

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

# FAMILY NEWS

Elmslie Memorial Charge

Page 216, May 2023



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Rev. L. Christopher Mason

**Music & Worship Minister:**

Antonio Sanchez

**Youth Minister:**

Roy McGregor

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

**Service Times:**

Sundays  
Elmslie Memorial United  
10:30am

Robert Young United  
583 Crewe Road  
8:45am

## The Spiritual Laws of Aerodynamics

Many of us like to travel. Living in Cayman, it is almost impossible to do so without booking a flight. We do so without thinking of what it takes for that airplane to fly from Cayman to, say, Miami. It requires what the scientist would call the laws of aerodynamics. Within these, there are four forces of flight: lift, weight, thrust and drag. These make a plane move up and down, and faster or slower.

However, there are three key factors necessary to ensure that the laws of aerodynamics effectively bring that plane from point A to point B. The plane needs a pilot, it must have fuel and it requires to be built in such a way that around 100 tons can lift off the ground and fly to its destination. In order to do this, most important are the wings.

In this is a parable of the church. The pilot is God. The fuel is the Holy Spirit. The two wings? Prayer and scripture.

For the purpose of this article, I want to focus on the latter: the wings.

We are a church which wants to grow – to do so numerically by people becoming Christians, spiritually by Christians growing in their faith and functionally by having all its members active in witness and service. However, these will only come about when we determine our priorities in prayer and Scripture.

This is a message for the church but the truth is that it starts with the individual – you and me.

Everyone would say that prayer is very important but few seriously pray – on their own let alone together with other Christians in corporate prayer. Most of us would acknowledge that we are a Bible-believing church, but how many of us are committed to really reading and studying our Bibles on our own, let alone with other members of our church? Further, to be Bible-believing is not the same as Bible-living.

Prayer is the lifeblood of the church. We engage in prayer because nothing of any worth can be accomplished without it. Prayer is acknowledging that the whole of the Christian life and all our

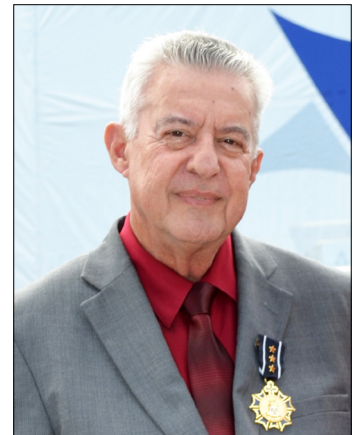
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## John Macmillan (1945-2023)

We extend our sincere sympathy to and offer our prayers for **Janet, Sheena** and **Bruce**, and the rest of the family at John's death on 17th April following several months of increasing ill-health. John was 78.

He arrived in Cayman from his home country of Belize in the mid-60s, and worked as a banker, trust officer and then, for many years, for the Kirkconnell family in the Kirk Home Centre. Following that, he became the Elmslie Church administrator prior to his retirement. He and Janet were married in 1969.

John was involved in the life and work of the United Church from the start, serving as an elder of Elmslie for many years, on the Cayman Islands Regional Council and Corporation, and as a lay pastor at Robert Young Memorial. He is going to be sorely missed.





The Cayman Islands Male Voice Choir, Good Friday, 7th April



Elmslie Easter Choir, Easter Sunday, with Daniel and Aaron Sanchez

ELMSLIE MEMORIAL UNITED CHURCH'S  
YOUTH MINISTRY PRESENTS A

# FISH FRY

*Menu:*  
Mahi Mahi (fillet) \$15  
Whole Snapper \$12  
Sides: Fried Breadfruit,  
Plantain & Fritters  
Pastries, water and  
soft drinks available for  
purchase, too.

Saturday,  
6th MAY 2023  
7am - until ...

ELMSLIE CHURCH HALL  
108 Seafarers Way  
George Town



Tickets available for purchase after Sunday services in the belfry or contact Jennelle McLaughlin or Roy McGregor.

## Missions Weekend Soon Come!

The Global Missions Committee is planning a special missions weekend from 8th - 11th June 2023. Speakers will be **Mr. Paul Wheatley** and **Mrs. Keitra Vilma** from Operation Mobilization. Please plan to be there!

## Ministry in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

**Mike and Mary Bowerman** spent ten days in St. Vincent and the Grenadines at the invitation of **Walford Thompson**, the pastor of Arnos Vale Covenant Assembly (AVCA) during Holy Week.

Mike was asked to preach at the Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter services and, during the week, led a Bible conference from Monday to Thursday on the book of Philippians, speaking in all on eight occasions. Both Mike and Mary also spoke at separate teas for men and ladies on the Saturday.



Pastor Walford Thompson and his wife Jen standing between Mary and Mike in front of AVCA.

AVCA is a church of about 60 members which Walford, although already well into his 80s, and his wife **Jen** started about eight years ago following his retirement as president of Ministries in Action. Mike and Mary found the people to be warm and responsive, and seemed to appreciate the ministry of the week.

Many at Elmslie know Walford who has visited on many occasions, providing training in church growth strategies and encouraging the many short-term mission trips the church has made, as well as preaching. He continues to be one of the missionaries we support as a church.

AVCA was a focal point for relief donations following the eruption of La Soufriere Volcano two years ago and continues to give 50% of its income to missions and relief work.

Mike and Mary want to thank, through this medium, the many who supported them with their prayers and in other ways for what proved to be a successful and worthwhile trip.

## Condolences

Our sympathy and prayers go out to **Richard Trull** and his family on the death of his mother, **Margarita (Madge) Trull** on 14th March, in Toronto, Canada. Madge had only a few months earlier celebrated her 100th birthday.

