



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

February 15, 2023. || Volume 10 Issue 05

Black History Month

THE HERMENEUTICAL HISTORY OF *SKIN FOR SKIN*

An excerpt from [Skin for Skin: Biblical Language in Jamaica's Morant Bay Rebellion](#) by [Stephen C Russell](#)

In a publicly circulated letter dated October 17, 1865, six days after the burning of the courthouse, Bogle and three co-signatories called on fellow residents of St. Thomas-in-the-East to join their ranks: “It is time now for us to help ourselves; skin for skin; the iron bars is now broken in the parish; the white people send a proclamation to the governor to make war against us... war is at us, my black skin, war is at us, from to-day to to-morrow” ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.929–30).¹⁰ The letter invoked the phrase *skin for skin* in support of its call for *us to help ourselves*. A few sentences later it glossed *us* with *my black skin*, whom it opposed to *the white people*. Bogle used *skin for skin*, then, to call on every Black resident of St. Thomas-in-the-East to join with every other Black resident in a war against the white plantocracy who were supported by the government and the military.

The phrase *skin for skin* was a central slogan of the rebellion. It was used not only in Bogle's letter of October 17 but also in efforts to recruit Black residents of the parish, especially men, in the days prior.¹¹ On October 10, following the initial disturbance at Morant Bay, a small number of policemen journeyed to Stony Gut to execute the warrant that had been issued against Bogle. They encountered hundreds of rebels in Stony Gut, who quickly overpowered them. One of the policemen, James Foster, testified that the rebels seized and beat him and that Bogle personally threatened his life with a loaded double-barrel gun. According to Foster, “Bogle said, ‘Swear his life! Skin for skin!’” ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.134). Foster and other Black policemen were compelled to swear an oath of race loyalty by kissing the Bible.¹² Peter McDowell and Alexander Francis, both bookkeepers on the Coley estate, testified that two days later, on the morning of October 12, the rebels raided Coley and compelled them to join the fight on pain of death. Recruits at Coley were also made to swear an oath of loyalty and seal it by kissing the Bible. McDowell testified, “They said we must go to Stony Gut and consent to join them, skin for skin” ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.93). Francis stated, “They said that we must join the blacks, skin for skin” ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.94). And the crowds who joined Bogle were reported to have chanted the evidently synonymous phrase *color for color* ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.18; 2.45; 2.381).

The phrase *skin for skin* derives from the Bible. As a Native Baptist minister, Bogle was familiar with the Bible.¹³ Other echoes of biblical language can be found in the very few words we can reliably attribute to him.¹⁴ For example, following the initial uprising, Bogle purportedly offered a public prayer in his chapel at Stony Gut thanking God “that he had gone to do that work and that God had prospered him in his work” ([RJRC](#)

[1866](#) 1.37; cf. [RJRC 1866](#) 1.14), echoing the prayer book version of Psalm 90:17: “Prosper, Thou, the work of our hands!”¹⁵ Indeed, Bogle had a copy of the Psalter on his person when he died, which had certain of its passages marked.¹⁶ Or, for example, in the letter of October 17, Bogle's use of the singular *my black skin* is odd in its grammatical context but echoes the biblical clause *my skin is black* (Job 30:30, KJV). And the letter's metaphorical use of *irons bars*, which are now *broken*, echoes Psalm 107:16. As transcribed in the Royal Commission's report, the letter brackets *skin for skin* between semicolons as an independent clause borrowed from elsewhere in support of its argument. I can find no use of *skin for skin* in contemporaneous English prose that is not a quotation from the Bible—below I discuss several occurrences of the phrase in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century works. Recruits were made to kiss the Bible as they uttered an oath that evidently included the phrase *skin for skin*.¹⁷ In light of all this, then, it seems to me that Bogle took *skin for skin* from the Bible.

