly expressing the hope that Jesus would be the one to lead them to victory over Rome, their oppressor.

Some scholars see Jesus' journey as symbolic of His earthly enthronement. Both John and Mark record the crowds affirming Jesus as King, of the Davidic lineage, perhaps due to the prophetic Word that the 'king would appear coming on a colt' in Zech 9. However, this was no ordinary King; as one of the Order of Melchizedek, Jesus is the King of the New Jerusalem (Peace), and his use of a colt shows that he is subverting the 'war' order for the way of Justice and righteousness.

As they spread garments in submission, so are we to submit to Jesus in our hearts, recognizing Him as Righteous King Who reigns forever. Like Jesus, we choose the path of Peace for it is the Kingdom of Peace that is eternal, war and arrogance will perish.

**LET'S WORSHIP
TOGETHER IN
MARCH**

Enabling people to grow in the depth of their understanding of God, Jesus and the Church (The Divine Personhood of Jesus)

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURES

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Mark 11:1-11

John 12:12-16

Zechariah 9:9-10

SUGGESTED HYMNS

Crown Him with Many Crowns

All Glory, Laud and Honour
Blessed be the Name of the Lord

Precious Lord, Take My Hand
Hosanna in the Highest

A Call to Prayer and Fasting

Brothers and sisters in the United Church family are invited to

PRAY FOR CONVOCATION

Every Wednesday until May 1

If able, please fast all day Wednesday; if not able to do so consider fasting up to midday

Every Sunday until April 28

CONGREGATIONS

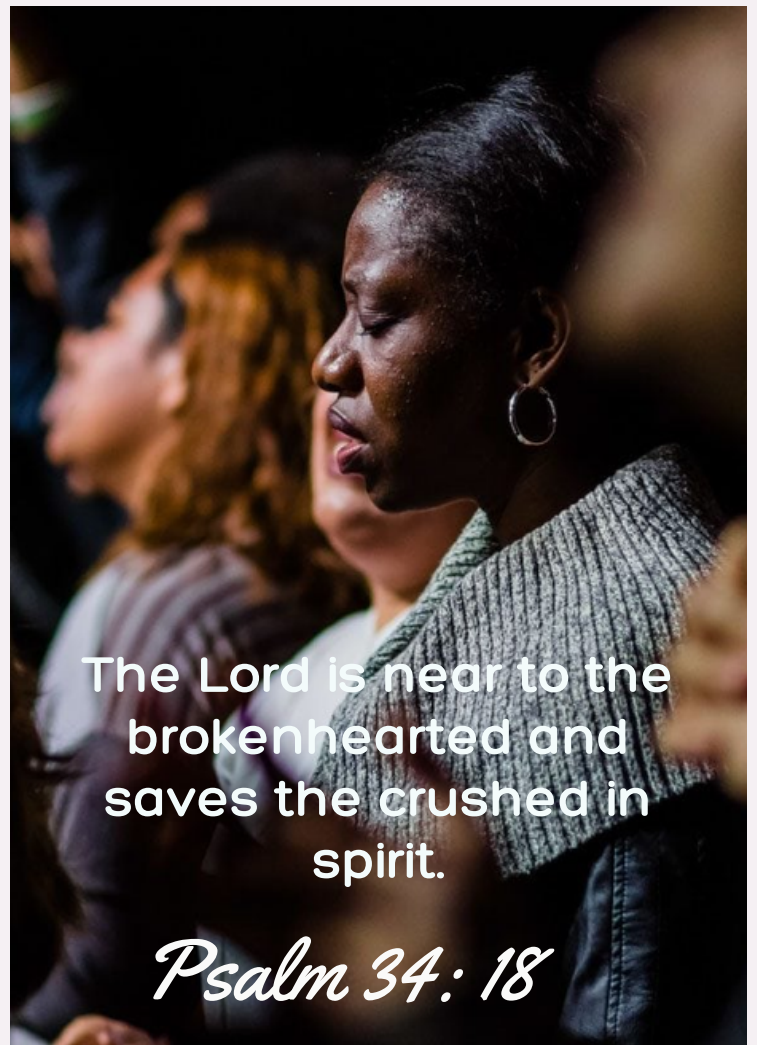
are asked to include the Convocation in their Intercessory Prayers

PRAY FOR THE WITNESS OF UCJCI IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS.

Let us Pray Together

WE PRAY FOR

- Mrs. Carlene Andrade, Administrative Assistant – SRMC, who lost her sister.
- The people of Haiti for the restoration of peace – right relationships – good decision-making and governance.
- Ministers of the United Church who are experiencing illness
 - Rev. Dr. Richmond Nelson
 - Rev. Karleen Thomas Barnes



The Lord is near to the
brokenhearted and
saves the crushed in
spirit.

Psalm 34: 18

Good Friday Offering

My sisters and brothers,

Lenten Greetings.

As is customary, the UCJCI seeks to invite individuals and congregations to make a special and sacrificial contribution to church development in the form of the Good Friday Offering. We are extremely grateful to the congregations which have consistently contributed to this offering thereby helping to expand the ministry of the UCJCI.

For 2024 congregations all across the church are invited to draw alongside the James Hill Congregation in the SRMC and assist this congregation in replacing its roof (see pictures below).

The estimate for the roof replacement is J\$2 million Dollars. The congregation has one quarter of that amount in hand. We are therefore trying to raise the minimum amount of J\$1.5M.

Please remit the amounts collected or individual contributions to the following account:

Bank: National Commercial Bank – Duke Street Branch, Kingston Jamaica

Account: United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands

A/C #: 234297430

Type of A/C: Savings

As we give, let us pray to the God of plenty to multiply our efforts and bless this ministry.

