



# A Weekly Update from The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

December 1, 2021

Issue 8

Volume 47

## MODERATOR'S MESSAGE UNION SUNDAY December 5, 2021

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ, I greet you warmly on this Union Sunday.

We pause each year on the 1st Sunday in December to reconnect with our history as a church; to celebrate our journey and witness, and to hear from God afresh as we live out our faith. We remember today the contributions of the Congregationalists, the Disciples of Christ and the Presbyterians to the Mission of Christ in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.

We celebrate the fact that as a result of the movement of God's Spirit and the obedience of God's people, all three Denominations, over time, were able to find the will power to make the required changes and adjustments in their polity towards the greater witness of Christian Unity.

We are reminded of the words of the prayer of Jesus in St. John 17: 20-23, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one - I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity (NIV). Throughout the Global Christian family, there are various manifestations of unity in the Body of Christ. Dialogues are taking place between varying Denominations towards deeper understanding and appreciation of each other. Christians from different Denominations are working together in addressing common concerns for the advancement of humanity and the environment. As the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, our unity is a significant witness in our region of the amazing possibilities that can result from the leading of God's Spirit and our willingness to respond. We do not only speak about "Christian Unity", we live it every day.

One of the opportunities that COVID 19 has created is increased access to the internet which has facilitated more cross fertilization; more opportunities to share Ministry with each other and not be limited by congregational boundaries. So, we are seeing persons sharing in each other's Worship Services, Bible Studies; greater connections are taken place within our auxiliaries. Still, there are others ways, facilitated by internet, wherein we can support each other's ministry; be of service to other congregations that could do well with our gifts and abilities if there is no immediate need for them where our membership is.

This is an opportunity, not to be missed, for deepening and enriching our unity in Christ.

Let us also seek for opportunities to work with other Denominations at the community level to advance God's Kingdom and to bring about transformation in people's lives and community in general. The need for peace and peace-building, for example, is a beckoning call that requires a united approach in addressing this monster. Let us be truly united.

May God grant you Hope, Peace, Love and Joy in this Advent Season.

Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott  
MODERATOR

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## The Season of Advent

The beginning of the Advent season signals the coming of Christmas and so our preparations begin. There are gifts to buy, cards to send, menus to plan for, people to see. The four Sundays – and weeks - of Advent remind us of the importance of the spiritual aspect of this preparation, the readying of our hearts and minds, not only for the celebration of Jesus' birth (1<sup>st</sup> coming) but also for His future return in glory (2<sup>nd</sup> coming) when He will set up His kingdom, judge His enemies, and reward the faithful, both living and dead.

Advent is full of symbolism and meaning, which is also reflected by the themes of the four Sundays/weeks.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday - HOPE  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday - PEACE  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday - JOY  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - LOVE



Extracted from CIRMC's November 24, 2021 update

## From Homeless to University Graduate

By Jonielle Daley, CITC

Tears streamed from her eyes midsmile when she walked the stage last Thursday at her graduation from the International University of the Caribbean that was held at Hope United Church. Shamoya Smith had a moment of immense gratitude when she received the Transformational Leadership Award for her years of outstanding service.

Smith credited her giving heart and selfless acts to countless rock bottom moments that motivate her to push through for others who may be facing difficulties, even if it requires her coming out of pocket.

Her mother, at the age of 15, had given Smith away just after birth to a Pastor who afforded her a very comfortable life as a child. However, the death of her mom when she eight sent her life into a tailspin that threw her on a journey of discovering her strengths. She was snatched from a stable home and placed into state care until custody was granted to her father and aunt.

Though she was faced with a series of child abuse and neglect bouncing between homes, she decided from very early that she would excel at everything she does and remained on the honor roll from primary school to the secondary level.

“I was 14 years-old and from I left his house, I never went back to live there”, said the 21 year old explaining that her father evicted her from his Windward road dwelling in Kingston. Reminiscing on life with her dad, she expressed that their relationship gave her a blueprint of what not to do as a parent and forced her to learn how to survive life.

“I had to live with a church sister. His excuse was that I had demons and for other persons he told them I am disrespectful, when deep down I was just looking for somebody to love me for who I am, ” she shared. At the time, she yearned for her father’s approval and his permission for her to be proud of her own academic accomplishments.

The activist eventually went to live with grandfather in Mountain View, who passed away shortly after.

Despite the slew of challenges, she graduated Dunoon Park Technical High School with eight subjects that were fully paid for by the government, National Commercial Bank (NCB) and the Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH). Smith was awarded scholarships to two universities and was also accepted to the University of the West Indies, Mona.



Admitting that she only learned of IUC when she was awarded the scholarship for her involvement and representation in co-curricular activities, she glistened with praises to God for having blessed her with that opportunity. The university paid 65 per cent of her tuition every year for four years.

“I did not know where the remaining 35 per cent was going to come from but I had faith,” she said, sharing that she wrote countless letters, never took no for an answer and never stopped dreaming and believing.



She continued serving through university in several activities. Smith expressed that over the four years, she found the most purpose in Circle K International at IUC, where she served as president for a year from March 2020 to 2021, and continues to be an active member of Kiwanis club.

