

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

THE FAMILY NEWS

George Town Charge

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Photo Credit: Nancy Watler

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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

Editorial: "Covering" Our Children

During two recent services at Elmslie, youth minister **Roy McGregor** spoke to the congregation about the importance of "covering" our children. He stressed the need for us to seek God's protection both of our own children and those who came to the various ministries of the church, such as Sunday school, youth group and the Girls' Brigade.

Young people today face unprecedented pressures. While throughout history there has always been pressure from their peers and from their desire to conform to the ways of the world, modern life with its social media and improved technology has added to this. Further, the increasing breakdown of family life, the emphasis on freedom with its "I'm OK; you're OK" philosophy and the questioning of authority and the discipline which goes with it, all add to the increasing pressures both on them and on those who are their parents, teachers and youth leaders.

How do we as the church provide a cover for our children? Here are some suggestions.

We need to *notice* them. We must welcome them and treat them as those who are important. This means speaking to them in church in the same we do the adults, rather than anxiously waiting for the moment they are invited go out to Sunday school.

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Anniversary Celebrations

As most of you know, plans for the Anniversary Celebrations are now in full swing! As mentioned during the Congregational Meeting on 9th January, leading up to the main celebratory events which

are a **Banquet Dinner** at the Lions' Centre and a **special Sunday service** at Elmslie (29th and 30th October respectively), several other exciting events, such as a **Fun Run & Walk** and **Fish Fry** (which are planned for the month of April), as well as a special night of music - **Jazz Under the Stars** (in May), **Youth Outreach Weekend** and **International**

Night (in June), **Reunion Sunday** (11th September) and **Seniors Board Games** (in October). Watch this space and social media for more information as plans continue.

Also, remember to send your stories and memories of 'days gone by' for inclusion in the Commemorative Booklet being produced. These may be sent to terri.merren@gmail.com.



Vintage photo of a prayer service at Elmslie for men going off to war.

Letter from Dean Mencius

Dean arrived in Cayman in early 2021, along with his wife, **Ting Lai**, and their son, **William**, during which time Ting has been working as an accountant. In October, they welcomed a second child, **Anni**.

Born and raised in mainland China, Dean moved to the USA to study and it was while in New York he became a Christian. Following his move here, he became a member of Elmslie. He is the first and only Chinese member the church has had.

Last month, he and his wife located to the UK where he will continue his studies at Oxford University.

He sent the following letter to the church.

Dear Elmslie Family,

I am writing to you with mixed emotions as this is my farewell to the church in which I will always hold a special place in my heart. I am moving to the UK with my wife, Ting, and our children, William and Anni, on 6th January and will be going to the University of Oxford to further my studies in Business.

When I arrived in the Cayman Islands and visited Elmslie Memorial United Church in early 2021, I was surrounded by ministry leaders, outstanding executives, exceptionally talented volunteers, amazing children and a church community that embodies what it means to love God, love others, and make disciples. Elmslie Church has



been critical to my family for faith

development. My wife and I, with our son William, have been involved in various church activities and events, including Sunday morning service, Sunday school, Bible study and Youth International Night. We are extraordinarily grateful for all your encouragement and for the opportunity to grow.

Prior to Elmslie, I had attended worship and Bible classes at Armenian Evangelical Church of New York for two years. I came from an atheistic family in China. But I knew even when I was raised far from the Christian faith that God was revealing himself and guiding me to follow Him.

I was baptized in First Baptist Church in the City of New York before my graduation from New York University in 2018. I started my faith journey with Bridges International, a Christian organization run by Cru for international students in the US and abroad. Through learning and volunteering, I went on to evangelise students who did not know Christ.

I discovered how to be sure I am a Christian and what it really means to “believe in the Gospel.” I also realized that personal Bible study is important and that lives could change dramatically when Christian fellowship and ministry are carried out together.

