

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

THE FAMILY NEWS

George Town Charge

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

South Sound United
44 South Sound Road
9:00am

Do you play the blame game?

Society is very good at playing the blame game. Whenever something unfortunate or painful occurs, somebody has to be held responsible. There are no longer any “accidents” in life; someone is to blame.

We are pretty good at it ourselves. When some misfortune happens which causes us discomfort, loss or hurt, we look around for someone to blame, someone to take the responsibility. “It’s not my fault,” we declare. We hold out that it cannot have happened because of some mistake we have made or some wrong we have done, or that it was merely an accident for which no one was to blame. We find it difficult to admit that we may have been at fault, let alone that it was just an unfortunate happening. For example, we feel this way when we catch our toe on a paver and break our leg: the owner of the driveway is at fault, or when there is an occurrence which is often referred to as “an act of God”: the Cat. Five hurricane which blew our roof off was because the builder did not provide enough hurricane straps.

This inclination to find someone to blame may be why we find it so difficult to apologize when we are wrong – when something **is** our fault. We are usually too proud to admit it so we play the blame game – we look for someone else to take responsibility.

The Bible is clear that we need to face up to our moral weaknesses and sins. Society prefers to use words like “mistakes” or “sickness” for things which are just plain wrong. When this happens, we tend to cover up sin, we fail to take responsibility or, worse, we look for someone else to take the blame for what is **our** wrongdoing.

However, if we are to know forgiveness from God, we have to be honest and admit when we do or say something wrong. No excuses. No rationalizing. No coverup. We can’t hide it from God, anyway, so why do we try?

The same applies when we wrong someone else. The only chance of forgiveness and restoration will come when we are honest and take the blame when it is our fault.

Most of us want restoration. Bob Gass, a devotional writer, has pointed out that “forgiveness and restoration are first cousins, but with a difference: forgiveness can happen in an instant, restoration often requires time.” He points out that the word restoration in the original Greek gives two pictures. First, fishermen mending their nets and, second, a doctor resetting a dislocated bone. He goes on to state: “The good news is that our God is in the business of resetting and restoring.” Mending nets and the healing of bones take time, and we may need patience in allowing God to do his work of restoration in our lives – a work that will make us better rather than bitter - which is often the result of trying to blame someone else.

The Apostle John has expressed it best in those well-known words in 1 John 1:8-9, “If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness” (NLT). With God, when we truly repent of our sin, there is both forgiveness and restoration.

Michael Bowerman



Profile of Sarah Ramkhelawan

A familiar face at South Sound United, whether leading worship, greeting at the door, singing with the choir or sharing a mission moment, is that of **Sarah Ramkhelawan**. She has been attending SSU since 2011, apart from a little over a year when she was away from the island.

Born and raised in Trinidad, she eventually left for Bermuda in 2007 before arriving in Cayman in 2010 when she was offered a job here as an accountant. "I then left Cayman in 2013," she says. "I was young and still wanted to travel and see more of the world. I also wanted to experience working in another jurisdiction. However, although a few offers to work elsewhere were available, I found myself moving back to Cayman in late 2014.

"I grew up in a Christian home with my parents and two older siblings so was exposed to the Christian faith from birth. Although I grew up in a Christian home with a predominantly Presbyterian background, I was also exposed to other faiths. Trinidad being a multi-religious society, I attended two Hindu primary schools and an Anglican secondary school. I had many childhood friends of different faiths and some with none! Childhood playdates and birthday parties sometimes took on a religious flair and this followed into adulthood at weddings when I've been in the bridal party for both Hindu and Muslim ones. I've also been blessed to travel around the world where I have observed and learnt about other cultures and religions. My exposure to different religions has helped to confirm my decision to follow the Christian faith.

"Although I grew up in church I never attended Sunday school. At that time, our family was one of the few with young children so I sat in church with all the adults, as there were not enough students to form a class. I never learnt any Sunday school songs or memory verses when I was young! As a teenager I was involved in youth group and choir. Later, when I became a young adult, I became the treasurer of the church for a few years before I left for Bermuda. Officially I'm SSU's mission coordinator and a worship leader, but also assist or volunteer in other areas when able."

When Sarah was asked what she saw as the strengths and blessings of being part of SSU, she replied, "SSU is special to me because it reminds me of the Presbyterian Church I attended while growing up. In fact, the first time my sister visited Cayman and I took her to SSU, she made the same comment: "It's just like home!" SSU has a small, casual, family atmosphere where you feel comfortable to worship. Everyone seems to be an extension of my family, which was particularly important for me when I moved to Cayman by myself without knowing anyone else that lived here. Although we are sometimes challenged by a lack of space, it does not hinder us in getting the work done."

She believes the church could have a bigger impact on Cayman by changing its image – not its doctrine, she hastens to add – as it is seen as an archaic institution rather than as a body of like-minded individuals who have a passion to love and serve the community. She added, "We were commanded to love our neighbour yet so many see us only as judging our neighbour."

When asked what she enjoyed doing outside the church, she replied, "Travelling!" She can also be seen running in South Sound before seven in the morning or on the Seven Mile Beach at weekends.

Sarah, with her commitment to the Lord and her enthusiasm for his work, has been a tremendous asset both to SSU and the wider Cayman community.



Back to Church Sunday at Elmslie



Back to Church Sunday was held on 12th September at Elmslie and all United churches across the island. Despite an unexpected outbreak of Covid in the community resulting in shortened services and take home lunches instead of fellowship meals, the message of HOPE was well-received by many.