In a well-known scene in Job, Yahweh boasts to the satan of the steadfastness of his servant Job despite misfortune. The satan replies, “Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face” (Job 2:4–5, KJV). To judge by the syntax of these verses and the rhetorical force of the satan's speech, *skin for skin* evidently constituted a traditional moral aphorism or gnomic proverb, or a variation on one. Whereas its meaning may have been transparent to the ancient readers of Job, for the modern reader this short phrase abounds in ambiguities. *Skin* can refer both to human and animal skins and, by metonymy, to the body.¹⁸ Both occurrences of *skin* need not have the same referent. And the preposition translated in the King James Version as *for* has a range of meanings. One common scholarly interpretation—rooted in the parallel use of the same preposition in *skin for skin* and in the inference the satan draws from it, *for his life*—is that the phrase originally referred to a fair contract in which items of equal value were exchanged.¹⁹ The satan uses the phrase as part of his dismissal of Job's supposed integrity. For the satan, there is nothing particularly noteworthy in the fact that Job should give up all that he had to preserve his own life. It is only reasonable that Job's own body, understood in essentially medical terms as referring to health, was more important to Job than anything outside of his body, including vast wealth and even beloved family members.

How did *skin for skin* shift from this meaning in Job to its use as a slogan for race loyalty in Bogle's letter? Long before

Bogle, *skin for skin* had become part of public discourse about race relations, slavery, and abolition. Consider, for example, the use of the phrase in the writings of Ottobah Cugoano, who was born in Ghana, sold into slavery in Granada, gained freedom in England, and became an active member of the Sons of Africa who advocated for abolition ([Gates 1988](#), 146–52; [Carretta 1998](#)). In 1787 he published *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species*, in which he argued that slaves had a duty to escape.²⁰ Cugoano writes,

But if any man should buy another man without his own consent, and compel him to his service and slavery without any agreement of that man to serve him, the enslaver is a robber and a defrauder of that man everyday. Wherefore it is as much the duty of that man who is robbed in that manner to get out of the hands of his enslaver, as it is for any honest community of men to get out of the hands of rogues and villains. ([Cugoano 1787](#), 73)

One strand in Cugoano’s theological and philosophical treatise takes up the language of Job. As part of his proof of the wickedness of slavery, Cugoano extends the logic of *skin for skin*. He argues,

Any property taken away from others, whether by stealth, force, or violence, must be wrong; but to take away men themselves, and keep them in slavery, must be worse. Skin for skin, all that a man hath would be given for his life; and would rather lose his property to any amount whatever, than to have his liberty taken away, and be kept a slave. It must be an inconceivable fallacy to think otherwise. ([Cugoano 1787](#), 54)

Cugoano thus interprets *skin for skin* in Job to refer not just to the body in medical terms but also to what we might today call bodily autonomy, that is, personal liberty, or the rights of the self in its own body. For Cugoano, the underlying logic of *skin for skin* in Job is that one’s self is worth more than any quantity of external property in which the self enjoys rights. As such, slavery, which is the theft of the self, is more heinous than any other form of theft.²¹

Related arguments were put forward by American abolitionists. In 1852, Boston journalist and politician Joseph T. Buckingham published the evidently fictional account *Seymour Cunningham; or, All for Liberty*.²² The narrative opens with a courtroom scene in which Seymour, charged with being a runaway slave, is able to produce a certificate attesting his liberty. His accuser admits the authenticity of the certificate but claims it belongs to someone else. To prove the certificate is his, Seymour displays the wounds described in the document—a missing toe, a missing finger, a missing calf, and a fractured arm. It later emerges that the papers do in fact belong to someone else and that Seymour enlisted the help of a butcher to disfigure himself to match the certificate. For Buckingham, the story offers “a striking illustration of an irrepressible desire for freedom from Slavery,—an undaunted resolution to recover it,—an unflinching

firmness under the process of personal mutilation, to secure that natural inalienable privilege of humanity” ([Buckingham 1852](#), 188). As an epigraph to the whole narrative, Buckingham quotes, with subtle alteration, from the book of Job: “‘Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give for his’ freedom.” Whereas in the book of Job, the satan used the phrase to distinguish the bodily self from external things, Buckingham here imagines the self as willing to suffer disfigurement of the body to attain liberty.