Some of the initiatives carried out by Circle K under her leadership were the **Premie Foundation Project** at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital where they donated supplies, the feeding of 50 people in the Crossroads vicinity and partnered with the Kiwanis Club for their annual Christmas treat that includes the feeding of the homeless.

“I went through University, four years of my life without paying a red cent,” said Smith who graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. She is now seeking employment and looking to start her master’s degree at IUC.

She expressed deep gratitude to the persons she believed God strategically placed in her life that knew what she was going through, yet had confidence in her so she could dream and work towards to making it a reality.

## *Congratulations!*



Some of the 2021 graduates of International University of the Caribbean and a staff member, at the ceremony which was held at Hope United Church last Thursday, November 25, 2021. Over 100 graduates joined online.



Join us in wishing best wishes to Mrs. Janet McConnell, in her new position as the Deputy General Secretary of the Southern Regional Mission Council. The region welcomed her to the office this morning, December 1, 2021.

## UCJCI FACTS

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# Haiti Relief

At the last count, the death toll was 2,207, with 344 people still missing. The severe physical, economic and social impact on Haiti have been made more challenging as shortly thereafter they experienced the passage of Tropical Storm Grace. All of this follows the recent assassination of their President.

As part of our initial response as a church, we wish to offer financial support to the relief efforts in Haiti, through our established contacts there.

We are aware of the restrictions on attendance in worship in Jamaica and would suggest that, where possible, congregations make a contribution from their own funds

## How to Donate

### Cayman Islands:

Send your contributions to your local congregations, which will then remit the same to the Cayman Regional Office.

### Jamaica:

**Bank:** National Commercial Bank Jamaica Ltd

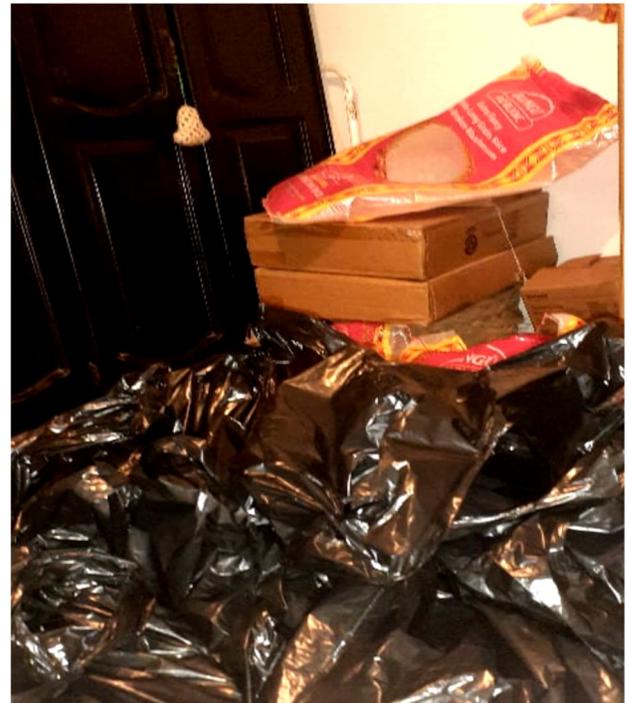
**Address:** 90-94 Slipe Rd. Kingston 5

**Account Name:** United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

**Account #:** 234297392

**Type of account :** Savings

Mission partner, and retired nurse , Joan Paige Bain prepares food parcels for distribution



**COVID-19 PROTOCOLS**  
**AFFECTING CONGREGATIONAL LIFE IN**  
**JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS**

Cayman Islands

The number of COVID-19 cases in the Cayman Islands continues to rise. Of the 4,917 confirmed cases, 3,340 are active with 4 deaths and 21 persons in the hospital. The Cayman Government has responded with regulations aimed at controlling the spread of the virus, including but not limited, to protocols for travel and gatherings. Consequently, indoor gatherings, including church services, are now restricted to 100 persons. The restrictions are in place until November 22, 2021.

Jamaica

There are 90,341 confirmed cases of which 1,025 are active with 2,331 deaths. The Government of Jamaica, on November 16, 2021, announced amendments to orders under the Disaster Risk Management Act (DRMA). These provisions are for the period November 18 to December 9, 2021.

Please note and be guided by the following:

1. Church Services – The number of persons allowed in the sanctuary for worship should be determined by the physical distancing requirement of a minimum of six feet between persons, but should not exceed 100 persons.
2. Weddings – the maximum number of persons allowed is 100.
3. Funeral services are allowed with a maximum of 20 persons within the place of worship or facility.
4. Burials are allowed for 30 minutes Mondays to Fridays between 9 am and 4 pm with a maximum of 20 persons at the graveside.

The other relevant provisions remain the same as under:

5. No physical crusades, conferences or conventions will be permitted.
6. Physical Gatherings are limited to 10 persons.
7. Stay at home – persons 60 years and over. Fully vaccinated persons are exempt.

Please note that the wearing of masks, hand sanitizing and social distancing are still required for public spaces and gatherings.