## 43rd Synod - Cayman Islands



Synod and Council leaders of the United Church following a reception dinner held on Friday, 21st April 2023. L-R: **Mrs. Debra Humphries, Rev. Chris Mason, Rev. Euthman Wray, Mrs. Janet McConnell, Rev. Norbert Stephens, Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott, Mrs. Rose Wedderburn, Mrs. Dionne Harriott, Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield, Rev. Anthony Chung, Rev. Wendel McKoy and Rev. Rohan Forrester**



United Church leaders at Elmslie after the opening service of the 43rd Synod on 23rd April during which the **Rt Rev Gary Harriott** (centre front) was installed as the Moderator of Synod.

## Water Ministry

The Water Ministry which was dormant for some time has been reactivated. There are already a number of volunteers who have agreed to be in the church on cruise ship days in order to offer tourists a bottle of water or provide an opportunity to speak to or pray with them.

More help is needed in manning the church when ships are in port, primarily between 11am and 3pm. If there are those who could offer an hour or two, once or twice a week, please contact the office (elmmusic@candw.ky or 949-7923). There is a particular need for volunteers on Mondays.



Two cruise ship passengers visiting the Elmslie sanctuary

## Congregational Meeting

A meeting of the Elmslie congregation took place following the morning service on March 19th.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to update the membership on the discussions held by the leadership in a series of meetings. This was presented by **Ormond Williams** who had been invited to facilitate these meetings of the leadership, including a recent a day of fasting and prayer.

The essential questions were as to where we wanted to be as a church in the next five years and what God wanted it to be. He stated that strategic planning is painful and takes time, but that the leadership is wrestling - a good place to be.

He spoke to five things:

1. The church is owned by God and all is therefore God's work which he has invited us to join as stewards.
2. He asked whether the church still had relevance in the world.
3. Changing lives by connecting people to Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is he who gives the increase and it does not depend on some worship style or other.
4. The church is about bearing fruit, not merely maintenance, and he asked whether we had become lukewarm.
5. He asked whether the church had become programmatic. Programmes, he suggested, may not serve their purpose, and while some people are doing good things, not all are doing godly things - what God wants. He suggested we may need to make changes but should do so wisely.

Ormond reminded the congregation that the church is about God's mission for mankind so as to enable mankind to worship God. He quoted John Piper: "Mission exists because worship doesn't", and challenged the congregation to be followers of God rather than just fans.

The congregation was advised that there had been only one nomination for elder so the election of elders would be deferred.



Elmslie congregants placing flowers on the floral cross, Easter Sunday 2023

Good Friday Baptism, 7th April



L-R: Elder William Walmsley, Rev. Chris Mason, Patricia Mason, Noria Eccleston, Mary Barnes, Ashley (U.K.), Brittany Webster, Rev. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield and Rev. Louis Sully

## Anniversary Celebrations Planning Committee Makes Contributions

On Easter Sunday, **Rev. Chris Mason** and **Terri Merren**, Chairman of the Anniversary Planning Committee, were pleased to make contributions to various auxiliaries within the church from funds raised during the planning of the anniversary celebrations last year. Ministries receiving contributions were Pantry (**Harriet Vassell**, Coordinator), EEATS (accepted by **Anthony Bodden**), Youth (**Roy McGregor**), Youth Band and Music (**Antonio Sanchez**).

In addition, excess funds and monies collected in the Anniversary envelopes and during the Anniversary Service totalling over \$11,000 will be applied to the Bus Ministry Fund (accepted by **Linda Bodden**, Treasurer of Elmslie), plus any other funds received for the Anniversary Celebrations.

The Anniversary Planning Committee wishes to thank everyone who supported the various events throughout the year.



## Spiritual Laws (Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

service is a work of God. We look to God; we depend on him to accomplish his will and purpose for us and his church. Jesus, using another illustration, that of the vine and the branches, stated categorically: *“Apart from me you can do nothing”* (John 15:5).

We seem to have our priorities in the wrong order. Prayer should precede activity. We plan, we strategize, we call meetings, we are busy. But prayer is such a small part of these. We need less planning and more praying. A typical ninety minute church meeting will start with a three minute prayer! The ministries of our church should be bathed with prayer. This would require at the very least for the church to come together regularly to do so. We need God to ‘fly the church’ and it is essential that we allow the ‘fuel’ of the indwelling Holy Spirit to empower it as we learn to depend on him. That takes intentional, focused and “without ceasing” prayer.

Knowing Scripture and living by it are equally important. St. Jerome, a 5th century church father, made the statement that “to be ignorant of Scripture is to be ignorant of Christ.” It was this conviction that inspired him to translate the Bible from Greek into Latin – the first ever translation.

Recent generations of Christians seem woefully ignorant of their Bibles and this is reflected in many in our churches whose lives are shallow, whose behaviour is questionable and whose service less than effective. The Bible self describes; Scripture is our spiritual nourishment – “milk” and “solid food”, light to show us how to live, a weapon to use against the enemy of our souls and seed to produce life and fruit. It is instructive that the first leaders in the church well understood these priorities. In Acts 6, they faced a potentially divisive issue when some elderly ladies in the church were being overlooked when it came to food distribution. Rather than ignoring the issue, let alone regarding it as unimportant, the apostles delegated the responsibility to others in order to focus on their priority, which was to give their “attention to prayer and the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4). We read on, in verse 7, that as a result “the word of God spread (and) the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly.”

Our church at the leadership level has been recently engaged in some serious soul-searching. Perhaps the challenge is as simple as this: to reestablish these two priorities of prayer and scripture. It will mean coming together to pray as a church in order to intercede for its ministries, attending home groups and Bible studies and taking every opportunity to listen to biblical teaching and preaching.

Life is a journey. We want our ‘plane’ to reach its destination, and this will take time. But every journey has a starting place and a starting time. Here and now is good time to start.

**Michael Bowerman**