Evidently *skin for skin* had become so closely associated with abolitionism in America that one advocate for southern secession attempted to turn the phrase on its head. In the midst of the Civil War, Reverend Jacob Cooper published a pamphlet in Philadelphia calling on American patriots to support the divinely appointed, that is, the elected, government, especially President Lincoln ([Cooper 1864](#)). A small rhetorical aside in Cooper’s argument is of special interest to us here. He writes, “Surely we are not prepared as the disunionists are to accommodate the language of a noted secessionist, ‘Skin for skin, all a man hath will he give for his—niggers!’” ([Cooper 1864](#), 100). The name of this secessionist is now lost to us, but the rhetoric of Cooper’s argument depends on the slogan and its source being well-known to his audience. In turn, the slogan itself only functions as a reversal—confirmed in our printed source by the use of an em-dash to mark the pause that highlighted the reversal of meaning. Furthermore, it hardly reads as a reversal of an arbitrarily selected biblical verse. Rather, the reversal worked because it targeted the evidently well-known use of *skin for skin* in abolitionist discourse. This aside by Cooper thus confirms the close association of the language and logic of *skin for skin* with advocacy of Black rights.

Although Bogle’s rebellion erupted only a year after Cooper’s pamphlet appeared in print, by 1865 emancipation had been legally settled in Jamaica for decades. Bogle gave the phrase *skin for skin* a new meaning that was more relevant to post-emancipation society while being firmly rooted in the legacy of its association with public discourse about race and Black rights. Grammatically, the shift in Bogle’s use of *skin for skin* was two-fold: he used *skin* to mean race, or, more precisely, all those with predominantly African ancestry, and he used the preposition *for* to mean *join with*, *be in support of*. Bogle, however, did not offer a grammatical exegesis of the phrase he borrowed from Job. Rather, he presented *skin for skin* as containing a transparent meaning. It is this self-evident meaning, this function of the biblical phrase in Bogle’s public rhetoric that interests me here. With *skin for skin* Bogle called for a Black alliance in the face of white oppression. He emphasized the need for all Black residents to join in the war against a common enemy: “Every black man must turn out at once, for the oppression is too great; the white people are now cleaning up they guns for us” ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.929). He encouraged recruits to compel fellow Black residents of the parish to join the war, “Blow your shells, roal your drums, house to house, take out every man, march them down to Stony Gut” ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.929). And he referred to the parish’s Black population in all its diversity as a singular entity, “my black skin” ([RJRC 1866](#) 2.929).

Opportunities

ST. ANDREW PREPARATORY SCHOOL



The Board of Directors, ST. ANDREW PREPARATORY SCHOOL seeks to recruit a suitably qualified candidate to fill the position of PRINCIPAL as at March 2023.

JOB SUMMARY

The principal is the instructional leader and is responsible for directing the affairs of the School in a manner that harmonizes with the policies established by the Board of Directors and the guidelines of the Ministry of Education. S/he plans and directs the activities of the school through prudent financial management, adherence to a well-defined strategic development plan and sensitive human resource management, while maintaining the highest quality of educational and physical facilities offerings.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Applicants should meet the following criteria.

- Master's Degree in Education/Educational Administration or a related field
- 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

KEY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

- Knowledge of the school's philosophy and mission.
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Exceptional interpersonal skills for developing working relationships with a wide range of persons
- Excellent Customer and Client Management skills
- Ability to multitask and manage a varied workload
- Excellent Time Management and Organisational Skills
- Outstanding analytic, problem-solving, and decision-making skills
- Good Administrative and Managerial skills
- Distinct display of initiative, high level of integrity and confidentiality
- Ability to work under pressure and for extra-ordinary hours

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- * Share a common vision of the school with stakeholders that sets high expectations for staff and students. Develop the School Improvement Plan in collaboration with the Staff, School Board, Supervisory Officer and other stakeholders
- * Ensure that the school's objectives are aligned to the policies of the Ministry of Education and the Churches' Christian principles.
- * Encourage and support parental involvement in students' learning.
- * Maintain visibility with students, teachers, parents and the School Board
- * Utilize financial and human resources to fully accomplish the goals and mission of the school
- * Establish and maintain an effective inventory system for all school supplies, materials and equipment
- * Assist the School Board in verifying the existence of vacant posts and participate in the recruitment and selection process for all staff.
- * Establish the annual master schedule for instructional programmes in the face-to-face and/or virtual domain
- * Maintain a positive school climate and school morale.
- * Ability to effectively interact with the public

Interested persons should submit their application by February 28, 2023, to:

**THE CHAIRMAN
C/O ST. ANDREW PREPARATORY SCHOOL
2-6 CECELIO AVENUE, KINGSTON 10**

OR email: stapsbursarydept@gmail.com
with ATTENTION: PRINCIPAL VACANCY in the subject line

WE WISH TO THANK ALL APPLICANTS FOR THEIR INTEREST HOWEVER, ONLY SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED FOR INTERVIEWS.

