



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

Post Synod Issue - April 21, 2021

# TAKING A STAND

## Against Violence

### 42ND SYNOD - WHAT'S BEEN DECIDED?



YOUTH  
SPEAK UP

LUCEA UNITED  
PARTNERING IN  
EDUCATION

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VOLUME 7  
ISSUE 16

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

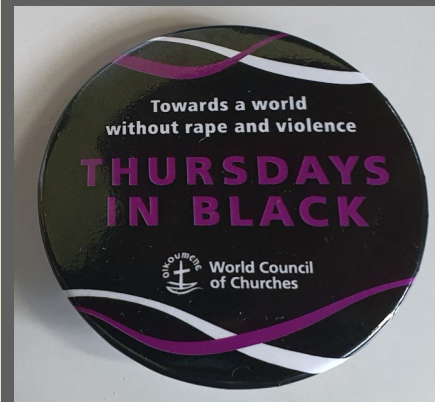




**”Speaking alone will not work; we must also be prepared to act.”**

**R**ecent reports in Jamaica of increasing violence, especially violence against women, were highlighted for action by the newly inducted UCJCI Moderator, Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott, in his first address to the church after induction. “In the Jamaican context, there is a thick cloud of darkness hovering; a dark cloud of violence; gender-based violence; violence against our women and girls and the abuse of our children. There is deeper concern regarding what is happening with some of our boys and men; what’s going on in their minds and heart. There are voices reaching out to the church for help in this crisis and clearly, we are not immune to these troubling realities. We are a people committed to justice and peace, so let us get ready to roll up our sleeves; step into the social murky waters and be God’s agents of

hope and transformation; God’s salt and light. He invited the Synod to wear black on Thursday in the week of the Synod and all other Thursdays to join the worldwide movement inspired by the World Council of Churches, dubbed, “Thursdays in Black.”



“Black that speaks of our strength; black that demonstrates our solidarity with those who are victims of violence; black that makes a statement of our commitment to work for a world without rape and violence.”

The March 24 issue of UPDATE carried an article— Gender Based Violence: Time for the Church to Recognise and Re-position— written by Rev. Donovan Myers of CIRMC.



Specific plans for action will unfold in the coming period.

Above—Moderator and members of the Synod staff dressed in black last Thursday in a symbolic stance against violence.

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# Spotlight on UCJCI 42nd Synod

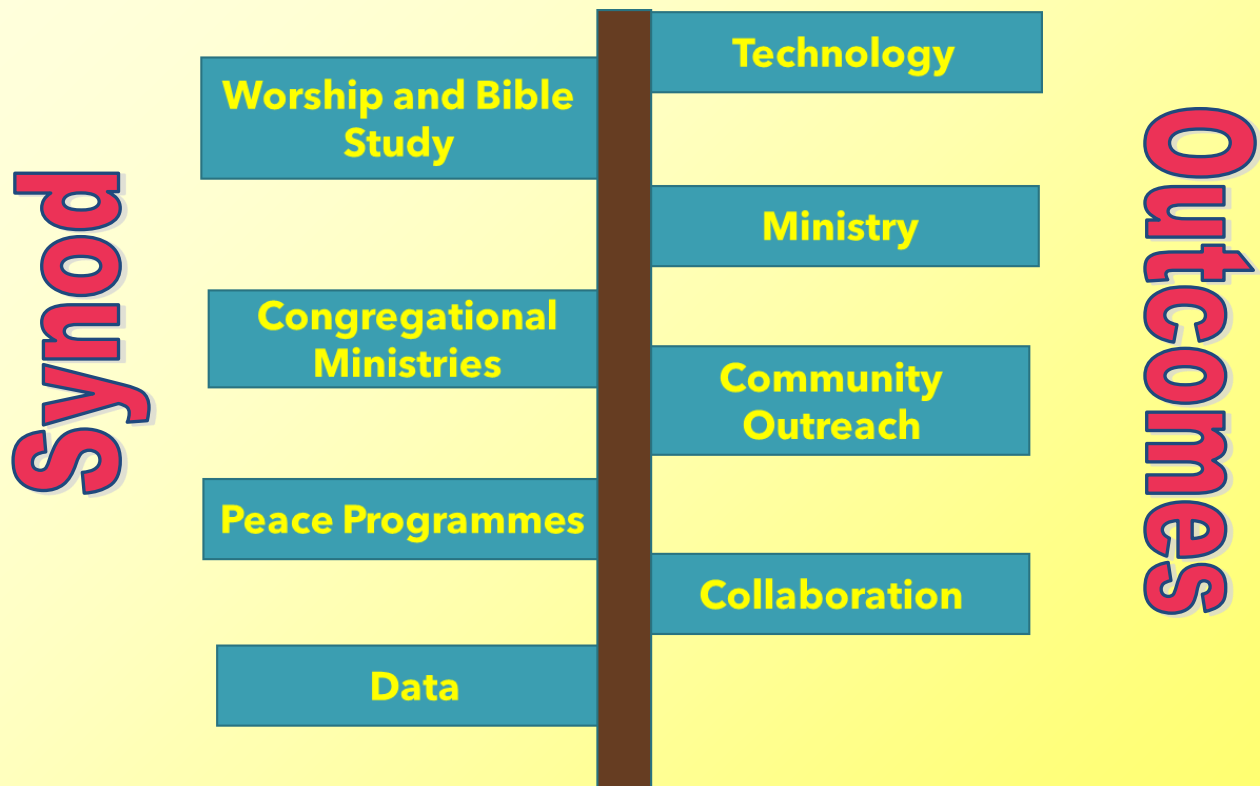
*Rooted, Resilient: Responding in H.O.P.E.*

