

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



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THE ABORTION DEBATE

TABLETS FOR PRINGLE HOME

Donations from UCJCI Partner

PRAYER AND
WORSHIP POINTS

THE COVID VACCINE

Coming Up...
A Virtual Forum



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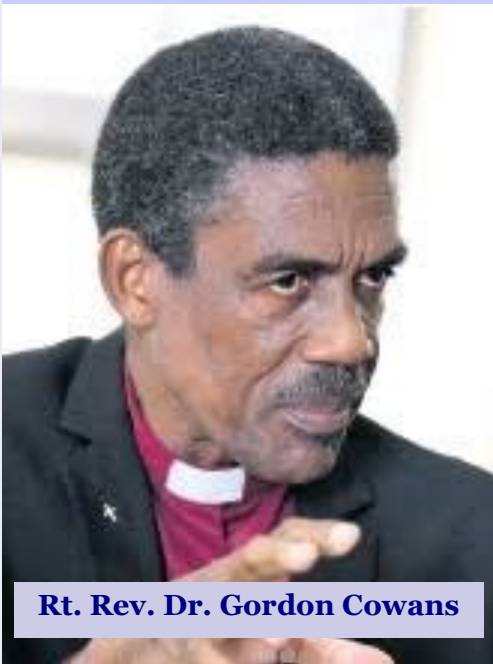
Our Vision: Touching Lives, Nurturing Disciples, Seeking Transformation through Christ

WOMEN ON THE MARCH FOR CHRIST

A Word from the Moderator...

We are in the Land of the Living and are determined to press on! We are grateful to God that last year's woes are behind us as we continue to rely on His gracious Hand to bring us into a new time.

The continuing story of the global battle against the corona virus is very much a part of our reality. We register our deep concern for those who are or have been most affected as the pandemic ravages health, employment, finances, emotions and so many aspects of life. Let this be the year in which each of us considers each sister's and brother's struggle as our own.



Rt. Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans

The resilience of our women and our Church's Women's Fellowship is a source of pride and encouragement to us all.

How wonderful it has been to see women and their organization

rising up to engage the amazing opportunities, utilizing the current technologies to maintain and strengthen that which matters. In this crisis, your loving concern for each other and your resolute commitment to serve others as motivated by that love, make you such a marvellous example. **May the Gospel of Christ continue to shine forth from you.**



Mrs. Pauline Bryan

The President -General Speaks

While we face the continued uncertainties of the day, we are constantly assured of God's everlasting love and faithfulness to us. God reminds us in Deuteronomy 31, verse 6: ***"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you or forsake you"***. What a tremendous promise! God did not promise that we would never have challenges in our lives, but the assurance is that God will remain with us, no matter what we are going through.

As we celebrate another year of our existence, let us, in keeping with our theme, be **"Women on the March for Jesus"**. In other words, we are not going to allow COVID or anything else to stand in our way. It may mean that we will need to do things differently, but we will be undeterred in our focus to serve God and reach out to others as we witness of God's faithfulness to us. While on the march for Jesus, please continue to follow all the government guidelines and protocols, as we play our part to eradicate this pandemic from our shores.

Happy Fellowship Week to all! We look forward to hearing your reports through your Councils on what special projects you have taken on this year. **May the blessings of the Lord be upon you as you seek to celebrate God's goodness to us for yet another year.**

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BEYOND THE PULPIT

The Abortion Debate — LET US CONSIDER...



Throughout the centuries there have always been different life issues that have generated dialogue and debate. Most recently across the world, and currently in Jamaica, the topic of abortion has sparked heated debates between the Church and society.

The debate always invites an individual to state whether they are for or against the act of abortion. In reality, with our human limitations, and of course Christian convictions, the tendency in finding answers to some of the most difficult issues in life is for one to see the issues through the lens of “black or white.” Truth be told, in experiencing life, its strivings and struggles, to choose “black and white” for the issues we are confronted with, takes us into a space where we discover that there are many “grey areas.” It is not as easy to choose and/or make a decision, as we make things out to be, even with our Christian convictions.