The International University of the Caribbean is seeking the services of a
Recruiter.

Requirements

- Be competent with the basic software applications
- Have knowledge of the marketplace
- Be able to offer strong marketing within the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands network
- Be able to meet commission-based recruitment targets
- Have great social skills
- Be student-friendly

Send your Resume and Cover Letter to ceemis@iuc.edu.jm

Circulate within your network.



RE : SYNODICAL SPORTS DAY 2023

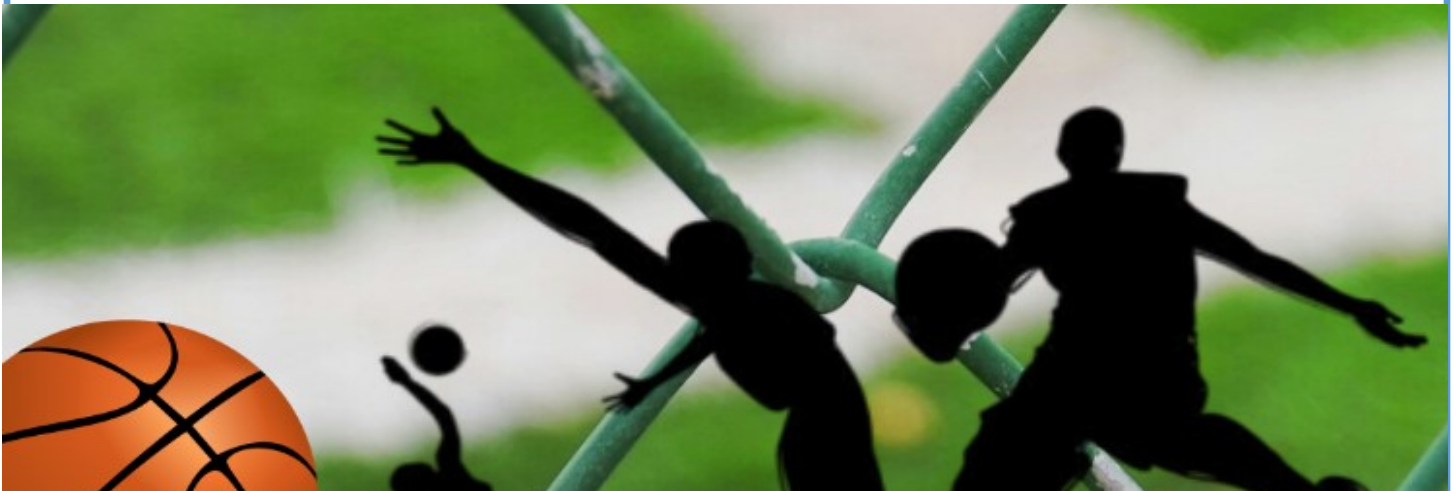
Greetings; Ministers, Lay Pastors, Youths, Youth Advisors

I pray all has been well with you and your fellowships. As you know the Covid-19 pandemic has hindered a lot of physical events for us. It is however with great joy I announce that **Synodical Sports Day will be a physical one**. This year we gather understand the theme **“Rooted, Resilient: Reignited by The Spirit”**. This theme is in tune with the Synod Theme as we seek to remind ourselves that we must be; **Rooted** in the Word of God, our faith and our Christian identity. **Resilient** in how we face the challenges of life with Christ by our sides. **Reignited by The Spirit** let us start a fire in the United Church Young People’s Fellowship and the wider church blazing with the fire of the Holy Spirit to engage in mission and ministry. Join us on Saturday, March 18, 2023, at the Naranda Sports Complex, Discovery Bay for our National Sports Day. The day proceedings starts at 8:00 am.

