



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

# THE FAMILY NEWS

George Town Charge

Volume 199, December 2021

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Rev. L. Christopher Mason

**Music & Worship Minister:**

Antonio Sanchez

**Youth Minister:**

Roy McGregor

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**Service Times:**

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

South Sound United  
44 South Sound Road  
9:00am

## From the Pastor's Desk Peace On Earth

Sometimes I worry that we get confused as to the meaning of some of the accounts concerning Christ. For example, "Peace on earth" is not wishful thinking. "Peace on earth" is not an ideal to be strived for. "Peace on earth" is not a prophecy to be enjoyed in some future age.

No, "peace on earth" is for now. It is here, available to be grasped and claimed by everyone.

But, Chris, there is still fighting around the world. Murder and rape are much in the news. My spouse lost their job and my parent's body is being ravaged by disease. How can you say that there's peace on earth?



Listen. In the Garden of Eden man disobeyed God and sin became part of the human condition. Corrupt humankind had to be removed from the presence of a holy and perfect God. Your eternal soul is separated from the force that created it. That is chaos and turmoil and guilt and anxiety that can never end in all eternity. That is the human condition and there is nothing you can do about it. That is hell.

The Spirit of God groans because of his separation from humankind. But God sent his only Son to earth, to live in human form, keeping perfect accord with His heavenly Father, only to be killed by those He came to serve. And, in so doing, He became the filter which captures the impurity of sin in the soul of every individual who asks to be cleansed. Now, no soul needs to be separated from its Creator. Now, every soul can be reconciled to God, bringing unity and perfect communion with him. That is peace.

When the great host of heavenly angels appeared at the birth of Jesus, they were not singing wishful or prophetic phrases. They were making a glorious declaration: "Peace on earth!" It was there right then and it's here right now. It is Christ.

Look. We are the highest creation of Almighty God. The troubles we have now are nothing in the grand scheme of eternity. There is enmity between us and evil. We will fight evil wherever we find it. As long as there is evil in the world, there is revolt. However, we can have peace right now through Christ, the Chosen One of God. We must allow Christ to put our souls in a right relation with Him and our present troubles will slip away.

So, from now on, when you hear the slogan, "Peace on earth," you will think of Christ, the Prince of Peace, who is on earth.

## Special December Birthdays

### Happy Birthday to

Abigail Bush - 16 on the 4th

Nadine Gray - 50 yrs on the 6th

Josie Knox - 90 yrs on the 6th

Beth Roulstone - 85 yrs on the 8th

Jamalleo Ramoon - 25 yrs on the 12th

Mary Bouck - 75 yrs on the 19th



# Elitia Vassell: Wife, Mother, Teacher and Christian

Family News caught up with **Elitia Vassell** who tells her story.

"I was born in Guyana and moved to Cayman when I was in my early teens in 1997. I grew up in a single parent household with mother, **Melvorn Stewart**, and younger brother, **Odel Downer**. My maternal grandmother and mother were instrumental in my childhood by instilling values and standards that have remained with me into adulthood."

She continues, "While in the Cayman Islands, **Rev. Mary Graham** and her husband **Desmond** became my adopted family. My life changed significantly due to their guidance and influence. I was raised in the Anglican Church, hence St. George's Anglican was my church home in Cayman. I then moved to Jamaica in 2002 to attend Church Teachers' College. **Sister Norma Thompson**, a Church Army officer, was my mentor and guide during those three years on campus. Her love for Jesus and lived out faith in Christ deepened my love for God. Through the years I have received undergraduate and post graduate degrees from Church Teachers' College, the University of the West Indies, Walden University and the University of Birmingham, UK." Elitia is currently a deputy principal at Clifton Hunter High School in Goldfield Academy.

"I came back to Cayman in Summer 2008 to host VBS at St. George's Anglican Church and a friend introduced me to **Eric**. We got married in January 2010 after a two-year courtship. We have two boys **Eze** and **Emry**, 7 and 9 years old respectively." After she and Eric were married at Elmslie, she moved to the United Church.

She was asked when she became a Christian and why being one was important to her.

"I have walked with Christ from when I was a young girl. I remember my Sunday School teacher, **Sister Kim**, who was part of the Assembly of God Church in my neighbourhood in Guyana working with me on memorizing scripture and deepening my love for God's Word. I was involved in many church Bible competitions and activities which opened my appetite to want to know more about God. I do not remember a significant moment when I accepted Christ but my confirmation in 1999 marked the moment when I publicly

accepted the Lord as my Saviour. I have been the president of youth fellowships both in Cayman and Jamaica. I was an altar server and also the youth representative on the Church Committee and to Synod."

