



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

February 1, 2023 || Volume 10 Issue 03

Black History Month

This World Is Not My Home

Many years ago I used to enjoy a song with the words of the first line, "This world is not my home, I'm just a-passing through," sung, I think, by **Jim Reeves** on a record (those of my vintage may remember Jim Reeves and also what a record was).

I was reminded of this song as I was reading about Abraham in Hebrews 11 where he is described as "a stranger in a foreign country" who "was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose builder and architect is God" (vv. 9-10). A few verses later, he is included among those early patriarchs who by faith journeyed through life as "foreigners and strangers on earth ... looking for a country of their own" (vv. 13 -14). The writer goes on to say that they – and all others who live by faith – long "for a better country – a heavenly one," one that "God ... has prepared for them" (v. 16).

I decided to search for other similar references in Scripture. I found Philippians 3:20 where Paul stated that "our citizenship is in heaven" and, in somewhat different language but with the same implication, that "as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord (for) we live by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:6-7). I discovered that Peter understood life similarly. He exhorted his readers, "Live out your time as foreigners..." (1 Peter 1:17).

It was a good reminder to me of the reality of life and of its transience. On the one hand, God our Father has provided us with "every good and perfect gift" for us to enjoy while here on earth. On the other hand, few of us aren't affected in some way by suffering, by whichever way it comes to us. Whether it is physical or emotional illness, a broken relationship, an unexpected disaster or the inevitable ravages of time – and the list can go on – we need to remember that we live in a fallen world. Sin has not only affected our moral nature but our minds and bodies. In fact, as the Bible makes clear, it has touched the whole of creation. Paul states in Romans 8:20-21 that even "creation was subjected to frustration" by the Fall and is in "bondage to decay."

As Christians we live in tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet' of life. We live on this planet for a limited period of time and are bound by the restrictions of life. But, remember, as Christians we live by faith. We look to God to provide us his grace and wisdom. We have One who cares for us, protects us from the wiles of the Evil One and provides for our needs. And, as Christians, we recognise that this world is not truly – and certainly not permanently - our home. This is why we should not become too cozy. "Don't lay up for yourselves treasure on earth," Jesus warned.

Many of us long for things to be different. For some of us, it's our circumstances. For others it's their health. It may be we are struggling with old age. Some of us wrestle with our failures. It might just be an unhappiness with the way we are made – the way we are. We may even pray to

God for change, but it doesn't always happen.

Rather than making us despondent, if we truly understand that we are "foreigners and strangers," this should, in fact, be an encouragement and a motivation. The Bible constantly reminds us to focus not on the here and now but on our real 'home'. Paul tells the Colossian Christians: "Set your hearts on things above" and again, "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things" (3:1-2). When we do so, we will feel our spirits lifting.

So, here is word of encouragement for all of us. As Christians, we know that we belong to God; He knows and understands us and, further, is ultimately in charge in all our struggles. Our sovereign Lord is also our heavenly Father. He only has our best in mind.

This world is just a temporary abode. We are travellers who have set up camp as we journey to our final home. The Bible promises for all Christians a new, eternal home, "a new heaven and new earth" which will be the eternal dwelling place for all Christians, a place where "there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Revelation 21:1-4).

We must, therefore, as with those saints in Hebrews 11 who journeyed in faith, "run the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (12:1-2). We live in anticipation of the 'not yet' but meanwhile we live by faith, rejoicing in the certainty we have of a God who is here in our 'already' but has something supremely better for us at the end of the race.

Are your eyes set on that better country which God has prepared for you?

Michael Bowerman

Taken from Elmslie Memorial Charge's Family News, Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council.

You can do this. As a result of what you undertake, you can produce a positive impact on this day.

You can experience the satisfaction of knowing you're making meaningful progress. You can feel less overwhelmed, more focused and purposeful.

You can do this even with the inevitable interruptions, distractions, obstacles and frustrations. You can do this by making a choice and sticking with it.

It won't be particularly easy yet it is well within your reach. You can do this because you've done it before and you have good reason to do it now.