As you prepare to turn out in your numbers. Please note that Our sporting event will have a few changes this year. These changes are specific to this year’s staging of Sports Day. We are all looking forward to seeing you come out in your regional colors and of course to see who will take home the trophy this year! Feel free to contact the Synodical or Regional Executive for more details. See You There

Yours truly,

Trifener Reid (Ms)



UCJCI

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UNIT

The UCJCI Communication and Information Technology Unit is inviting applications for a six-week internship programme for Graphic Designing and Video Production.

If you are creative, have experience using Adobe photoshop, Adobe Premiere Pro or Canva, is reliable, meet deadlines and can work under pressure, this internship programme is for you.

This intern will be required to work with a team to:

- produce graphics based on a content map for Instagram and the promotion of events
- record and edit videos based on a content map for YouTube and Instagram

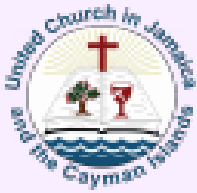
Compensation will be given.

How to Apply

Submit your resume and cover letter to synodhr@ucjci.com.

If you can, include in that email a link to your work.

The deadline for application is February 17, 2023.



NOTICEBOARD



TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS

Equipping the saints for the work of ministry

IT'S TIME TO REGISTER!

Register now for Module 1.

Training begins **March 11, 2023** and continues **2nd and 4th Saturdays** (9-1:30 pm) and **Thursdays** (6-8 pm) following each training Saturday. Module 1 concludes in August.

Delivery online via Zoom. Learners may join online from one location in each region by special arrangement with Regional Mission Council offices.
Cost: \$9000

ORIENTATION SESSION

Come and learn about the Training

An Orientation session is planned for those who register as well as others who are interested in learning more about the Training for Lay Leaders Course.

This will be held on Saturday **March 4, 2023** online from 9 am - 11:30 a.m. via Zoom

Meeting ID: 879 2238 3834
Passcode: 192859

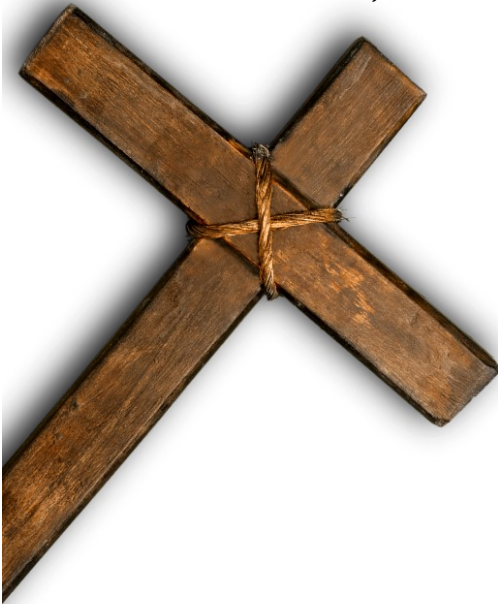
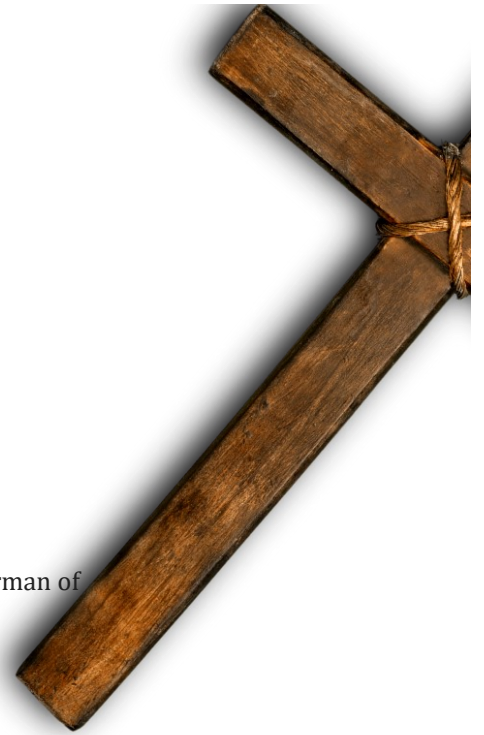
UCJCI Lay Leaders Certificate Course is designed to prepare lay persons to serve in leadership.