She adds, "I love God and have grown in faith and confidence year by year because I fully trust God and depend on him to guide me. My favourite scripture is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

She indicates that she has been involved at Elmslie by leading worship, helping with children's time and occasionally being asked to preach. What she values in the church is the fellowship. "I joined Elmslie in 2010 and I haven't gotten to know everybody. Many I know by face but some names I do not know. I would love to see a church directory created with photographs that anyone who is part of the church could easily be able to identify the members and adherents by face and name. The directory would only contain faces, names and family connections within church."

One of the challenges as a church with which she identifies is the need to reach out and connect with young adults in the church. "We have a vibrant Sunday school and youth group but as a church we have struggled with forming a vibrant young adult programme. I would love to see us grow in this area. The group between the ages of 25 and 45 needs to be given the opportunities to grow in their faith."

She adds some perspective on the wider community. "Cayman Society is small and while social issues continue to increase there seems to be a sense that as the church we choose not to want to discuss or publicly state our disagreements with the way in which some of these issues are being dealt with on a national scale. We

sometimes ignore or offer limited solutions. While we assist in some areas, we are not getting to the root; we are just providing a temporary sticking plaster. I often ask myself if the church as we know it now were not to exist anymore, would it be missed. Would the impact of its absence be so great that people would ask whether they needed the church - God's people who are Christ disciples? Do we go out of our way to help others and to make a difference?"

With a busy job, a family to care for and with her involvement with the church, what else does Elitia find time for? "I love playing volleyball," she says, "and I work hard at raising our two boys to walk in the purpose God has called them. I cherish my alone time and I like to sleep!"

We appreciate Elitia for all she is contributing to the church, her school and to the community, as well as that by Eric, who currently serves as an elder at Elmslie. Continue to pray for them and their family.



**Special Anniversary**  
Congratulations to **Leony & Norman Williams** who will celebrate 45 years of marriage on the 18th of December!



## Supporting the Wider Church

Many in our two churches have faithfully supported a number who are serving the Lord in the four corners of the earth.

Christmas is nearly upon us, and this will provide, hopefully, a timely reminder that there are those, some a long way from home, who would welcome an email, a phone call – maybe by Facetime or Skype - or even a gift at this time of year. The pandemic is undoubtedly affecting them, too. During the year, the committees have been able to talk with several by way of Zoom but personal, individual contacts showing support and as a way of sharing in their ministries would be a great encouragement to them.

Those who would like to follow through on this suggestion can get the relevant information from **Diana** in the office (elmmusic@candw.ky or 949-7923) or from **Betty Ann** (mobley@candw.ky or 516-3678). **Mike** (bowerman@candw.ky or 925-4590) can also supply details.

Here is a list of those whom our churches support, with a brief description of their specific work:

**Joan Page Bain** continues to live and work in Haiti with her husband, **Allemand**, although officially retired, and has been focusing recently on relief work following the earthquake and hurricane that affected her area of the country during the summer. She continues to help out at a clinic she started.

**Sam Rice** has retired to Pittsburg to look after his elderly mother but he and his mission, Gospel Growers, continue to support the churches in the area in which he used to live, the clinic he founded, a Christian radio station and Christian schools, the children of which many of us support through sponsorship.

**Bresile St. Germain** is a Haitian pastor, now 87, who ministers to Haitian churches primarily in Florida. He continues to preach and evangelize regularly as well as and

train churches in church growth.

**Walford Thompson**, formerly president of Ministries in Action, retired with his wife Jen to his home island of St. Vincent and is pastor of a church there. He has been spearheading relief work following the eruption of the Soufriere Volcano.

Also in his late 80s, he continues to have a marked spiritual impact on his island.

**Paul Borthwick** continues to work for Development Associates International, training Christian leaders in developing countries. With the pandemic, much of his ministry is done by Zoom although he is about to do some travelling again in the new year. His wife **Christie** badly broke her hip mid-November and special prayer is requested for them in this challenging time.

**Nyoman Sumaryana**, an Indonesian pastor in his home island of Bali, has a special ministry to his Hindu society with many coming to know Christ. He is about to complete a church building which will allow more opportunities for ministry among both children and adults. He is ably supported by his wife **Eka**. His oldest son **Rico** is training to be a pastor.

**Chip Kirk** works with Operation Mobilization and provides training and motivational conferences for the organization. Many will remember Chip, together with his puppet Junior, speaking at Elmslie and South Sound.

