

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

# THE FAMILY NEWS

Elmslie Memorial Charge

Volume 207, August 2022



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Antonio Sanchez

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[www.bethesdacounselling.ky](http://www.bethesdacounselling.ky)

## Service Times:

Sundays  
Elmslie Memorial United  
10:30am  
Prayer Service last Sunday of each  
month 6:30pm

Robert Young United  
583 Crewe Road  
8:45am

## Rev. Robert Young and the Church Which Bears His Name

Many might miss the little church situated along Crewe Road as it is very small and does not even boast a carpark! The story of how it got to be there and who the man was whose name it bears is equally little known.

The **Rev. Robert Young** was a Scottish missionary who was sent in 1907 to Grand Cayman by the Church of Scotland to be the minister of Elmslie Memorial Presbyterian Church. Here he met his wife, **Olga**, who was the daughter of **Custos Edmond and Alice Parsons**. They had a daughter, **Fay**, many of whose family still live on the island.

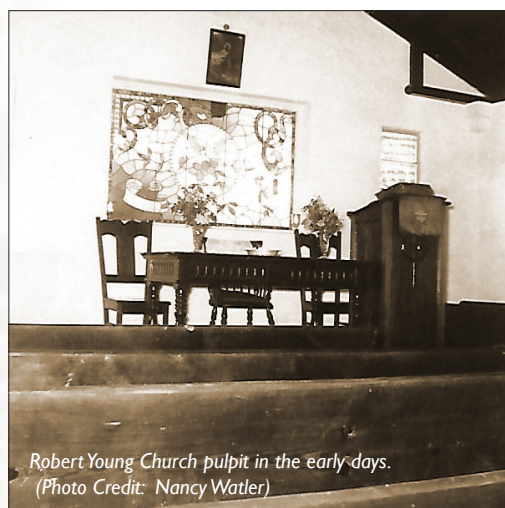
After several years he left to minister in Jamaica where he served on two occasions as Moderator. It was during one of these times that the foundations of Elmslie were laid in 1920, one of the memorial stones bearing his name. Olga died in 1939 after which he visited Cayman to renew his friendships here. He died in 1947. He was



Rev. & Mrs. Robert Young  
(Photo Credit: Christopher Price)

known, according to an article written by Fay for the church's 50th anniversary, to be "a man rich in sympathy and helpfulness."

The sanctuary was built in 1952 but there had been, for some while, services held on Crewe Road by a number of families who had relocated to Crewe Road from Red Bay, Prospect and South Sound following the devastating 1932 hurricane which washed away their homes and their church in Old Prospect. These were held on the porch of the home of **McPherson (Capt. Mack) and Kathleen Thompson**, the home next door to the present sanctuary which was to later be owned by **McNee and Althea McLaughlin**. Capt. Mack donated the land next door to his house for a church and also helped finance it. **Capt. Royal Bodden**, who also



Robert Young Church pulpit in the early days.  
(Photo Credit: Nancy Watler)

built Elmslie, was the builder and many others contributed time and money, including the father of **Janilee Clifford, Edison Jackson**, the chief mason and carpenter.

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## Feelings: the Great Deception?

A lot of Christians are troubled by their feelings - or lack of - in the exercise of their faith, whether it is during church services or when praying. Some become even more concerned when they have times, sometimes extended ones, when they don't feel 'spiritual' or have any sense of the presence of God. I admit I have been there.

One thing of which I have become increasingly aware as I have become older is how the persons we are, the persons God has made us, affects so much of life - indeed, the Christian life - and how important it is to recognize this. People's personalities and temperaments are different. So, for example, one person is outgoing and emotional while another is reserved and dispassionate. Sometimes we make the mistake of comparing ourselves to someone else of a different disposition, thinking we should be expressing our faith, whether in worship or in witnessing, in the same way as that person we think more spiritual.

But note two things here: one, because we Christians are all different, this will be evidenced, for example, in the way we worship and the way we witness. Two, our relationship with the Lord and our spiritual state cannot be gauged by how we feel. In fact, emotions can be very deceptive both to ourselves and others. Further, expecting constant 'good'

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## Quotable Quotes: Finding God's Will for our Lives

God's will is not some package in the future let down from heaven on a string but a scroll that unrolls every day... The only day I have to live for Jesus... is today" (Paul Little).

