

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

THE FAMILY NEWS

George Town Charge

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9:00am

New Elders at Elmslie

On Sunday, 19th January, during the congregational meeting following the Sunday morning service, four new elders (pictured below left to right: **William Walmsley, Suzanne Livingston, Anthony Bodden** and **Eric Vassell**) were appointed to serve along with existing elders, **Astra Christian, Nigel Boothe, Joan McField** and **Leoany 'Fay' Williams**. **Liz McLaughlin**, who had reached the end of her three year tenure, was re-elected to serve. *"Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you."* Hebrews 13:17-18



Full Board of Elders pictured front row, left to right: **Rev. Chris Mason, Liz McLaughlin, Astra Christian, Nigel Boothe, Eric Vassell, and William Walmsley**. Back row, left to right: **Joan McField, Suzanne Livingston, Leoany 'Fay' Williams and Anthony Bodden**

From the Pastor's Desk

If you are between the ages of 22 and 37, society has labelled you a millennial. Do you hate being called that? I understand your feelings. *Business Insider* says that most people over 40 tend to clump all millennials together as “spoiled, lazy, selfish,

obsessed with technology, superficial, indecisive and disrespectful.” No wonder you hate the title!

For now, though, forget the title. I would like to ask you, “What do you have a passion to do in life? What is your dream? Could it be that God put that dream in your heart?” It is a mistake to think, “If I want to do it, it probably is not God’s will” - unless, of course, your dream is just to sit on the Seven Mile Beach the rest of your life!

Finish this statement: “I have always wanted to....” Perhaps you wanted to train for some special work - perhaps to start a business. Or you wanted to be involved in ministry. Review your talents and abilities. The Bible says, “Each

one has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that” (1 Corinthians 7:7). If God is the one who put this dream on your heart, take steps right now to make it happen. Explore. Read books and search the Internet. Take a class, learn a language, interview people, try your idea on a small scale. Be alert for God’s timing.

Yes, you may have to work for awhile at a mundane job that doesn’t seem to relate at all to what you’d eventually like to do, but don’t let that stop you. The Bible gives direction, saying, “Do not just do what you have to do to get by, but work heartily, as Christ’s servants doing what God wants you to do” (Ephesians 6:6). Trust God to move you toward the dream He has given you to accomplish. With God’s help, you can do it!



How About Sunday Morning Worship (Part 2)?

By Michael Bowerman

Worship must be about honouring Almighty God – addressing his ‘worth-ship’. All that happens on Sunday morning must focus on this. Therefore, going to church is serious business!

Last month we talked about the time leading up to Sunday worship. There needs to be a ‘holy expectancy’ which will cause us to prepare ourselves by prayer and confession of known sin. We stressed how important it is to be on time to meet our God as a matter of respect for him.

Expectant... prepared... serious... These are some of the words which should characterize our approach to Sunday worship. Reverent... thoughtful... real... and, yes, serious again should be features of the time when we *actually* worship together. By the way, serious is not the opposite of joyful. And real does not mean we must be intense.

Music has always been an integral part of worship from Old Testament days. We worship God as we sing but the psalms make it clear that the playing of musical instruments can also be used in worship. For example, the psalmist in 33:1-3 states, “Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.” We have keyboards, guitars, trumpets and drums today!

But the critical thing about music in worship, and singing in particular, is that it is ascribing praise and thanks to God: his person and his work, and especially the work of the cross. This must be the focus - not a repetition of our aspirations, not centred on ourselves, though there is a place for songs of desire, request and response during the service. But we centre our thoughts on God – Father, Son and Spirit. Songs like *We Have Come into This House*, with the line “Let’s forget about ourselves and magnify the Lord and worship him” remind us of this, as does Matt Redman’s *Heart of Worship*: “When the music fades... I’m coming back to the heart of worship and it’s... all about you, Jesus...”

If this is to be the case, the words of the songs must have substance and meaning. Some of the songs have great tunes and beat, but have questionable theology – or it is difficult to know what they are really saying, like *These Are the Days of Elijah!* When we come to Communion, how does *Let Us Break Bread Together on our Knees* help us to think about the cross – as pretty a tune as it is? Good tunes are important. Equally, those which aren’t can take away from appreciating the words. Music involves the emotions and it is right and proper to *feel* as we sing. But feelings are not sufficient. The more important thing is to *think* about the words as

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Lady Johnson



Our deepest condolences and continued prayers for the family of the late **Lady Johnson**, long-time member of South Sound United Church, who passed away on Sunday, 29th December 2019. A Service of Thanksgiving was held in her honour on Saturday, 11th January, at Elmslie Church. Lady Johnson (Rita) was the wife of the late **Hon. Sir Vassell Johnson**, mother to **Tessa Bodden, Ronette Jurn, Zillah Isaacs, Bud Johnson, Juliet Du Feu** and **Bradley Johnson**, and mother-in-law to **Sheila Johnson, Anna Johnson** and **Chris Du Feu**. Also left behind to mourn her passing are 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Special February Birthdays

Happy Birthday to

Francilla Myles - 60 on the 9th

Tony McField - 50 on the 9th

John Macmillan - 75 on the 16th

Aileen Macdonald - 98 on the 23rd

Edward Rodney - 60 on the 25th

Baby Blessing at Elmslie



On Sunday, 19th January, baby **Gi'naiya Kaelyn Ebanks** (pictured with her parents, **Kerriann & Graydon Ebanks**), was blessed at Elmslie Church. The baby's sister **Gianna** is also pictured witnessing the blessing.