Take a deep breath, relax your body, quiet your thoughts. In peaceful contemplation, feel the power of your own intention.

Then calmly release your objections and set that intention to work. Notice how highly effective you become when you remind yourself of the simple truth that you can do this.

— Ralph Marston

THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

presents

43RD SYNOD

Theme

"ROOTED, RESILIENT:
REIGNITED BY THE SPIRIT"

STAY
TUNED FOR
MORE
UPDATES

Blended Modality
**REGISTER
NOW!**

The registration portal closes
on Feb. 28, 2023.

*For those applying for Cayman Visa
registration ends on Feb. 15, 2023.

START

**APRIL
23**

END

**APRIL
30**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL OFFICES OR VISIT
<https://synod.ucjci.com>

SYNOD CORNER- Bulletin #1

The 43rd Synod of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands will be held in the Cayman Islands. The last time the Synod convened in the Cayman Islands was 1987.

Moderator-Elect : Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott

Venue:

- The Worship Services and Public Lecture will be held at the Elmslie Memorial Church.
- Business Sessions will be at the Savannah United Church.

Delegates: Congregations will be represented by the Minister, Lay Pastor (if applicable) and two Delegates.

How can you participate?

1. Pray for the Synod.
2. You are invited to attend all the Worship Services, the Public Lecture and Moderator's Reception

If you are in Cayman:

3. Prepare to welcome our Sisters and Brothers who will be joining us.
4. Person's are needed to host the Delegates from Jamaica. Please indicate your willingness to host to your Minister, your Church Office or the Synod contact person in your Congregation.
5. Decorating: Are you good at decorating? We will need assistance in this area. Please contact the Council Office.
6. Drivers: Can you serve as a driver during the week of April 23-27, 2023? Please contact the Council Office.
7. Each Charge has been assigned a day to prepare morning and afternoon snacks for the Synod- What can you contribute? Please contact your local Congregation.

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council welcomes the opportunity to host the Synod and do anticipate your participation!

PRAYER *Corner*

- The McNish family as they mourn the passing of Mr. Leslie McNish, former Chairman of WRMC and Elder of the St. Paul's United Church
- Rev. Tamara Smith Coleman who lost her father
- The son of Mrs. Sheila Arscott Smith, Jerome, who is recovering from injuries from a car crash
- Ms. Joy Williams who lost her brother and sister
- Members of staff with relatives affected by COVID-19
- People affected by the war between Ukraine and Russian
- Crime and violence in Jamaica and the security force and government as they respond



Dear God,

Father God, we thank you that your amazing unfathomable love has been poured out for us at the cross and poured into us by the Holy Spirit. We want to taste and experience more of the depth and breadth and length and height of your amazing love. Help us to walk by faith. Help us to endure in suffering. Help us to own our need of you. Help us to fully embrace your Son, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. So, pour out your love into our hearts, in increasing measure by the power of your Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is in his name that we pray, Amen.

Liturgy for Worship at Home

February 5, 2023

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

RETURN to Your Roots

- Isaiah 58:1-12
- Psalm 112:1-10
- 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)
- Matthew 5:13-20



SPECIALISED TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS COMING IN JUNE 2023



Would you register for **Module 2** of **UCJCI LAY LEADERS CERTIFICATE COURSE?**

We are assessing interest in order to plan for **Module 2**.

If you are preparing or involved in leadership in:

- Children's Ministry
- Evangelism and Discipleship
- Youth Ministry
- Ministry with Community

Module 2 may be for you!

If you are interested in becoming a **Lay Pastor**, Modules 1, 2 and 3 are all requirements for your preparation.

If any of these descriptions relate to you, send us your name, congregation and mobile number using the contacts below.

**We want to
hear
from you**



876-8818783 (WHATSAPP ONLY)



laytrainingadmin@ucjci.com

TECHNICAL SUPPORT NEEDED Lay Leaders Training

Are you skilled in using the Zoom Platform?

Are you available 2nd and 4th Saturdays and the following Thursday evening?

