

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands



# FAMILY NEWS

Elmslie Memorial Charge

Volume 225, February 2024

## God and God Alone

Gospel singer **Steve Green** is probably best known for his song, "God and God Alone." The first verse goes, "God and God alone created all these things we call our own; From the mighty to the small, the glory in them all, is God's and God's alone."

He undoubtedly drew inspiration from Isaiah 45 where the prophet is encouraging a despondent nation to once again turn their eyes towards God. Here is a selection of things he says about God in this chapter: "... He who created the heavens, he is God... He says: 'I am the LORD, and there is no other... I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right... There is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Saviour; there is none but me... Turn to me and be saved... for I am God, and there is no other... Before me every knee will bow, by me every tongue will swear'" (vv. 18-23).

This is a reminder to us, especially in our praying, that God is God; there is none other. We need therefore to focus on him *first*, recalling his awesome nature, his mighty works, his incomparable character. It is *this* God before whom we stand and to whom we pray. He has granted us the enormous privilege of not only being in a relationship with him but to talk to him – the one who is "God and God alone!"

We need to consider and address him in this way *before* we begin making our requests. This will give us a confidence that he is, too, our sovereign Lord and gracious Father who delights to hear and answer our prayers.

## New Elders Appointed at Elmslie

During the first worship service of the year, the two new elders elected to the congregational board, **Shana Linwood-McLaughlin** and **Elitia Vassell**, were commissioned. At the same time, **Suzanne Livingston** and **William Walmsley** were recommissioned to their second term on the board. William is to be the new secretary. In the photo taken during the commissioning by **Rev. Chris** are (left to right), Shana, Elitia, William and Suzanne, along with continuing elders **Joan McField** and **Lorna Reid**. Missing from the photo was elder **Nigel Boothe** who was away attending a funeral in Jamaica.



### Minister:

Rev. L. Christopher Mason

### Music & Worship Minister:

Antonio Sanchez

### Youth Minister:

Roy McGregor

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Mondays - Fridays

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Council e-mail [cirmc.info@gmail.com](mailto:cirmc.info@gmail.com)

### Bethesda Counselling Website:

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

### Service Times:

Sundays

Elmslie Memorial United

10:30am

Robert Young United

583 Crewe Road

8:45am

Mission Statement: The George Town Charge exists to love God, love others and make disciples.

## Is it Ever Right to Fight?

The Bible tells us, in Jesus' words, that we will hear of "wars and rumours of wars" before the end of time (Mark 13:7). Of course, no one knows precisely when that will be but everyone is well aware of the many wars currently taking place around the world. Awareness is especially focused on those in Ukraine and Gaza. The latter has particularly caught the world's attention, polarizing many, some supporting Israel, some the Palestinians, and leading to many and large demonstrations. Most of us, too, if we are honest, will have strong feelings about the rights and wrongs of this conflict.

How should we respond as Christians, especially those of us residing in a relatively peaceful society like Cayman? It is important that we do so, and that we determine what we think about war in general and about the conflict in Gaza in particular.

I recently listened to an interview with Lord Richard Dannatt who retired some years ago as General Dannatt, Head of the Army in Britain. In the interview he described his experiences in Northern Ireland, Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo. He was then asked a question as to whether he believed it was always right to wage war. Of special significance to this question was the fact that he is a committed Christian. His response was brief because of the lack of time but he referred to what is known as the 'just' war tradition. In effect, he stated that there are two elements – two questions to ask: One, is it *right* to fight? Two, is it the *right way* to fight – in other words, is it proportionate?

Through the years, there are Christians who have taken a pacifist position that it is *never* right to engage in war, and those who believe there can be 'just' wars. CS Lewis, who had fought in the First World War before he came a Christian, addressed this issue at the start of the Second, now as a Christian. His conclusion was that there were times to fight. He felt that as God had told Christians in the Bible to submit to governing authorities, it was their responsibility to follow politicians' lead in such matters. The outcome of World War 2, and the inevitable result had the allies not faced up to Hitler, seems to have proved he was right.

The above is not intended to persuade you to adopt one or other position or even get you to decide on the rights and wrongs of the Israeli-Hamas conflict. Rather, it is to encourage you to think 'Christianly' about such matters. Believers in Christ need to develop a Biblical worldview about everything that relates to life, including worldwide issues such as warfare.

However, there is one more important thing we can do and that is to pray. Pray specifically for those places of conflict that justice will prevail, but not without mercy. We believe, too, that the most important thing every person, be they Jewish, Palestinian – or Caymanian – needs is to come into a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The Old Testament prophet Micah expressed it in this way: "What does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). So we should pray that in some way through this terrible situation people will find the true and living God.

**Michael Bowerman**

## Elitia Vassell:

### Newly Elected Elder at Elmslie

Elitia is one of two new elders appointed to the congregational board of elders during the last congregational meeting. As she was recently featured in Family News, we are providing a brief synopsis.

She has been attending Elmslie since January 2010 when she married **Eric Vassell** who himself recently stepped down from the board. She has been involved in that time as a worship leader, preaching occasionally and leading the children's time. She believes it important to honour God by using the gifts and talents he has given her. She believes he has given her the gift of leadership, and she endeavours to lead diligently, as Romans 12:8 instructs.

Over the years, she has been called to many leadership positions, starting with being president of her youth fellowship groups in Cayman and Jamaica as a young girl. At school, she was involved in debate and entered competitions where she was often called upon to lead. She was also the youth representative to the Synod for the Anglican church and the youth representative on the church committee.

Elitia often found herself leading various groups and teams when no one else wanted to do so. Her firm demeanour and confident tone inspire those around her to do well. She is cognizant that leadership comes with influence and that leaders must ensure that the way they do so, especially in the church, must follow Jesus' example.

Having been raised in the church and serving Jesus all her life, Elitia is humbled to be elected as elder at Elmslie and says that she will lead diligently. She states, "To God be the Glory! Great things he has done!"

Let us ensure we keep Elitia in our prayers as we also remember all our elders in their important leadership responsibilities.



## Cayman Keswick Starts This Weekend

Our Cayman Keswick 50th Anniversary celebration starts this weekend.

The dates are Sunday evening, 28th January, to Wednesday evening, the 31st, and this year's event will be hosted at First Baptist Church. **Pastor Dave Jorge** will be leading us in a multi-church choir. The format will be a four night event, with each evening running from 6:30 pm – 8 pm. There will be no lunch-time sessions this year. Our speaker is **Dr. Jeremy McQuoid**, who is the current Chairman of the Trustees at Keswick Ministries, and pastor at Deeside Christian Fellowship Church in Aberdeen, Scotland.

This will provide a wonderful opportunity to hear excellent Bible teaching while having fellowship with Christians of other churches. We hope to see many of you there.





*Happy Valentine's day*

**Special February Birthday**  
**Happy Birthday to**  
**Paul McField - 65 on the 9th**

**Special Wedding Anniversaries**

Congratulations to

**Deborah & Luke Theophilus** who will celebrate  
 10 years of marriage on 7th February and to  
**Sharon & William Walmsley** who on the 25th  
 will celebrate 35 years.



Remember When? .....