For more information, contact your Regional Mission Council or email: laytraining_admin@ucjci.com or WhatsApp 876 8818783



PRAYER *Corner*

- Those affected by earthquake in Syria and Turkey
- 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 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,

God, help us to value diversity beyond variety. Help us value diversity with a vision for a progressive future that acknowledges our strength together as well as the power, creativity, ideas, and part that we all bring when we are all welcome – to come to the table and taste and see that the Lord is good.

Help our brothers and sisters in suffering. Ordain a band of unity and support in chaos and turmoil.

Amen.

Liturgy for Worship at Home

February 19, 2023

Transfiguration Sunday

Reconciled with God through Christ

- Exodus 24:12-18
- Psalm 2 or Psalm 99 - 2
- Peter 1:16-21
- Matthew 17:1-9

TECHNICAL SUPPORT NEEDED Lay Leaders Training

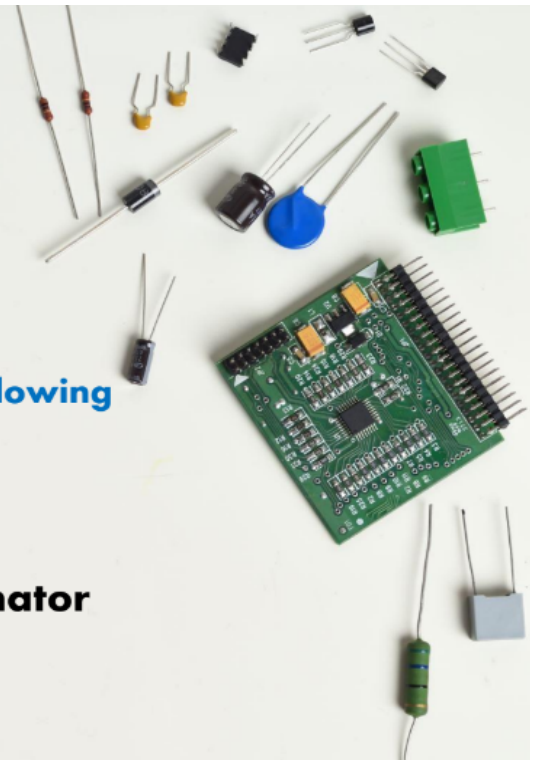
Are you skilled in using the ZOOM platform?

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

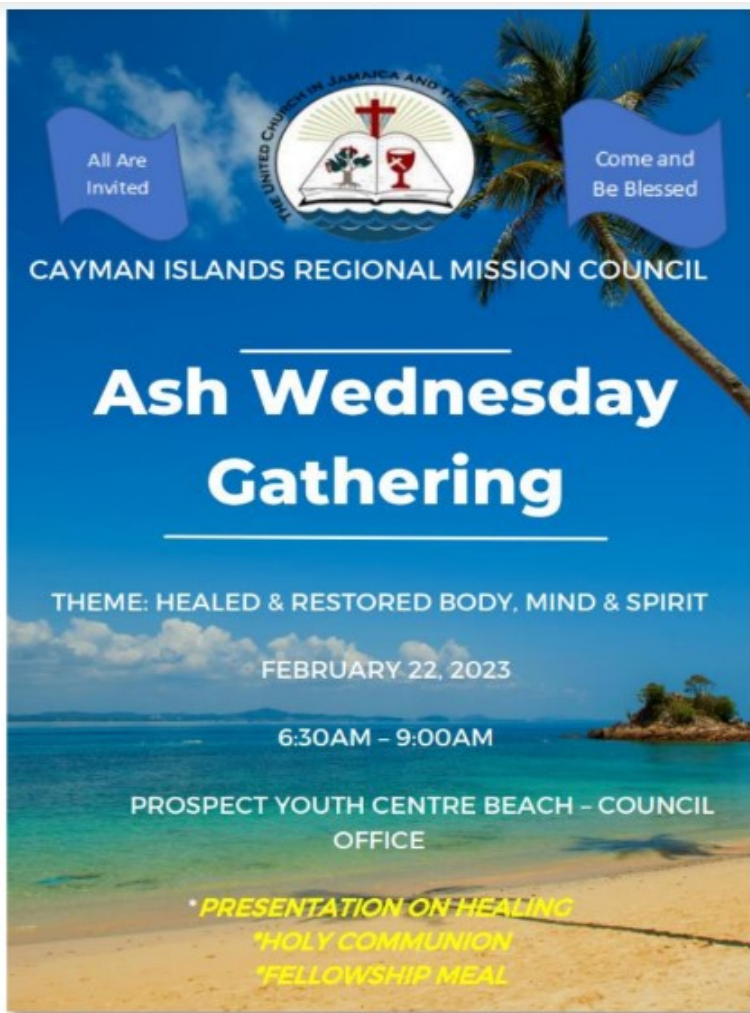
If your answer is YES, we need you!