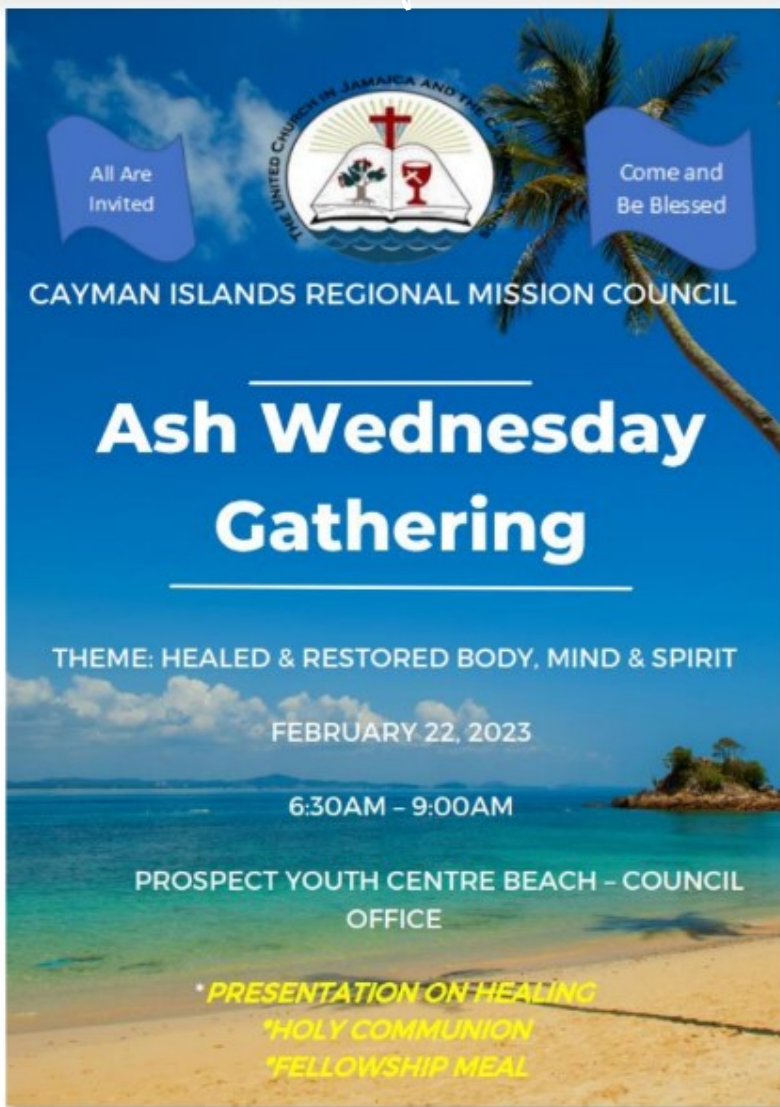
IF SO, WE NEED YOU!