The 42nd Synod of The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands concluded on Sunday April 18, 2021 after a week of bible study, worship, business sessions, a public lecture and capacity building webinar.

## OUTCOMES OF SYNOD

Worship experiences and sermon challenges, collegial engagement, discussion groups, reports and collected discernment have stimulated ideas and plans to faithfully engage the work of mission in the next Synodical period.

Over the next period, the United Church is determined to continue to Worship, Work and Witness while reviewing, re-orienting and strategizing in the following areas:



Training, advocacy, the development of resource material, succession planning, developing new ministries are among the strategies identified which will be further developed through the relevant Synodical Committees, regional mission council structures and auxiliaries. **So, WATCH THIS SPACE.**



# Expressions from the Youth Synod

Young people from the United Church across four regions met on Tuesday April 13 for what they described as a very enriching and beneficial session. Firm in their belief that they are vital contributors to the United Church and, like the bamboo, are Durable, Strong, and Resilient especially in stressful situations. In their report to the Synod on Thursday April 15, they shared challenges which will provide opportunities to improve youth ministry and the Vision they will pursue over the next two years.

## Challenges



- Boost youth interest, attendance, and participation at UCYPF planned events
- Encourage volunteerism for leadership
- Improve the mutual understanding of communication at all levels
- Strengthen UCYPF relationships across regions by scheduling interaction time and connecting more with youths especially those who are not on Zoom
- Have more youth ministers to enhance the ministry to youths and help by designing activities for youths whilst monitoring the outcomes of same
- Improve the level of discipleship by journeying through scriptures and tough questions/issues
- Advocate for more opportunities for youths to serve in different areas of the Church's life.
- Develop more educational and professional opportunities for youth
- Improve consistency as youths tend to feel extremely supported at times, and at other times, not so much
- Improve prayer and worship, evangelism, advocacy, community service, life skills, mentorship and recreation.

## Vision

- Grow numerically and spiritually
- Provide a vibrant youth ministry with young people being passionate about God, living exemplary lives, growing in knowledge of God and serving God and the Church
- Be empowered for leadership within Youth Ministry.
- Develop mentorship programme for youths
- Have more youth ministers
- Increase representation across the ministries of the United Church
- Be passionate about and involved in evangelism
- Implement professional development seminars for youth
- Develop a programme for youth to offer pastoral care to other youths
- Capitalise on the technological possibilities to advance the work of youth ministry.





# HIGHLIGHTS OF RAYMOND COKE LECTURE

**“Pastoral care in our times demands competent pastors willing to be servant leaders.”**

The functions of Pastoral Care were lifted up by the presenter. These functions were identified as Healing, Guiding, Sustaining, Reconciling, Nurturing, Liberating and Empowering. All of these were deemed as necessary and relevant in the current context. Additionally, when rooted deeply in the Christian faith they can indeed bring HOPE. For Dr. Nyomi, Pastoral Care as a response that brings HOPE, will seek to restore people to holistic health, help them to find opportunities in the midst of challenges, ensure that communities, people and the entire creation experience shalom/peace, and enhances the church’s ability to engage effectively in evangelism.



Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi—Presenter at Raymond Coke Lecture on Pastoral Care



Rev Raymond Coke, honouree.

**“Long, selfless energetic and faithful service.”**

*An excerpt from the Tribute from the UCJCI Synod.*

Raymond Coke embraced an understanding of the pastoral role best captured in the biblical imagery of the ‘shepherd’. Such an understanding led to the conviction that the office is exercised primarily through caregiving and leadership.

Pursuant to the former, he exercised a visitation ministry that was second to none and which included home and hospital. This he did without neglecting the children, youth and young adults who experienced him as being both genuine and approachable. Where the context allowed, he seized the opportunity for meaningful engagement with public education institutions with staff and students being the focus of his care.

## ‘A Bright and Hopeful Future’ —Closing Service Challenge

Moderator, Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott issued a sending charge to close the 42nd Synod of the United Church. Here is an excerpt from the sermon.

“In Isaiah 55, the prophet, from the belly of the Exile; as God’s spokesman; God’s mouthpiece, holds up before God’s people a vision of a bright and hopeful future; a future marked by these critical words, **“Instead of...Instead of”**. Let’s hold those critical words in our hearts and spirits; ...they represent the bridge between **what is** and **what shall be**. The prophet describes a future marked by those critical words, **“Instead of”** even as he described a future that was anchored on the reliable and dependable Word of God. And so I invite you to envisage with the Prophet; to envisage with me; to dream with me; to vision with me a future that is **Bright and Hopeful** for the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands; a future that is bright for the Cayman Islands and for Jamaica land we love, and because God has not abandoned His world and God’s people are scattered across the globe, let us dream for them as well; let us capture in our spirit a future that is **bright and hopeful**.

- The **Bright and Hopeful Future** that the prophet describes, does not ignore the **Challenges of the Time**
- The change that was to come; the hope of a bright future, was anchored in the word of God
- In this season of **thornbush** and **briars** we need to hear afresh what God is saying to us. Name your thornbush; name your briars; name those things that are robbing you of meaning and life, and seek a Word from God. Make sure it is a Word from God.

Some signs of hope were revealed at Synod –e.g, our response to the COVID 19 pandemic and our grasping of the opportunities that are presenting themselves; the peace-building in Norwood; the accompaniment of the broken-hearted by the Bethesda Centre in Cayman and Theodora in Negril; the resurrection of the outreach at North Street United and we know that there are others that were not featured, but we need to experience more joy and see more “going out in peace.” We need to see more mountains bursting into song and more trees clapping their hands.

Let us remain **Rooted in Christ; Resilient In the face of challenges and trails**, so that we may have **Bright and Hopeful Future**.

## LUCEA UNITED CHURCH IN PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT EDUCATION

### Baywest Wellness Hospital Awards 10 Tertiary Level Students with Bursaries

The Family Life Ministries of the Lucea United Church is delighted to partner with Baywest Wellness Hospital to provide financial support and contribute to the empowerment of our youths through education.

Baywest Wellness Hospital has provided one million dollars through bursaries to cover tuition cost for ten tertiary level students in the parish of Hanover. The recipients are enrolled in a full-time undergraduate degree programme at University of the West Indies, University of Technology, Northern Caribbean University, Montego Bay Community College, Sam Sharpe Teachers College and Churches Teachers College. The six males and four female awardees are pursuing studies in the field of Medicine, Pharmacy, Psychology, Environmental Health, Social Work, Business Studies, International Relations, Counselling and Education.

The awards were non-denominational and recipients were selected based on good academic performance and verifiable financial need. This assistance is quite timely for these students as their families have been experiencing financial hardships which is further compounded by the effects of the pandemic. The church is happy to be able to ease the tuition cost burden for these families and to assist in keeping our youths on the path to learning.

Baywest Hospital is owned and operated by Dr. Germaine and Kerene Spencer from the Lucea congregation. The awards ceremony was held on April 18.

The Lucea United Church which celebrated its 190th anniversary last year, has anchored its position in the parish of Hanover as a needs meeting church catering to the spirit, social and economic wellbeing of not just individuals but the entire family.

Contributed by Rev. Glenroy Clarke, Minister, Lucea United Church



Mrs. Ashta Johnson (right), member of the Lucea United Family Life Ministry Committee makes a presentation.



Mrs. Onygie Chigozili, (right) Secretary Lucea United Family Life Ministry Committee presents to a beneficiary..