*"I do not get to know God, then **do** his will. I get to know God by **doing** his will" (Philip Yancey).*

*"Anything about which we cannot pray or about which we are unwilling to pray is almost certainly outside the will of God" (Anon).*

*"God had a plan but Abraham had an idea. As a result, Ishmael was born. The only thing God will use is that which is born of his will, in his time and by his Spirit" (Bob Glass).*

*"Show God your willingness and he will show you his will" (Anon).*

*"The will of God for the people of God is in the Word of God" (John Stott).*

*"If we are in the place of God's will, we will be in the place of his purpose, his power and his provision. We will have enough health, enough time and sufficient resources." (Anon).*

*"If you are seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, you will be in the will of God." (Kevin De Young).*

## Fifth CTLT Graduation Held

The Centre for Theological Leadership Training held its Fifth Annual Commencement Exercise at The Church of God of Prophecy, Victory Tabernacle, on Sunday afternoon, June 26th.

Of special note was the award of an Honorary Doctor of Divinity to **Mike Bowerman** from the ACTS Academy of Higher Education in Bangalore, India, which is affiliated with the International Accrediting Board, Switzerland, in recognition of his lifelong commitment to Christian education and God's mission and ministry over more than 50 years. This was conferred on him by CTLT's president, **Bishop Clayton Martin**.

Director of CTLT, **Bishop PJ Lawrence** pointed out that there were increasing numbers of students from overseas joining the programmes, many from Jamaica but others from the USA and India, with interest shown from others in Europe and elsewhere. This is made possible as the classes at present are being held by Zoom. However, he was keen to stress that CTLT was designed and set up to provide courses for the local churches, and was encouraging those in Cayman to sign up.

CTLT offers courses at various levels, leading to a Certificate, a Diploma, a B.A. and an M.A. However, those interested can take individual subjects according to their interests and needs. The courses are designed to help Christians deepen their faith and be equipped for the service in which they are engaged in their churches. Each is for a period of ten weeks, and the next semester will begin mid-September. Those interested can obtain a brochure with full details by visiting [www.clttcayman.org](http://www.clttcayman.org) or by calling the administrator Winston Vernon at 345-922-3902.



# 100th Anniversary Celebrations Continue

On Friday, 1st July, members of the community and of Elmslie church came together for a midday meditation service to commemorate the day in 1920 that the memorial stones of the church were laid. Flowers in memory of those gone before us were placed. Pictured above left is **Sheila MacKenzie**, granddaughter of the late **Rev. Robert Young**, standing next to the memorial stone he laid 102 years ago, as well a floral tribute placed in his memory.



## Robert Young Church (Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

When the Robert Young Memorial Church was opened, there were only about 16 houses in the whole area. The minister of the first members which met in Capt. Mack's house was **Rev. J. Moon** who was to be followed by **Rev. George Hicks**,



Cayman delegates seated in front of Robert Young church. (Photo Credit: Nancy Watler)

During the past 32 years, **John Macmillan** has faithfully served as its lay pastor. Of special note is that Janilee's daughter, **Cathy Gomez**, played the original pump organ from 1963 when she was nine and today still plays the piano there!

## John's Story

*John Macmillan is a familiar figure at Elmslie having been a member since his arrival in Cayman in 1968 and for a large part of this time also an elder. Family News asked him to tell his story for this edition in which we are featuring the little church on Crewe Road, Robert Young Memorial, of which he has been the lay pastor for over 32 years. This is his story:*

"I was born in Belize on 16th February 1945 and am the fourth of five children. I had a happy upbringing and grew up in Belize and Wales. My father was an elder in the Presbyterian Church in Belize and, being a leader and strong influencer in our family through example and service, my siblings and I all matured with solid church connections and a developing faith in God.

"My three older siblings, **James, Elizabeth and Rita**, were many years older than my little sister **Madge** and me, and by the time I had reached the age of ten (or thereabouts) they had already moved away from Belize and on to greener pastures abroad. This left just Madge and me in Belize with our parents and I spent much of my time out of school helping or doing something involving the church there, as well as playing tennis and later learning to fly small planes.