Special October Anniversary

Congratulations to **Roy & Anna Kay McGregor** who will celebrate one year of marriage on the 17th. May God bless you with many more happy years together.

Special October Birthdays Happy Birthday to

Stephanie Menko - 16 on the 1st
Marco Archer - 55 on the 9th
Jonathan Walmsley - 25 on the 16th
Rejah Welcome - 21 on the 18th
Kimberley Eccleston - 21 on the 26th

Students Studying Abroad

Please remember to pray for our youth who are studying abroad. They are:

SOUTH SOUND UNITED CHURCH

Julian Menko - University of Kent, UK - Politics & International Relations, 4th year;

Charlotte Gray - Trinity College, Dublin Ireland - Ancient and Medieval History and Culture, 2nd year;

Matthew Hanson - University of Exeter, UK - Civil Engineering, 2nd year;

Charlotte Hinds - Imperial College, London, UK - PhD in Clinical Medicine Research;

Sabine Ellison - University of Ottawa, Canada - Engineering, 1st year;

Sophie Ellison - United World College, Costa Rica, 1st year;

Nathaniel Meghoo - 2021 graduate University of Chester, UK - International Tourism Management; BA with Honours;

Andreas Meghoo - University of Northumbria, Newcastle, UK - Information Technology & Business, 1st year;

Bianca Meghoo - 2021 graduate. University of Leicester, UK - BA in International Affairs. Now Back in London to study Law.

ELMSLIE MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH

Shana McLaughlin - University of Plymouth, UK - Masters in Architecture, final year;

Hannah Robinson - University of Leicester, UK - General Engineering, 1st year;

Katherine Walmsley - University of Liverpool, UK - Occupational Therapy, 3rd year;

Joshua McField - University of Greenwich, UK - Computer Engineering, 3rd year;

Jaydon McField - Rossall Boarding School, UK - to finish High School and play football for Fleetwood Premier League Football Club;

Amari Watler - Ryerson University, Canada - Business Studies with a Double Major in Entrepreneurial and Marketing, 4th year. (Doing courses online); and

Ethan Whittaker - Princeton University, USA - Physics and Math, 4th year.

Julian's Travel Adventures

As young people growing up in the Cayman Islands, we are blessed to have access to so many opportunities and the support for studying and gaining work experience abroad. In the past five years, I have endeavoured to take full advantage of these opportunities as they have come my way. At age 16, I was successful in my application to the United World College (UWC), which was the start of my great adventures. I spent the next two years living and finishing high school in Montezuma, New Mexico, surrounded by classmates from over 90 different countries, a number of whom I have already been able to visit in their homes! This exposure developed my interest in pursuing experiences that may seem challenging or out of my comfort zone.

I continued my education by starting university in Kent, England. While a very different environment from New Mexico, I found many aspects of the experience to appreciate and learn from. I spent much of my free time traveling, experimenting with cooking, cycling and participating in the wide range of societies available, such as the Caribbean Union.

In 2020 the covid-19 pandemic came and turned many lives around. I remain eternally grateful to be in a place like Cayman during the worst of it and to



know that my family would be safe even when I left. Like many others, my original plans for the year had to be scrapped, but I wasn't willing to write off the year and return to finish my studies immediately. Instead, I made the decision to move to Budapest, Hungary, for the year where I would complete a research project with my university as well as take virtual classes with a university in Hong Kong. I made sure to make the most of my year connecting with my Hungarian family and exploring the stunning country that Hungary is!

Throughout my time spent abroad, I have always remained grateful for the firm foundation instilled in me by my family and my faith, and I couldn't have reached where I am without my many support systems - my close and extended family, friends and church family - that keep me grounded, motivated and are always there when I need them. I always look forward to reconnecting with everyone whenever I am back on island for a break. In the future, I hope to continue to spend time abroad - ideally in a position that allows me to promote the Cayman Islands, as well as to eventually return to contribute and apply my global experience and international knowledge to the domestic scene.



I would encourage all young people in Cayman to never diminish their potential but instead seek out opportunities to pursue a life that excites and fulfills them - as many of those opportunities exist!

Julian Menko is a 4th year student at the University of Kent, England

New Member for Elmslie



On Sunday, 5th September, **Susan Solomon** (pictured with **Rev. Chris Mason**) was received into membership at Elmslie.

Sunday School Presentation at SSU




Sunday School teacher, **Valerie Anderson**, explains to the congregation, with the help of her class, what they have been doing in Sunday School classes. These presentations are regular features and are much enjoyed by all.

Baby Blessing at South Sound United



Adeline Raine Lee was blessed at South Sound United Church on Sunday, 22nd August. **Rev. Chris Mason** performed the blessing. Adeline's parents are **Daniel and Suneeta Lee**, and her grandmother is **Karen Lee**.


**Cayman
Keswick**
2 0 2 1
'All One In Christ'



Sunday 3rd October
6pm
First Assembly of God

SPEAKER:
Pastor Steve Brady

www.facebook.com/caymankeswick

News from CPHS

- During the inspection in May by the Office of Educational Standards, the school received a "Good Report", with the High School section being given an "Excellent Report".
- After eight years as chair of the Board of Governors, **Pastor Ormond Williams** has stepped down, effective the end of July. **Mrs Sheena Thompson**, deputy-chair, is acting chair until the appointment of a new one.