A beneficiary celebrates with family.





Rev. Glenroy Clarke, Minister of the Lucea United Church.



Ms. Tova Trench Anderson, Chairman of the Family Life Ministry Committee of the Lucea United Church.



Beneficiaries express their thanks in conversation with members of the Family Life Ministry Committee of the Lucea United Church.

**PRAY ♦ PRAY ♦ PRAY ♦**

**UCJCI responds to the COVID-19 pandemic as a community of faith**

*A Call to Prayer*

**Every Wednesday**

**12 noon—1:00 pm**

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by **prayer** and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

**Philippians 4: 7 (NIV)**

**LET US BE DILIGENT IN PRAYER**

*Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.- 1 Chronicles 16:11*

- ♦ Rev. Khereen Wilson Bailey who lost her grandmother.
- ♦ Mrs. Mauleen Henry whose mother has not been well.
- ♦ Rev. Sylvan Hinds whose mother is not well.
- ♦ Persons who are bereaved.
- ♦ The political leadership of the Cayman Islands.
- ♦ The family, colleagues and friends of Rev. Lloyd Reid
- ♦ Continued healing and help for Rev. Dr. Elsa Clarke
- ♦ Healing for members of the United Church and the wider community who have contracted COVID 19.
- ♦ Persons struggling with the impact of COVID 19 on personal, family, community and work levels.

# APRIL IS UCYPF MONTH

## The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands The United Church Young People's Fellowship President's Message for Synodical Youth Sunday

April 25, 2021

Dear sisters and brothers,

As youths living in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, we have found ourselves living amid a pandemic. We have been reviewing old and creating new and engaging ways to serve the Lord. Be encouraged to focus on adjusting to this season as we click into various new ways of being - utilizing bible apps, attending church virtually, and keeping abreast of social media whilst tapping into Jesus. We have the task of winning souls for the kingdom of Jesus Christ through COMMITTING to Him, LEADING persons to Him, and INSPIRING people all over to value Him. One can agree that the process of committing, leading, and inspiring in Christ-like knowledge occurs sequentially. Are you able to spell CLICK any other way?

I encourage you to **click into** developing a purposeful relationship with Christ, strengthened by renewed minds, and committing every aspect of our lives to Him. Christ cares about us and desires that our efforts enhance His kingdom. Living holy and acceptable lives is our true worship.

**Click into** stepping up to the plate. He has equipped us to lead and nurture His sheep. Let us with joyous hearts empower others, share the word, dig deeper, and be the kind of leaders who emulate Christ and create a Christ-like chain reaction. Christ must be living in and working through us. As His vessels, let us not be obstacles but true shepherds to the flock.

I challenge us to **click into** being on fire for God as we inspire those we connect with to love God and love their neighbours. Inspiration is made manifest through evangelism, advocacy, and personal conduct. The Youth Synod held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, was a success! We are grateful for the participation from all regions. This platform was a great opportunity to introduce, discuss and reiterate what we stand for as Christian young people. As youths, one of the things we do not support is gender-based violence. Therefore, we have decided to join the World Council of Churches in the #ThursdaysInBlack campaign. Today, your UCYPF Synodical executive invites you to join us in wearing black every Thursday as we speak up and out for a world without rape or violence.

Let us be rooted Christian young people so that individuals, irrespective of age, will want to emulate our examples and grow to value our ministry. May we aim to glorify God and remain relentless and resilient like the bamboo even when we lack inspiration. **Push** instead of giving up, **choose joy** instead of happiness, and **choose Christ** instead of self. Being Christ-centric reminds us that whatsoever we do should be done in a Christ-like manner, aligning with His purpose. Jesus Christ is the true vine, and we are the branches; He has called us friends. Abide in Him, seek and receive His divine knowledge and direction.

*Youths, Let's CLICK (Commit, Lead, and Inspire in Christ-like Knowledge).*



*Vanessa Blissett, UCYPF Synodical  
President*



# **THEMES FOR HOUSE WORSHIP LITURGY**

## **SUNDAY APRIL 25**

**Theme:**

**Whose voice do I listen to?**

Knowing the Shepherd's voice makes the difference between life and death.

Zechariah 11: 4-17; Psalm 23;

St. John 10: 11-18

## **SUNDAY MAY 2**

**Theme:**

**ABIDE!**

Keep focus, know the power of your source.