"After completing my studies, I started work at Barclays Bank in Belize and not long after this my father passed away. Eventually, my younger sister moved to New Orleans and my mum moved in with her sisters, so when the opportunity arose to take



## International Night at Elmslie

Elmslie's second annual International Night which was held on 24th June was a big success with a much larger turnout of congregants representing countries from all over the world in dress and native dishes.



## Special Wedding Anniversary



Happy Anniversary to **Alex & Ronald O'Neil** who will celebrate 50 years of marriage on the 12th of August. May God bless you with many more happy years together.

## John's Story (Cont'd. from Pg. 3)

up a job in Cayman with Barclays in 1968, I embarked on the journey that changed the course of my life and brought me to my new home where I still am some 54 years later.

"Having spent my entire life to that point involved in the church, within a week of arriving in Cayman my internal compass led me and I found myself at Elmslie. I soon became involved in the choir, began to teach Sunday school, joined Christian Endeavour and even played the piano for church. It was at Elmslie I met and got to know **Janet** (who was to be my wife) as she too was a believer and involved in many of its programmes and activities. Janet and I were married on 20th February 1969, over 53 years ago, and I give God all the honour and glory for our marriage.

"Over the years since, Janet and I have been so very blessed by God. We were given three children **Duncan, Sheena** and **Bruce**. Sadly, our first son, Duncan Esterley, died shortly after birth. This painful time in our lives drew us closer to God and through His grace it has allowed me to empathize more fully with others in their grief.

"A few years after Duncan we received the gift of a girl, Sheena, and a boy, Bruce. They have given us seven beautiful grandchildren: Bruce has **Conor, Peter** and **Gabriella** and Sheena and her husband **Mark** have **Jaden** and triplets **Alexa, Jenna** and **Emma**.

"When I moved to Grand Cayman as a senior officer with Barclays in 1968, it was not much longer after that I was asked to move to the Brac to help manage the branch there. A few years later I moved to CIBC Trust to assist with the management. From there I left the financial services sector to manage Kirk Enterprises (focusing on Kirk Home Centre) which I did for some twenty-eight years. I had no idea that throughout my career I would continuously be called to further work in God's church and, in answering God's call, I started preaching around 1972 - and have been doing so ever since. In my spare time I completed theological studies training and was commissioned as a lay pastor on 17th June 1990. Accepting this commission seemed right for me and it has given me a wider scope and structure for ministry. In 2004, I came to work full-time at Elmslie as the Church Administrator and also at the Council office. "Growing up in a Christian family and in later accepting Christ as my Saviour, I cannot say that I ever experienced a 'mountain top' moment with Christ, nor did I have a sudden conversion.

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## John's Story (Cont'd. from Pg. 3)

However, from my early days I steadily grew in the innate knowledge and conviction that Christ was an integral part of my daily life and, over time, my faith and dependence on Him deepened.

"God's grace and mercy has been evidenced in my life over and over and, on so many occasions, He has been made more real to me than ever before, such as when I survived a major car accident and, on another occasion, an airplane crash. These are the kinds of things that made me realize that my God, though not visible, is caring for me. I cannot imagine living without His presence guiding my daily life. I also cannot imagine not being involved in doing God's work through His church. It is my way of honouring His call, being grateful for all that He has done for me and genuinely not taking it for granted.

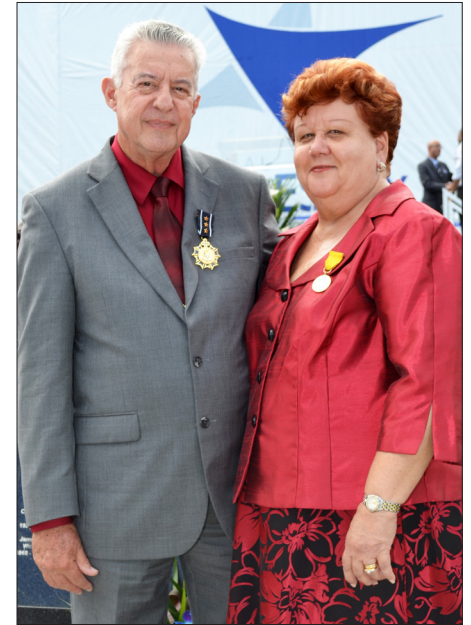
"Since 1990 it has been my privilege to act as the lay pastor for the Robert Young Church and on many occasions, I have also assisted at the Elmslie and South Sound churches. This dedication to the ministry was recognized by the Cayman Islands Government when I was awarded the Medal of Honour.

