



UCJCI UPDATE

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CAYMAN ISLANDS

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Congregational
Disciples of Christ and
Presbyterian

'THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO THE EMERGING GLOBAL CHALLENGES IN A DIVIDED WORLD'

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

IN THIS ISSUE

REV. DR RODERICK
HEWITT SPEAKS OUT. 1

• SEXUAL
MISCONDUCT
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PRAY FOR:



**Rev. Stotrell Lowe
and Rev. Dr. Mar-
garet Fowler, who
are both recover-
ing from surgery.**

In an outstanding presentation, at the Advocacy Forum of the UCJCI, held at the Sanctuary of the Webster Memorial United Church January 18th, veteran Minister of the Word and Sacraments, the Rev. Dr. Roderick Hewitt stated that: "the fast changing global landscape especially in the area of technological advancement is redefining what it means to be human and also greatly reducing trust in human relationship with one another and with the environment. 2016, he said, will go down as the year of a colossal political shift through the increased re-ascendency of extreme right wing white supremacist inspired nationalism and many other isms around the world. 2017 has seen the 'ascendancy of moral lowlives' as the standard of leadership in some nations. "Extremism", he intoned, "is displacing the voices of reason and common sense as they take over some main stream media, the social media and other forms of mass communication to transform the political and economic environment of many nations".

Rev. Hewitt who was home on furlough from South Africa, said that the election of Trump will go down in history as the re-ascendency of white supremacy and nationalism fused with



Rev. Dr. Roderick Hewitt

the support of conservative evangelical Christianity now at the centre of governance and public discourse in the USA.

Over 80% of the white evangelical Christian community and 67% Catholics voters gave their support for this new world order.

The consequence will be far reaching for the ministry and mission of the church globally. We have observed Key evangelical leaders prostituting the gospel and the global witness of the Christian faith when they voted for a leader whose character and values betray the gospel of Jesus Christ and whose campaign policies unapologetically called for victimization and marginalization of the most vulnerable peo-

ple such as immigrants and Muslims.

A nationalist brand of identity politics has now gained strong global traction. Facts and reasoning no longer matter. Self-willed fanatics no longer see the need to become educated because delusion offers greater security. Lies that are repeated many times through social media become true!

What counts is what emotionally connects with the people. Such persons embrace cultic leaders, charlatan messiahs and sociopath demagogues that promote paranoid xenophobes! said Dr. Hewitt.

He also questioned: **Is the Age of Humanism ending?** - These life denying forces he stated, are greatly contributing to the decline and ridicule of virtues that build genuine human relationships such as **love, care, compassion and kindness** especially for the weak and powerless. . This era, he argues, that began with enlightenment that caused the triumph of rationalistic and enlightenment shaped mind that fashioned us as rational being is now found wanting and unable to deliver.

(Contd overleaf)



70:

Rev. Gerald Emanuel

February 11

Rev. Dr. Clinton Smith

February 12

Humanity's common future looks to be in jeopardy..... "Welcome to the age of political irrationalismWelcome to the new polytheistic age in which we are living in which we must now cope not only with the gods of many religions but gods from many other global political and economic systems!" exclaimed Dr. Hewitt.

The notion of human capacity has journeyed through all kinds of ideologies to pursue human happiness since the enlightenment into the modern, postmodern and now technocratic age in which we are experiencing the resurrection of mechanistic and materialist way of conceiving human actions, he said. Technology-driven intelligent chat boxes are providing information for consumers. Artificial intelligence will be taking over a number of human jobs and people will need to be retooled for new jobs. **It is no longer who is talking but what is talking to you!**

Speaking to what he sees as the rise in **Digital Technologies and the Computational Age**, Rev. Hewitt said that in this contemporary era of toxic media, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter can be used to cause international incidents.

Trump shapes foreign policy using the 146 characters of Twitter!

The new humanity is being born fully wired from birth. The emergence of digital technologies and computational media have unleashed advancement in communication technologies that make life in 2017 so different from a few years ago. The power of mega data gathered from our use of smart phones and computers are gathering and analysing data about us 24/7 that are sent to marketer of different institutions that wish to sell us something. Our relevance as humans are directly linked to what we can purchase and influence. **Through algorithmic computer programming method big data will be gathered about all human beings that participate in the market place.**

Noting that the Addiction to Technology undermines trust in Humans and Human Relationships the Rev. Dr. Hewitt noted that, it is this technocratic godlike reality that now controls and influences the region's political, economic, security, "and I dare say", he added, "even religious landscape".

"It has eroded and weakened the traditional modes/space of participation in the different institutions of society. New form of networking have evolved that challenges traditional forms of governance in party politics and church. Institution that are not relevant to people's needs lose public trust.

People no longer cling to loyalty that does not deliver relevant service. As people seek to cope during this age of automation, intentional effort must be given to life-long learning in order for us not to become commoditised and enslaved. Who knows... our additive faith in technology especially phones to get our information may seriously undermined our trust in humans and human relationships".

Speaking on Ministry and Mission implications for the Church in Jamaica, Rev Hewitt stated that, the necessary exposure of alleged sexual act against a minor by a church pastor that has shamed and disgraced the ministry and mission of the Jamaican church has served to expose the precarious nature of Spiritual leadership."

More next week!

THE UCJCI POLICY ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

- **Biblical and Theological Basis.**

3.Contd. from last week. Further, the Church is called to be a transforming presence by promoting right relationships within its midst, and in the world, in the Name of the One, who is our Judge, and our Hope. **(1 Peter 2: 9-11)**

4. Within the Church, some are called to leadership. Such persons are set aside, and designated as a trustworthy presence among the people of God. The position that leaders hold, carries with it power and authority intended to be used to support the Church's ministry and the individuals that the Church serves. When such power is used to take sexual advantage of the vulnerability of someone who seeks our help, it is particularly shocking and expressly unacceptable. **(1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 3: 1-10.)**

5. It is our responsibility as Church, in order to maintain and protect the integrity of the Church, to call to account anyone who uses his/her office to exploit or harm another.

POLICY POSITIONS.

1. The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (**UCJCI**) will not tolerate any behaviour by its **Ordained Ministers, Lay Pastors, Commissioned Ministers, or employees**, which constitutes sexual misconduct.
2. The UCJCI is committed to providing a safe environment for worship, work and study in all its Pastoral Charges, Congregations, Institutions, Agencies and Organizations that are owned by, and operated fully under its name. **Complaints of sexual abuse will be taken seriously.**

(More next Week.)