Acts 8: 26-40; Psalm 22: 25-31; St. John 15: 1-8 \*\*\*

## **SUNDAY MAY 9**

**Theme**

**Remain in God's Love**

Love makes the way possible for bearing fruit

Acts 10: 44-48; Psalm 98; St. John 15: 9- 17\*\*\*

## **SUNDAY MAY 16**

Ascension Sunday

**Theme**

**That we may be ONE**

United in Harmony and Love to accomplish our mission.

Acts 1: 15-17; 21-26; Psalm 1; St. John 17: 6-19\*\*\*

## **SUNDAY May 23**

Pentecost Sunday

**These bones will live!**

It's not over until God says it is over... There is nothing impossible with/for the Holy

Spirit's power.

Ezekiel 37: 1-14\*\*\*; Psalm 104: 24-35; St. John 15: 26-27; 16: 4- 15





UCJI Lay Training Institute is talking...  
The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands  
**LAY TRAINING INSTITUTE**

**LAY LEADERS CERTIFICATE COURSE - MODULE 1**

# LAY LEADERS TRAINING IN COMMUNICATION

**SATURDAY APRIL 24, 2021 |  
9:00 AM - 4:00 P.M.**

Training via Zoom. For persons interested in joining this session, please contact your Regional Mission Council office.

Lecturer:  
**Mrs. Elaine Commissiong**  
Communication and Change Management  
Consultant





# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

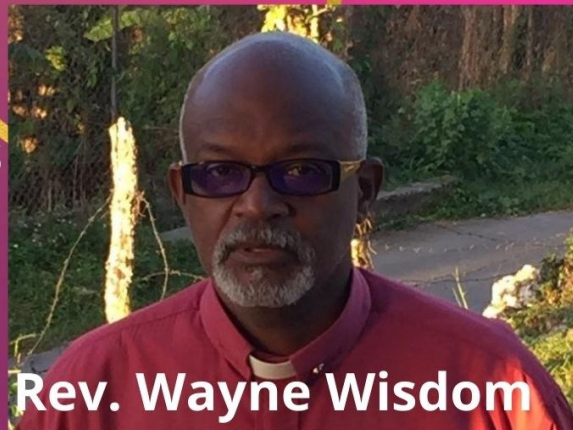
*Greetings*



**Rev. Obren Thomas**  
April 22



**Ms. Marsha Martin**  
April 22



**Rev. Wayne Wisdom**  
April 23



## **Sundays with CWM (18 April)**

### **Life-Flourishing Economy**

#### **Psalm 4**

Amidst his distress, David asked for God's mercy and relief. His distress stemmed from people in power around him who have delusional values, despise the righteousness of God and do not have the devout attitude that they should have. The psalmist proclaimed that the ultimate promise for those who are faithful in the Lord is to be filled with joy and dwell peacefully in Him.

An Old Testament theologian defined suffering as the restriction of life; the source of suffering comes from the unjustness of others' and our own sins. The former oppresses people through power, while the latter replaces God with their ego and when both intertwine, it leads to endless suffering. In the first 20 years of the 21st century, the world underwent a drastic change – climate changes, global warming that brought disaster to various ecosystems, the COVID-19 virus which followed the steps of globalisation and harmed the health of many, taking away millions of lives. The unjust economy has caused God's family to be unsustainable and disrupted the peace for all inhabitants on earth. Human's greed is undoubtedly a key cause of all these suffering.

Repentance is the first step of Jesus' gospel for the kingdom for heaven, by turning to God's kingdom and His righteousness will humanity then be able to enter relief, so that all creation can live peacefully always.

-Li Hau Tiong, CWM Partner in Mission (East Asia)

#### *Prayer*

Holy Spirit, may you liberate us, so that the people of God's family will receive freedom. Deliver us from the brokenness of our forefather Adam so that we can turn to your will finding the power to love as you love and live ever in your Spirit.



## UCJCI VALUE S

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

### **Evangelism:**

Sharing the story of God’s amazing love demonstrated by Jesus Christ, in a relevant manner, to those without Christ in our community and beyond  
(Matthew 28:18-20).

**IN THE COMING  
ISSUE...**

**Our Ministry  
with Children**

## THE UNITED CHURCH IN JAMAICA

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Moderator

**Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott**

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:*

**“Rooted, Resilient: Responding in H.O.P.E. (Health - Opportunity - Peace - Evangelism)**