Contact: Karen Francis, Lay Training Coordinator
karen-francis@ucjci.com

a gratuity will be offered



NOTICES



All Are Invited

Come and Be Blessed

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



NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL (NERMC)

FELLOWSHIP DAY OF ASH WEDNESDAY

at Meadowbrook United Church

9:00 A.M.

FEBRUARY 22 2023

Theme: RETURN TO FELLOWSHIP

FEATURES:

- * YOUTH CHARGE BY ELIZABETH BENJAMIN
- * PREACHER - REV. DONOVAN MCPHERSON
- * CHILDREN'S CHURCH (AT THE PREP SCHOOL)

*JOIN US IN PERSON OR ON MEADOWBROOK UNITED CHURCH'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL

AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES START AT 1:00 P.M.

- * INGATHERING FOR CEDAR VALLEY MISSION
- * AWARDS CEREMONY FOR CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHERS & SUPERINTENDENTS
- * PRAISE FEST

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




FOUNDERS' DAY 2023

WORSHIP SERVICE
Monday, March 6 @ 6:00 p.m.
Preacher: Rev. Dr. Collin Cowan
Minister of the Emmanuel/ Boscobel Charge of United Churches
Former General Secretary of the Council for World Mission

LECTURES
Tuesday, March 7 @ 9:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.
Theme: "How Beautiful Upon the Mountains... (Isaiah 52:7) - The Caribbean Pulpit"
Speaker: Dr. Winston A. Thompson
President, Jamaica Theological Seminary

THE INAUGURAL CLEMENT GAYLE COLLOQUIUM ON PREACHING
Wednesday, March 8 @ 9:00 a.m.
Topic: "The Celebration of Preaching in the Caribbean Church"
Speaker: Rev. Neville Callam
Former General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance

Meeting ID: 823 2586 7640 Passcode: FD2023
876-927-1724/2868
UTCWI Chapel
@utcwi

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>



**18TH
MARCH**

WE'RE BACK !!

NATIONAL

SPORTS

DAY





WESTERN REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

ASH WEDNESDAY GATHERING DAY OF WORSHIP & FELLOWSHIP

Wednesday, February 22, 2023
at 9:00 a.m.
Farm Heights United Church

THEME:
**"REALIGN AND REIGNITE...
BY THE HOLY SPIRIT"**

Live Streaming on
the Western
Regional Mission
Council YouTube
Channel



GUEST PREACHER:
Rev. Lembe Sivile
Minister, Meadowbrook
Charge of United Churches

SUBSCRIBE



*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



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
SOUTHERN REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

UPCOMING EVENTS FEBRUARY 2023

12 SRMC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP RALLY

22 ASH WEDNESDAY CONVENTION

25 UCMF MEN'S CONVENTION

11, 18 & 25 EVANGELISM TRAINING

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON EACH EVENT WILL BE SHARED AT A LATER DATE



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
Southern Regional Mission Council

ASH WEDNESDAY CONVENTION

**"RE-IGNITING THE CALL:
FROM A SPARK TO A BLAZE"**

CLARENDON COLLEGE

FEBRUARY 22, 2023 AT 9AM

Happy Birthday



Rev'd. Carlington Douglas
February 17



Rev'd. Valerine Reynolds
February 19

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

Address: 12 Carlton Crescent, Kingston 10

Telephone No: 876-926-8734

E-mail Address: synod@ucjci.com

Website: www.ucjci.com

YouTube: UCJCI's Channel

Instagram: @UCJCI

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