Contact: Karen Francis, Lay Training Co-Ordinator

karen-francis@ucjci.com

a gratuity will be offered

NOTICES



All Are Invited **Come and Be Blessed**

THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

Ash Wednesday Gathering

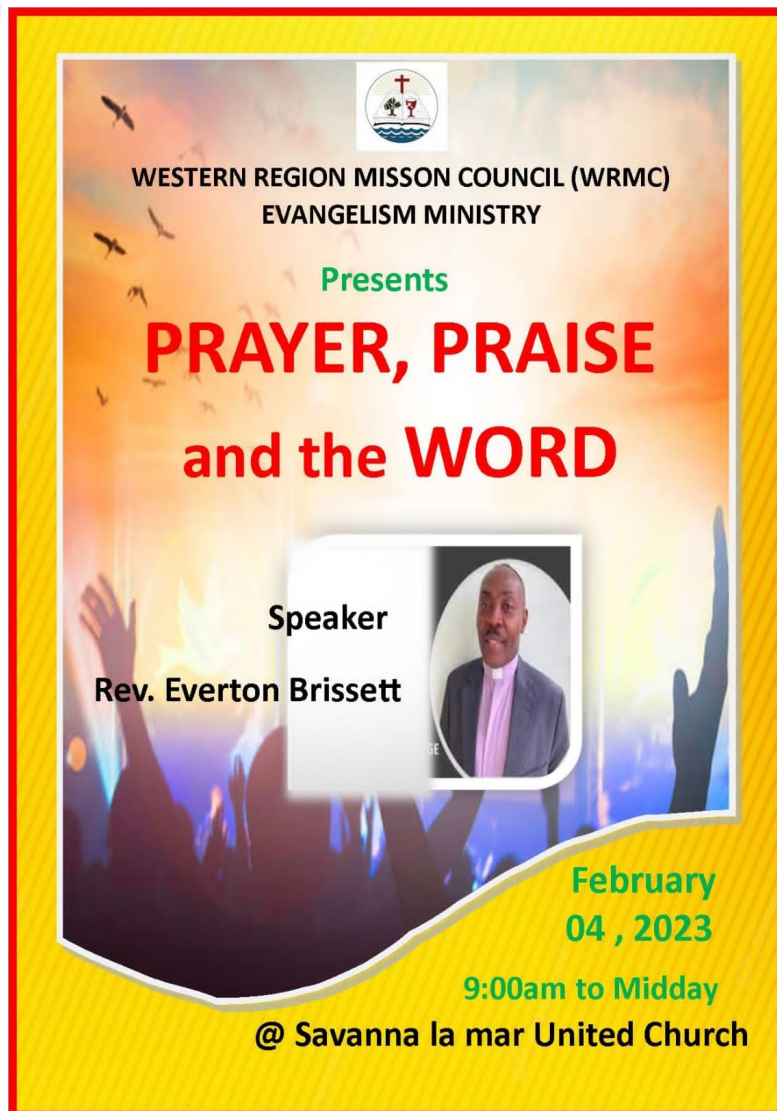
THEME: HEALED & RESTORED BODY, MIND & SPIRIT

FEBRUARY 22, 2023

6:30AM – 9:00AM

PROSPECT YOUTH CENTRE BEACH – COUNCIL OFFICE

** PRESENTATION ON HEALING
* HOLY COMMUNION
* FELLOWSHIP MEAL*




**WESTERN REGION MISSION COUNCIL (WRMC)
EVANGELISM MINISTRY**

Presents

PRAYER, PRAISE and the WORD

Speaker
Rev. Everton Brissett



February
04, 2023

9:00am to Midday
@ Savanna la mar United Church



WRMC REGIONAL SPORTS

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4, 2023

More information soon!



Cars For Sale

Enquires and offers can be made at the Synod Office.

- ✓ 2016 Hyundai Tucson 4WD
- ✓ 2017 Volkswagen Tiguan

Address: 12 Carlton Crescent, Kingston 10
Telephone No: 876-926-8734



Happy Birthday



REV. ROY DODMAN

FEBRUARY 02




EVANGELISM CONVERSATION 2023

UCJCI NORTH-EASTERN REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL INVITES ALL: ELDERS MEMBERS, CONGREGATION, EVANGELISM LEADERS, MINISTERS AND PASTORS TO AN EVANGELISM CONVERSATION.

Under the theme: "We are in it Together"

REV. DR. STEPENSON SAMUELS
SPEAKER

FEBRUARY 4, 2023
HOSTED VIRTUALLY ON ZOOM
MEETING ID : 886657494
PASWORD: EVANGELIZE

MORE INFO:
+1 (876) 864-9557
Zoom Link will be circulated closer to date of the event



*Tune in to United in Faith
Sundays on **RJR 94 F.M** at
6:30 a.m.*

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**



**18TH
MARCH**

WE'RE BACK !!

NATIONAL

SPORTS

DAY



**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. Maureen Henry

Contact Us

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YouTube: UCJCI's Channel

Instagram: @UCJCI

**We appreciate your feedback.
Please send your comments and input to
citc@ucjci.com**