**Daniel Gonzalez** – Pastor Daniel – is a church leader in Havana, Cuba. He has been pastor of Santa Suarez Baptist Church for many years and, along with his

wife **Ana Isabel**, is seeking to determine what role God has for him going forward.

**Jim and Karla Smith** have been working in SE Asia for many years and are currently living in Timor Leste where their primary work is to train and enable early learning teachers by providing material in their native languages. They are raising their twin grandchildren who do on-line schooling.

**The Mount Olivet Boys' Home** located in the hills of Manchester Jamaica, is the United Church's home for boys who need shelter. Among other support, there is a feeding programme to which members may contribute, one that was greatly encouraged by the late **Olive Miller**. New buildings have recently been built but there are many challenges in running the home.

**The Pringle Home for Children** is another United Church one, located in Highgate in the Parish of St. Mary. It provides safe shelter for children in need, and there is a sponsorship programme by which people can support them.

## Wedding News



**Michelle**, daughter of **Ella Kaye Lockwood**, was married on the Seven Mile Beach to **Dave Clark** on 6th November. We congratulate the young couple and wish them God's blessing in their future together.

## South Sound Baby News



**Alexander Daniel** was born on 9th November to **Daniel and Catherine Bond**, a little brother to **Natalie** (pictured above). Proud grandparents are **Peter and Valerie Anderson** of SSU.



## From the Music & Worship Minister

Every year, we present a Christmas Musical Morning, a morning full of music from traditional carols to contemporary Christmas music. The Choir and the Praise Team are always central to this, along with participation from the Youth Orchestra, ensembles and soloists. This year it will be held on the morning of 19th December but will be a shorter version. Due to the community transmission of COVID, we have not been able to practice as much as we desired nor in the way we are used to but we anticipate an encouraging morning for the congregation as well our audience tuning online, which has been increasing. Despite the situation and present challenges, we'll find creative ways to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ our Saviour and once again proclaim to these Islands and to the world through music that Jesus is the reason for the season. We pray that we will experience his presence as we worship him.

**Antonio Sanchez**

### CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING (CTLT) CAYMAN ISLANDS

NON-DENOMINATIONAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME PROVIDER

#### A CHRISTMAS SPECIAL SEMINAR ON "THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS IN THE CONTEXT OF PLURALISM"



WELCOME: **REV. DR. PJ LAWRENCE.**  
DIRECTOR, CTLT -CAYMAN ISLANDS

MODERATOR: **MS. SANDRA LEE SAMUEL**

GUEST SPEAKER : **REV. DR. STEVEN JENNINGS.**  
PASTOR, JAMAICA BAPTIST UNION, KINGSTON, JAMAICA.

RESPONDER: **REV. DR. GARY GARDNER.**  
SENIOR LECTURES, CTLT CAYMAN

DATE: SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER 2021  
TIME: 10AM TO 11:30 AM  
VIA ZOOM

MEETING ID: 2485559547  
PASSCODE: 5SZPSI

## Advent/Christmas Schedule

South United (SSU) and Elmslie (EMU)

28th November - 31st December	SSU	EMU	CANDLE
28th November 1st Sunday in Advent	9:00 am	10:30 am	HOPE
5th December 2nd Sunday in Advent	9:00 am	10:30 am	PEACE
12th December 3rd Sunday in Advent	9:00 am	10:30 am	JOY
12th December Christmas Production	9:00 am	—	
19th December 4th Sunday in Advent	9:00 am	—	LOVE
19th December Christmas Musical Morning			
4th Sunday in Advent		10:30 am	LOVE
19th December Christmas Production	—	6:00 pm (in the courtyard)	
24th December Christmas Eve Candlelight Service		6:30 pm	
Joint Charge - SSU & EMU			
25th December Christmas Day Service	—	9:00 am	CHRIST
Joint Charge - SSU & EMU			
26th December 1st Sunday after Christmas	9:00 am	10:30 am	
31st December Watchnight Service	—	10:30 pm	
Joint Charge - SSU & EMU			

## Anna-Kay is Ordained



Youth Minister **Roy McGregor** left for Jamaica early November to witness the ordination of his wife, **Anna-Kay**. She was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments at the Webster Memorial United Church in Kingston on 11th November, along with **Rev. Sandra Collins** and **Rev. Wendell McKoy, Jr.** Rev. Anna-Kay Henry-McGregor has been placed in the Bethel Charge of the United Church in Highgate St. Mary, serving four congregations. We congratulate Anna-Kay, and pray for God's blessing on her and Roy as she formally embarks on her ministry and as he returns to serve among our children here in George Town.

