



# UCJCI UPDATE

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

THE UNITED CHURCH  
IN JAMAICA AND THE  
CAYMAN ISLANDS

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*Congregational  
Disciples of Christ  
Presbyterian*

## THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS

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**OUR VISION:** “*Touching  
Lives, Nurturing Disciples,  
Seeking Transformation  
through Christ*”

**SYNODICAL THEME:**  
“*Renewal and Transfor-  
mation: Discipleship for  
Life*”

### UCJCI VALUES

#### Family:

Family is a gift from God. As we grow in relationships, we encounter God through each other, and are strengthened to live for God in the world.

(Psalm 127:3-5, 128:3-4, Ephesians 5:22-33, 6:1-4).

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**T**he miracle of Christmas is the wonderful love of God which was poured out into this world and into every heart that is ready to receive Jesus. He is the love of God in human form, the Love Incarnate, the embodiment of God’s love.

The love of God, Jesus, breathes life into the deepest part of our broken and wayward hearts. It changes and transforms us into a new being, a new creation. How comforting and empowering to know, to embrace, and be embraced by this amazing love.

Amid our loneliness, confusion, pain, grief, hopelessness, and disillusionment He comes and in Him, we find acceptance, understanding, healing, hope, peace, and joy.

Jesus is, indeed, the greatest gift of all! The priceless gift, the gift that is freely given, the gift that is so much needed! Indeed, for these reasons, we celebrate! **We celebrate His coming. We celebrate His rich, abundant, and unconditional love not only on Christmas day but every day of our lives.**

- Rev. Otto Menko

# love

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*



John 3:16

### CLOSURE OF UCJCI OFFICES

The Synod Administration Centre  
and Regional Offices

will be closed for the Christmas Season

**Wednesday, December 23, 2020 to  
Monday, January 04, 2021 .**

The offices will re-open on

**Tuesday, January 05, 2021.**

# THE UCJCI ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS

## Consider Your Response

The Synod Administrative team paused to celebrate the Christmas season in a celebration planned by the Human and Mission Resource Unit, which combined a carol service, candle lighting, Christmas games, affirmations and lunch. All regional offices joined in virtually and so did some members of staff from the central office in order to ensure physical distancing protocols could be observed.

Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans , who also shared in the celebration, paid tribute to General Secretary, Rev. Norbert Stephens for his leadership of the team. In his own words of affirmation, Rev. Stephens thanked all team members for their faithfulness.

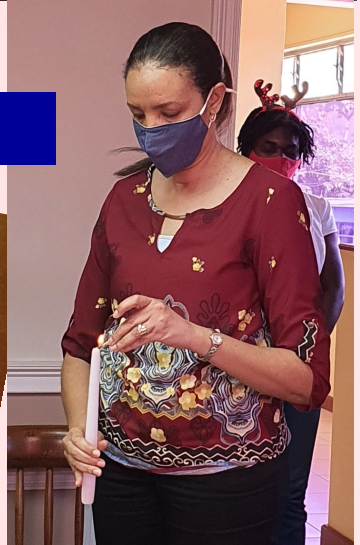
The theme of worship, which was led by Alisa Magnus, was 'Consider Your Response' and the gathering was led to reflect on the response of Mary, the shepherds, Simeon, Anna and John the Baptist to the good news of the incarnation of Christ. The staff was challenged to consider their own response and to be faithful in taking that good news to others.



Candle-lighting was a feature of the carol service.



A member of the team in prayer



A dramatization of 'Breadfruit roasting on an open fiyah



Some team members joined via Zoom platform.



## BEYOND THE PULPIT

*Providing a space for leadership discussion of issues of faith in community*

# Is COVID 19 a sign of Endtimes?

Is COVID-19 an example of pestilence referenced in 2 Chronicles 7?

Is this pandemic a punishment for the sin of human beings – racism, human trafficking, violence against women, child abuse, destructive activity in the environment?

How should a Christian view COVID 19 and what should be an appropriate faith response?

Let's join a conversation between Revd. Henley Bernard, Director of Ministerial Formation in the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands and Rev. Dr. Roderick Hewitt, a minister in the UCJCI and President of the International University of the Caribbean in a podcast coming in January.

**Watch this space for more information.**



Rev. Dr. Roderick  
Hewitt



Rev. Henley Bernard

**NEWS! NEWS! NEWS! NEWS! NEWS! NEWS! NEWS! NEWS!**

**CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER**



Jasmine Lambert-Wragg receives the UCJCI Ethics Award from Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield, Deputy General Secretary of the CIRMC at the recent Cayman Prep and High School Graduation Ceremony.

**HOUSE WORSHIP THEMES FOR DECEMBER**

December 25  
**The Unspeakable Gift**

December 27  
**The Names of Jesus Series**  
— *Saviour of the World*

A Watchnight Service liturgy has been prepared for New Years' Eve, December 31  
**Out with the Old; In with the New**

Liturgies are available from your Minister/Lay Pastor, Communication Officer for your congregation and from your Regional Mission Council Office.

**WALK GOOD ALISA!**



Alisa Magnus Administrative Assistant for Children and Youth Ministry of UCJCI leaves the Synod office at the end of December. Alisa will continue on her journey of academic study in field of theology. Alisa served for 3 months in this capacity. Farewell Alisa. and God bless you for your service.

The United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands  
Presents  
**THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT**  
ON UCJCI'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL

DEC 25 2020 6PM

KAIROS CREATION

FEATURING REV. DR. RODERICK HEWITT AND BRO ROY  
"ZACHARIAH AND THE GIFT WITH THE STRING"  
BY REV. EARL THAMES  
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY REV. KEVIN "NANA MOSES" CALVERT

**Send comments and news about your congregation to: [ucjciupdate@gmail.com](mailto:ucjciupdate@gmail.com)**



**CELEBRATIONS!****HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**

**December 23**  
*Rev. Gary Harriott*



**December 25**  
*Rev. David Tucker*



**December 27**  
*Rev. Dwight Kelly*



**December 31**  
*Rev. Nevroy Francis*

**PRAY WITHOUT CEASING:****A PRAYER DURING TIMES OF  
COVID-19**

(Rt. Rev Richard Bott, Moderator, United Church of Canada)

When we aren't sure God, help us be calm;  
when information comes from all sides, correct and not,  
help us to discern;  
when fear makes it hard to breathe, and anxiety seems to be the  
order of the day, slow us down, God;  
help us to reach out with our hearts, when we can't touch with our  
hands;  
help us to be socially connected, when we have to be socially  
distant;  
help us to love as perfectly as we can, knowing that 'perfect love  
casts out all fear'.

For the doctors, we pray, for the nurses, we pray,  
for the technicians, janitors, aides and caregivers, we pray,  
for the researchers and theorists; the epidemiologists and  
investigators, for those who are sick and those who are grieving,  
for all who are affected around the world...  
we pray for safety, for health, for wholeness  
May we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked  
and house those without homes; may we walk with those who feel  
they are alone, and may we do all that we can to heal the sick—in  
spite of the epidemic in spite of the fear.

Help us O God that we might help each other. In the love of the  
Creator, in the name of the Healer in the life of the Holy Spirit.  
May it be so.

UCJCI'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19  
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

**Individual Prayer:**  
**Every Wednesday**  
**from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.**

(2 Timothy 1:7)