Blessings

Rev. Norbert Stephens – General Secretary, UCJCI





HAPPY BIRTHDAY

REV. DR. JANE KALUBA

MARCH 23

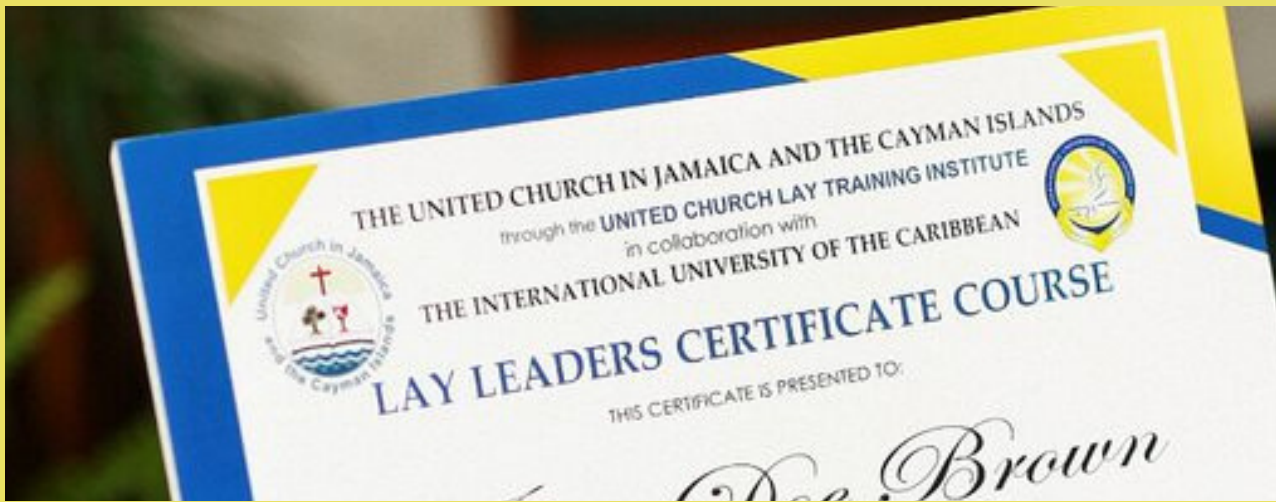


EVENTS PAGES



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 for promotion in UCJCI Update.



MODULE 2 - MARCH 30

TOPIC: MINISTRY IN COMMUNITY



ANY
MEMBER OF
UCJCI MAY
JOIN IN THE
TRAINING
FOR EACH
SESSION OF
MODULE 2
AT A COST
OF \$1000
PER TOPIC

RESOURCE PERSONS:
REV. CARLENE WALFORD

**Training via Zoom
9 am - 12:00noon**

**Register and make your
payment through your
regional office. You will
then be provided with
the Zoom link.**

*Come and learn about your
church and the Christian faith*



The United Church Lay
Training Institute

TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS

MODULE 1

NEW START DATE -
MARCH 23, 2024

TOPICS INCLUDE
EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP,
COMMUNICATION, BIBLE
STUDY, WORSHIP,
CAREGIVING

**THIS TRAINING IS FOR
PERSONS PREPARING TO**

SERVE AS:

- **Elders**
- **Specialized Ministry Leaders**
- **Lay Pastors**

2nd and 4th Saturdays- March to
August 9:00 a.m. - 2 p.m.

via Zoom. Registration through regions
opens February 27

FOR MORE INFO

 ucjci.karen.francis@gmail.com

 1876-4327057



COST
JMD
\$10,000

RECORDED ORIENTATION SESSION
AVAILABLE BY EMAILING
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UNITED CHURCH YOUNG ADULTS ACTION MOVEMENT
PRESENTS

Ingathering OF THE **YAAMS**



WHICH YAAM WILL BE CROWNED?

ENTRY FEE-\$300



SPEAKER:
REV. TARA TYME



UCYAAM Ingathering



UCYAAM
Rev. Earl Thames
SCHOLARSHIP
\$200,000.00

PROCEEDS IN AID OF REV. EARL THAMES SCHOLARSHIP
FUND & UCYAAM MINISTRIES.



ST PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH, MONTEGO BAY

DUKE STREET UNITED CHURCH' PERFORMING ARTS MINISTRY

PRESENTS

The Predicament



WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY:

CHEVAN SHIRLEY

STARRING: Selina Baker, Latoya Campbell, Calneth Reid,
Shama Reid, Melva Harrison & Fitzroy Clowson.

VENUE:

**DUKE STREET
UNITED CHURCH**
70 DUKE ST, KINGSTON

SHOW DATES:

**FRI. MAR. 29 @6 P.M.
SAT. MAR. 30 @6 P.M.
SUN. MAR. 31 @6 P.M.**

TICKETS:

**PRESOLD: \$1,500
AT GATE: \$2,000
\$800 FOR KIDS**

FOR TICKETS, WHATSAPP/CALL: 876-348-7700

SPONSORS:



Save the Date!

SUNDAY MAY 5



**The United Church in Jamaica and
the Cayman Islands**

CONVOCATION 2024

Theme: Reignited by the Spirit!

8:30 A.M - 3:00 P.M.



Montego Bay Convention Centre

See you there!



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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Tel: 876 9268734; ♦ E-mail: synod@ucjci.com ♦ Website: www.ucjci.com

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GENERAL SECRETARY

Rev. Norbert Stephens

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Cayman Regional Mission Council
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield

North Eastern Regional Mission Council
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Southern Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Janet McConnell

Western Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Mauleen Henry