Elmslie Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting was held following the morning service on 19th January. This had two main purposes: to elect elders for the new year and to lay out a proposed reorganization of the church's ministries and teams. The list of elders elected and re-elected can be found on page 1.

The United Church embarked on a programme for Renewal and Transformation back in 2008. The George Town Charge is presently going through a period of self-analysis and, as part of this, **Rev. Oliver Daley** spent some days earlier this year helping us do this by identifying areas in need of strengthening.

The elders' board has now suggested a restructuring of Elmslie's ministries with teams to undergird them. The eight ministries proposed are outreach, care group, fellowship, evangelism, discipleship and stewardship, worship, youth and global missions. These will be supported by five teams: prayer intercession, finance, administration, property and communication and media.

Several teams already have leaders with **Antonio Sanchez** and **Roy McGregor** already heading up worship and youth respectively. Also, **Betty Ann Mobley** has agreed to head the global missions ministry.

The meeting agreed to adopt the new structure which will be further worked on by the board of elders.

Words of Thanks

Every year, the Elmslie Global Mission Committee prepares a budget which goes to support those working overseas. Many in the church give to this through the light blue mission offering envelopes. In turn, those we support keep in touch mostly through newsletters, copies of which are available from **Diana Bodden** in the church office.

Several have sent an end-of-year note of thanks for the support the church has given, a selection of which are below:

Walford Thompson: "Thank you for your continued partnership with us in the ministry," he writes. His new church in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) is currently purchasing a property to serve as a ministry centre and Christian library as well as a church. "We are limited in finances being a small church," he says, "and SVG is the fourth poorest country in the Caribbean." He is seeking our prayers and support.

Paul Borthwick writes, "Thank you for partnering with **Christie** and me by your prayers, encouragement and financial support." He is currently completing his new book based on John 3:16, but will be travelling in February for ministry, first to Turkey, followed by "a special location in a country opposing the Gospel and pressuring Christians" where he will speak to a gathering of Christian leaders from South East Asia.

Sam Rice: "Your support is greatly needed and appreciated at all times but especially now. Haiti is suffering so badly. Any extra funds will be greatly appreciated," he says. Apart from sponsoring children through Gospel Growers which Sam oversees, we need to pray for them that they will come to know the Lord and grow up to take their place as Christian leaders in their churches and societies.

Chip Kirk: "I deeply appreciate the partnership in ministry that Elmslie has chosen to have with me through ministry with Operation Mobilization," he writes.

We need to continue to support these and the others on our list with our prayers and financial gifts. They and the people they serve are part of the whole church. So, John in the book of Revelation recognized that there are those "from every nation, tribe, people and language" worshipping God throughout the world, and that they will be in heaven with us doing the same.

Cayman Keswick



Jonathan Lamb was the speaker at the annual inter-church **Cayman Keswick Convention** held mid-month in the Church of God Chapel and the Family Life Centre. He provided some excellent and much appreciated ministry from 2 Corinthians and the book of Psalms.

The Music Man!



Eric & Elitia Celebrate 10 Years



The Ogstons Revisit Cayman



Eric and Elitia Vassell reached their 10th wedding anniversary on January 23rd, celebrating the occasion in their back garden the following Saturday night surrounded by family and friends, including some from overseas, including Elitia's mother. Central to the celebration was the renewal of their marriage vows in an elaborate ceremony, conducted by **Rev. Chris** with the help of **Rev. Mary Graham** of St. George's Anglican.

Eric is the son of **Phillip (Slim)** and **Harriet Vassell** and they have two little boys, **Eze** and **Emry**.

Rev. Edgar Ogston, and his wife, **Jean**, spent a two week-holiday back in Grand Cayman where he had been the minister of the George Town Charge (which then included Robert Young Memorial) in the years 1983 - '87. They were able to meet up with many who were part of the congregations in those days, and visited each of the three churches, preaching at Robert Young and Elmslie on the Sunday morning of January 26th. This was followed by a pot-luck lunch in their honour.

The Ogstons returned to the Church of Scotland with their three children, **Stephen**, **Eileen** and **Heather**, then 10, 8 and 6, and have pastored four parishes: in Leven on the east coast of Scotland, followed by a period in the Shetland Islands, then to Beuly in the north and finally in Mallaig on the west coast. Rev. Edgar is now formally retired as a minister and they live in Girvan in the south-west where they continue to be involved in ministry.

The three children are all married and between them have five grandchildren. Stephen has followed his father into the Church of Scotland ministry.

Sunday Worship (Cont'd. from Pg. 2)

we sing them. Those hymns and songs with what might be termed 'good theology', those which have biblical substance and speak to God's love and might, especially in the work of Christ, are the better ones. And it isn't about old versus new, it's not about whether we sing songs or hymns, whether they are upbeat or reflective. It's about whether God has been truly worshiped "*in Spirit and in truth.*" That is what is important.

Next month: What about the Bible and preaching?