The debates about abortion have revealed and highlighted that the case for or against abortion is filled with many grey areas. As a Christian woman (and I am Christian before being Pastor),

I could never agree to the act of abortion based on irresponsible behaviour and a lack of regard for life. However, let us not be oblivious to the fact that there are some medical realities, for example, a life and death situation that involves mother and foetus that may invite the mother to make a decision.

At the heart of the debate is the right of the mother to make her own decision whether or not to go through a pregnancy. With this right, the burden then becomes that of the mother to deal with the consequences of her action.

All cases re a decision to do an abortion should not be dealt in the same vein, each case ought to be dealt with on its own merit. Be reminded, as humans we are not the ultimate judge of people’s action/s. The task of being ultimate judge is God’s prerogative.



Rev. Tara Tyme

NEWS



TABLETS FOR CHILDREN AT PRINGLE HOME

Every child at Pringle Home for Children will now have a tablet to aid their education. This has been made possible by a Global Ministries, a joint witness between the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, partners of UCJCI in the United States. Global ministries contributed USD2500 to purchase the tablets.

Here, Rev. Norbert Stephens, General Secretary UCJCI (left) makes the presentation to Mrs. Jeanette Rose Bryan, Director of Pringle Home for Children. The presentation was done at the UCJCI Synod office on Friday January 16, 2021.

A NEW CHAIRMAN FOR NERMC



North Eastern Regional Mission Council has a new Chairman—Mrs. Jennifer Martin. Mrs. Martin is a member of Mannings Hill United Church, a Commissioned Minister in UCJCI and currently the Education in Mission Secretary for Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM). The elections took place on Saturday January 16, 2021. She is married to Dr. Paul Martin.



CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY 21

Mrs. Najahuldin Martin



JANUARY 25

Rev. Bevin Miller

JANUARY 26

Mrs. Joyce Williams



UPCOMING EVENTS



The United Church in Jamaica and
the Cayman Islands

HUMAN AND MISSION RESOURCES UNIT

PRESENTS

WORKSHOP # 1
2021

THE CONGREGATION AS EMPLOYER: **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE LAW**

11 February 2021 | Thursday | 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | ZOOM

Facilitator: Andrew Silburn, Industrial Relations Practitioner

Purpose:

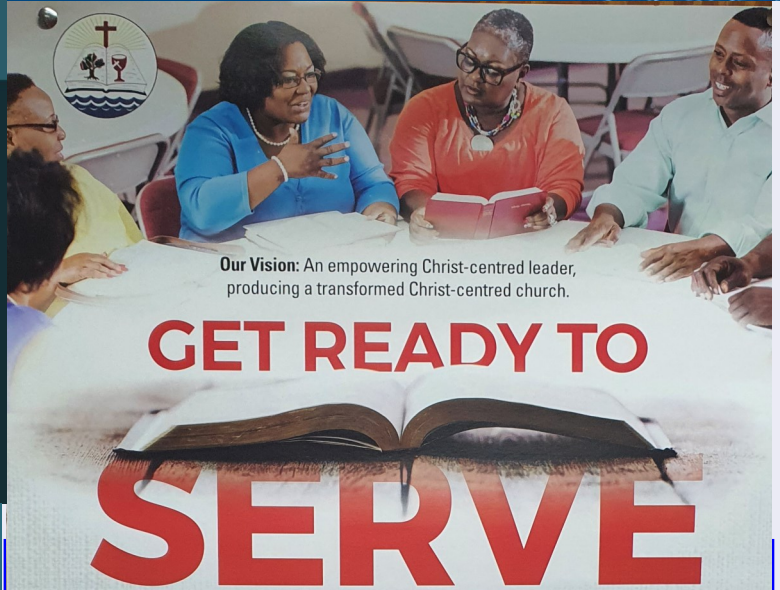
The aim of this intervention is to:

1. Assist Ministers, Congregational Secretaries or Administrators in understanding and executing the Congregation's /Board's responsibilities as the employer, in relation to the Labour Laws, when employing full or part-time staff.
2. Provide tools and templates for the employment processes (basic employment contracts, a checklist for employment, labour relations code, etc.)
3. Provide basic guidelines for the employment and termination processes.