# CIRMC

## Youth Group Celebration Party

On Friday November 19, 2021, The Savannah United Church had a final Open Air Celebration Party on the Basketball Court for the teens group and a Craft Activity with the primary group. The night was filled with games, prizes, giveaways with food and fellowship. The Youth Group will break for the remainder of the year while the children participate in preparations for the annual Youth Christmas Cantata.



In recognition of Sunday School Month, the Savannah United Church celebrated its Sunday School Teachers on Sunday, November 21, 2021.

Twenty-five (25) dedicated Teachers were honored with framed Certificates of Appreciation from Nursery Teachers to Senior High Teachers who have served for several years within their Youth Ministry.

Special recognition was given to Mr. Herman Wilson (Adult Sunday School Teacher) and Mrs. Marisa Crawford (Sunday School Superintendent) who have both served in this capacity for over a decade. They were presented with a special award for their many years of service by Regional Deputy General Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield.



## Cayman Thanksgiving December 6, 2021

Cayman Thanksgiving is a weekend-long national celebration honoring Caymanian heritage, culture, way of life and everything Caymanian. It is also an opportunity to stop and express gratitude, marking the end of hurricane season.

Cayman Thanksgiving is observed annually on the first Sunday in December.

*1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble...*

*10 He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."*

*11 The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.*

*-Psalm 46:1.10-11*

## Prayer Corner

- Rev Rohan Kong and his wife whose newborn son, Joel Kong, remains in hospital since birth.
- Pastor Ormond Williams who lost his mother.
- Mrs. Karen Francis, whose husband Rev. Dr. Norman Francis has passed on.
- The Climbing number of COVID-19 infections in the Cayman Islands.
- Patients, families and workers in the health sector in the Cayman Islands and Jamaica.
- Members of staff with relatives affected by COVID 19.
- Those who have loss loved ones to COVID-19.
- Crime and Violence in Jamaica.
- The people of Haiti and Afghanistan.
- Victims, family members and those affected by the operations and principles of Pathway International Kingdom Restoration Ministries in St. James.

Almighty God,

We thank you, Lord that you have come to us in our tribulations. You deliver us from “the terrors of night and the arrow which flies by day”, and you guide us in your paths. Grant, Lord, that you may be glorified in us according to your will.

## Liturgy for worship at home

**December 5, 2021**  
**UCJCI Union Sunday**

### **“Jesus the Shining light”**

Malachi 3:1–4  
Philippians 1:3–11  
**Luke 1:68–79**

### **Jesus Will Come Again**

The song and prophesy of Zechariah concerning the purpose behind the coming of Jesus, speaks volumes and forms part of the central message of advent. He came to shine His light on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death and guide our feet in the path of peace.

# Notices

United Theological College of the West Indies invites applications for the following short course:

## Music and Worship

### What will you learn?

The technological fundamentals of church audio setup and use.

The value of the digital world to church maintenance and growth.

Locate the value of music in the functional life of church.

How to identify the defining features of Caribbean church music.

How music enhances church life.

### Why should you enroll?

**Expand** your knowledge of how music works in church life.

**Broaden** your view of technological advances in music.

**Acquire** skills in how technology enhances the use of music in different settings with focus on the Caribbean experience.

### For whom?

Choir Directors, Pastors, Deacons, Musicians  
Retreat Leaders, Lay Leaders, Choir Members  
Praise Team Members.

### Course Duration:

January 15, to March 5, 2022.

**Cost:** USD \$75.00



7 Golding Avenue, Kingston 7  
Tel: 876-927-1724, 927-2868  
Email: jthompson@utcwi.edu.jm

Registration closes January 7, 2022



United Theological College of the West Indies invites applications for the following short course:

## Advanced Certificate in Leadership Skills for Church and Society

### What will you learn?

Theory and practice of leadership.

How to lead as decision-maker, motivator, and communicator.

How to lead during chaos, crisis, and conflict.

How to lead by design.

How to lead as project manager and entrepreneur.

### Why should you enroll?

**Build** your capacity to be a transformational leader, and lead ethically.

**Fulfil** your leadership potential through acquisition of a range of leadership styles, competencies and strategies.

**Acquire** skills in team building, strategic planning and decision-making.

### For whom?

Managers and middle managers in schools to include; Principals, Vice Principals, Senior Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Work Experience persons, and others who aspire to leadership positions in their organization... Church, Service Clubs, Volunteers Organization, and other social or societal groups.

**Course Duration:** January 22, to March 6, 2022

**Cost:** USD \$300.00



7 Golding Avenue, Kingston 7  
Tel: 876-927-1724, 927-2868 | Email: jthompson@utcwi.edu.jm

Registration closes January 14, 2022

End Violence Against Women and Children



Share your *Thursdays in Black* photos on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and tag us @ucjci

#WCC, #UCJCI,

#evgw, #ThursdaysinBlack, #endviolenceagainstwomen



**Tune in to Our United in Faith Programme.**  
**Every Sunday on RJR 94 FM at 6:30 a.m.**



**Mr. Nigel Henry  
December 1, 2021**



**Rev. Rohan Kong  
December 4, 2021**

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

**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

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