"The Crewe Road community is a special one and Robert Young is no exception to this. It is a happy and welcoming place for worship, a place where you are not just visiting but are part of a family. Although the sanctuary is small, able to seat only 48 worshipers, the members and adherents are vibrant, supportive, progressive, warm, caring, close knit and open to newcomers. Many of the regular congregants at Robert Young live nearby and can walk to the sanctuary from their homes in Crewe Road, many are senior citizens or the family members of the original members who helped with the opening of the sanctuary.

"The Robert Young family is a thriving one that makes sure that anyone who attends service feels welcome. I believe it is the friendliest church on the island! Prior to COVID, regular attendance was almost at thirty and there continues to be a steady growth and growing diversity in the age range of worshipers. In the past, many may have lamented that the church was a dying one as it mainly comprised of a few senior citizens. However, I would challenge anyone who still feels this way to pay a visit to our service at 8:45 on a Sunday morning. Yes, you will still find a number of happy and faithful seniors but you will also see the faces and hear the voices of many younger folks, too, all who have gathered together as a family to lift their hearts and voices to God in gratitude and unity.

"Some of the greatest challenges we face at Robert Young are the smallness of the sanctuary, the lack of parking spaces for those who are not within walking distance and, as the sanctuary is a single room building, we are unable to hold simultaneous Sunday school classes. However, we do not view these challenges as insurmountable and continue to find creative ways of working around them. The Robert Young congregation is creative and resilient and we carpool and coordinate pick-up amongst ourselves through the week, work with neighbours and friends in the community to arrange parking whenever the sanctuary is open, and we are almost there in respect to the implementation of video streaming our services, with two of our younger adherents already trained in the technology.

"There is a Caribbean saying that a "small axe fall big tree" and our small congregation definitely sees possibilities for further growth. Although some change will be required to achieve it, we know that with God all things are possible. We ask for your continued prayers that God's will and vision for what a little church can do will be revealed to the Board of Elders and congregants of Robert Young as we continue the journey of doing His work. "To God be the glory for all that He has done and continues to do."



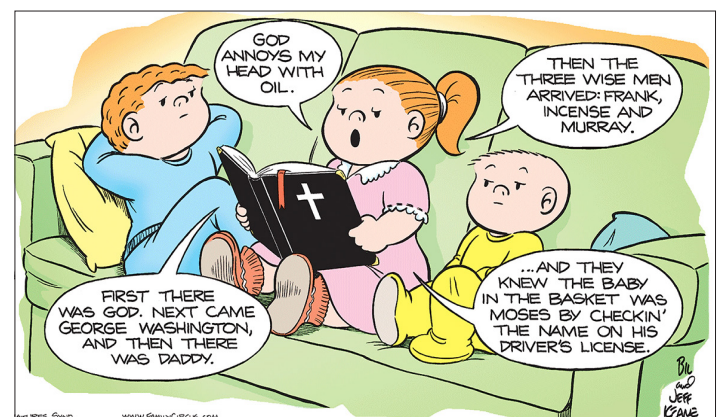
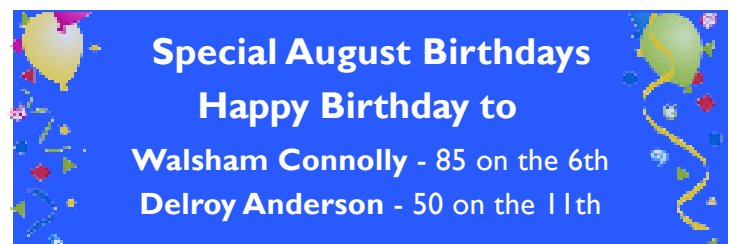
### GET READY FOR VBS 2022!