Who should attend:

Ministers and congregational secretaries or administrators of congregations where staff are employed by the congregation/congregational board.

To register: email Ms. Monique Lofters programmeassistant-hmr@ucjci.com by January 31, 2021, to book your space. For additional information, contact: Mrs. Janet McConnell, Human and Mission Resource Manager, janet-mcconnell@ucjci.com or 876 926 6059 or 876 509 4669.



Our Vision: An empowering Christ-centred leader, producing a transformed Christ-centred church.

GET READY TO

SERVE

**TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS THROUGH THE
UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN
ISLANDS LAY TRAINING INSTITUTE**

WILL NOW BE DELIVERED ONLINE

For those who started the training in 2020, please contact your Regional Mission Council office which will provide information on plans for you to access and continue the training.

New learners welcome

Are you seeking a deeper understanding of areas of ministry in your local congregation?

Do you desire to join the leadership team in your church as a way of contributing to the growth of God's people?

Have you been chosen to serve in an area of ministry in your congregation?

Do you want to prepare to serve your church by using your gifts in an area of service?

REGISTER NOW
through your Regional Mission Council office.

**Training Resumes
February 13, 2020**

**UPCOMING
EVENT**

Webster Memorial United Church

Virtual **Public Forum**
on the

Covid-19 Vaccine

**Sunday,
2021 January 24 | 4:00 pm**

Join us on

Rev Norbert Stephens
General Secretary, UCJCI

Dr. Ernestine Watson
Pharmacist

Mr Earl Moxam
Journalist
MODERATOR

Dr. Michelle Brown
Medical Doctor,
Virologist, UWI, Mona,
Medical Doctor

Dr. Karen Lewis-Bell,
Public Health Specialist

PANEL PROFILE:

Dr. Karen Lewis Bell, Public Health Specialist, who will speak on the development of vaccines and how they prevent diseases

Dr. Ernestine Watson, Immediate Past President of Pharmaceutical Society of Jamaica, will address the pharmaceutical perspective including benefits and possible adverse effects

Dr. Michelle Brown, Virologist from the Dept. of Micro-Biology will speak primarily concerning the coronavirus

Rev. Norbert Stephens, Gen. Sec. UCJCI will address the responsibility of the Church to facilitate awareness and responsible information in a context of low trust.

Mr. Earl Moxam, veteran journalist with the Gleaner RJR Communication group will chair the discussion.

Opportunities will be given for us to ask questions.



The Board of Governors, MONA PREPARATORY SCHOOL is seeking to recruit a suitably qualified candidate to fill the position of PRINCIPAL as at August 2021.

Applicants should meet the following criteria;

- ◆ Master's Degree in Education/Educational Administration or a related field
- ◆ NCEL – Aspiring Principals' Programme along with Trained Teacher Certification
- ◆ Knowledge of the Education Act and Regulations as well as school administrative processes
- ◆ Knowledge of ICT in Education
- ◆ At least (3) years' experience in a similar capacity or in a senior leadership position
- ◆ Possess excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to work with team members at various levels
- ◆ Excellent oral and written communication skills along with strong presentation skills
- ◆ A propensity to think creatively and “outside the box” with highly developed analytical and problem solving skills. (For more details please visit our website at monaprep.edu.jm/careers)

Interested persons should submit their application by **February 12, 2021** to:

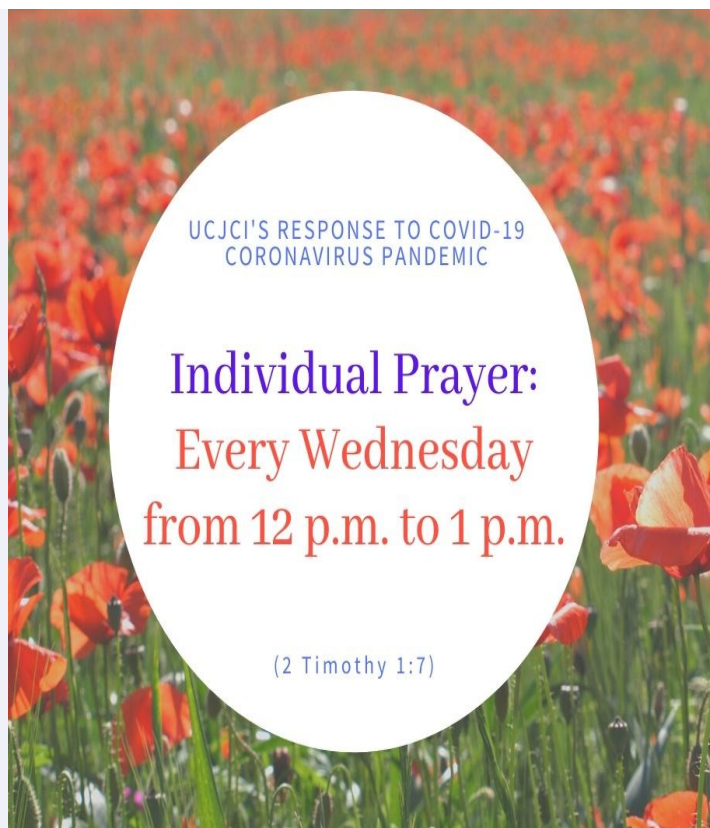
THE CHAIRMAN
C/O MONA PREPARATORY SCHOOL
221 OLD HOPE ROAD,
KINGSTON 6.

OR email: jobvacancy@monaprep.edu.jm with
ATTENTION: PRINCIPAL VACANCY
in the subject line.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING:

LET US PRAY FOR:

- ◆ The physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health of persons in community in Cayman and Jamaica
- ◆ Good judgement as families face contentions and disagreements
- ◆ Rev. Dr. Roderick Hewitt and family at the passing of his sister Mrs Essiline Smith who resided in the USA
- ◆ Continued concerns for the education of children and youth in Jamaica
- ◆ Decision-making about the livelihood of persons in public and private sector spaces in Cayman and Jamaica
 - ◆ Rev. Donovan Myers and family



HOUSE WORSHIP LITURGY THEMES FOR JANUARY

The liturgy developed by the House Worship Team reflect the Synodical worship themes.

THEME FOR THE MONTH:

Rooting our Physical Health in God brings us Hope

JANUARY 24

Surely God is with us

JANUARY 31

God has brought us through many physical tribulations and God deserves our unreserved praise and thanks

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

Send comments and news about your congregation to: ucjciupdate@gmail.com

UCJCI VALUE S

“In seeking to live out our calling, we particularly value and are committed to:

Relationship with God
so we may know God and relate to God as a person, rather than an impersonal force, knowing Jesus to be Lord of our lives, so we may grow in grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit .”

(Mark 12:29-31, Matthew 3:16-17, Romans 8:1-17).

IN THE COMING ISSUE...

BEYOND THE PULPIT

Contemplating the COVID Vaccine

THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA AND THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

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Moderator

Rt. Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans

General Secretary

Rev. Norbert Stephens

Regional Deputy General Secretaries

Cayman Regional Mission Council
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield

Southern Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Rose Wedderburn

North Eastern Regional Mission Council
(Interim)
Rev. Norbert Stephens

Western Regional Mission Council
Mrs. Mauleen Henry

SYNODICAL THEME:

“Renewal and Transformation: Discipleship for Life”

Follow us on    @ucjci