Monday, 8th August - Friday, 12th August  
at Elmslie Memorial United Church

5:30 pm - 7:00 pm Ages 4 - 17

Registration forms for both leaders and children  
are available on Elmslie's website  
[www.elmslieunitedchurch.ky](http://www.elmslieunitedchurch.ky)  
or contact Youth Minister, Roy McGregor.



## Pray for our Students who Studied or are Studying Abroad

### Shana McLaughlin:

Graduating in September 2022, with a Masters in Architecture from the University of Plymouth

### Katherine Walmsley:

Graduated with a degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Liverpool, UK

### Kimberley Eccleston:

Graduated last year. Attended ceremony this year at the University of Reading with a BSc in Mathematics

### Lakeisha Watler:

Graduated this year with an MSc in Forensic and Criminal Justice, University of Leicester

### Ethan Whittaker:

Graduated with a degree in Physics and Maths from Princeton University, USA. Plans to study Neuroscience

### Jeseil Blythe:

Graduated from UWI, Mona Campus with an upper 2nd Class Honours in Economics and Accounting

### Elitia Vassell:

Completed a second Master's Degree in Education in Social, Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties from University of Birmingham, UK

### Hannah Robinson:

Studying General Engineering, at University of Leicester, UK, 2nd Year

### Joshua McField:

Graduated with a degree in Engineering from the University of Greenwich, UK

### Jaydon McField:

To finish high school at Rossall Boarding School in the UK, and play football for Fleetwood Football Club

### Amari Watler:

Final Year. Online Business Studies with a Double Major in Entrepreneurial studies and Marketing, Ryerson University, Canada

## Feelings (Cont'd. from Page 2)

feelings because we are Christians is unrealistic – in fact this just doesn't happen.

I remember early in my life singing the hymn with the chorus, *At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light*. Many of us know the words which follow: *And the burdens of my heart rolled away; It was there by faith I received my sight, And now I am happy all the day!* This is just not true! No Christian is "happy all the day." Whatever the Bible says, it doesn't tell us we will have a constant happy glad feeling, that we will never be sad, never be upset! Unfortunately, some Christians pretend that this is so!

We need to be aware of this when we are together at Sunday worship. There are those who come to church full of the joy of the Lord. Others are there who may have overwhelming burdens, grief or are deeply depressed. We should be careful not to pressure people to worship in a particular kind of way. We can and should encourage one another but we must allow the Holy Spirit to minister to each individual heart so they will meet with the Lord just as they are. Some will worship in demonstrative ways; others will want to be quiet in their communing with God.

I have recently been helped by reading some of C.S. Lewis's letters, written about seventy years ago. He wrote in one of these of a feeling of not wanting to pray at times. "Though a nuisance," he said, "it need not depress us too much. (Prayer) is an act of will... that God values rather than the state of our emotions, the act being what we give to *him*, the emotions what he gives to *us*" (my emphasis). He pointed out that a lot of factors can affect our emotions, such as our ill-health. We know, too, many other things can adversely impact how we feel: grief, adverse circumstances or mental illness, for example. Lewis emphatically stated that with regard to the devotional life we should "never, never... try to generate an emotion by will power."

Further, and particularly helpfully, he wrote, "The presence of God is not the same as the sense of the presence of God..." In other words, God is there whether we feel him there or not. David understood this when he stated that "even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (Psalm 23:4 NIV). God is there even in the blackness.

One final thing, again from Lewis. "It is a great joy to be able to 'feel' God as a reality... But you must be prepared for the feeling dying away again, for feelings are by nature impermanent. The important thing is to continue to believe when the feeling is absent, and these periods do quite as much for you as those when the feeling is present."

Don't get me wrong. I am not suggesting that emotions have no part in our spiritual life and experience. The point that I am making is that the foundation of our faith is not our feelings but its unchanging truth, and that our relationship with the Lord is not based on how we are feeling at any one time but the promises that we find in Scripture.

And it is often at those times when those 'good' feelings aren't there that our faith and our relationship with the Lord is proved to be real and secure.

Michael Bowerman

## Music Camp was a Big Success!



Pictured above, **Amelia Sanchez** leads the children at Music Camp. More on this and other camps/VBS in the next edition of Family News.