Elmslie is a milestone in my faith journey for this was my first church membership. I am extremely thankful to **Rev. Chris Mason** for accepting me into full fellowship of the church. Again and again, I was impressed not only by his loving and compassionate character and wisdom but also by his humility and his desire to help spiritual seekers investigate the outrageous claims of Jesus. I am grateful to **Roy McGregor** who was kindly asking his friends for any job leads to support me professionally, to **Suzanne Livingston** who taught children including William in Sunday school so as to deepen their understanding of Christianity and morality and to **Antonio Sanchez** who warmly delivered delicious Cuban cuisine to the China table on International Night! I appreciate **Michael Bowerman** for inviting me to lunch

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Alden is Knighted

We congratulate **Sir Alden McLaughlin**, past Premier, on receiving a knighthood from Her Majesty, the Queen in the New Year’s Honours. He is only the second Caymanian to have received this distinction after **Sir Vassell Johnson** in 1994. Sir Vassell was a member of South Sound Church at the time. Sir Alden is the brother of Elmslie elder, **Liz McLaughlin**, and **Debra McLaughlin**, Director of the Cayman Prep and High School.



Quotable Quotes about Truth

“Christianity is first and foremost about truth, not about feelings and experiences” (Anon).

“Truth is by definition exclusive. It is possible for all religions to be wrong. It is not possible for all religions to be right” (**Ravi Zacharias**).

“All truth is God’s truth” (Anon).

“The most powerful weapon in the world is not the bomb but truth” (**Andrei Sakharov**, designer of the nuclear bomb).

“Political correctness is a tool for blocking the truth” (**Jack Popjes**).

“The truth is hate to those who hate the truth” (**Mary Stachowicz** who was murdered for questioning the lifestyle of a homosexual).

“We no longer ask, ‘Is it true? Is it right?’ Instead, we ask, ‘Does it please me? Does it work for me? Does it suit my purpose?’” (Anon).

“You will know the truth and the truth will set you free” (**Jesus** in John 8:32).

Cover Our Children (Cont'd. from Page 1)

We must *provide* for them by ensuring we have good programmes that they not only enjoy but which teach them the truths of God's Word and will lead them into faith. We need to *pray* for them. Our work among the children and young people is perhaps the most important in the church. So we must pray for them and for the young people's ministry of our church. We should also pray for those in the church who interact with them as teachers and leaders that they will be given the love, the patience, the understanding and the skills to relate well to them. We should pray that all who deal with our children are themselves Spirit-filled, growing in grace, zealous for the Lord and desiring to serve him.

Yes, we must pray for our children's protection - against the physical dangers they may face

in life. But we pray, too, that they will be protected from all the adverse influences that will seek to drive them away from who and what God wants them to be. We pray that the world won't "squeeze them into its mould", to quote JB Phillips' wording of Romans 12:2. Most importantly, we should pray that they will come to know Christ as their Saviour and Lord. There is no greater protection than Jesus. By entering into a personal relationship with him and then learning to trust him, God's people - young and old - will be able to walk through life experiencing God's help and protection. Paul tells us in

Ephesians 6 that "*we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places* (v. 12 NLT). Our children are facing these. That's why we must pray for them. But it is important to teach them to pray, too, and so call on the protective name of the Lord when they feel the pressures and when they are tempted.

Let us be very serious about our children. Let us do our part in covering them in these dark and difficult days in which we and they live.

Baby News



Congratulations to **John Henry & Judy Ebanks** on the birth of their grandson **Guy Harold Brook** on 19th January. Parents are **Colin & Lauren Brook**.

Keswick 2022



All meeting Sunday evenings: 6:00—7:30 p.m.

Feb 6 @ Cayman Islands Baptist Church

Mar 6 @ First Baptist Church

Apr 3 @ First Baptist Church

May 1 @ Cayman Islands Baptist Church

Jun 5 @ Church of God Chapel GT

SPEAKERS:

Torrance Bobb (First Assembly of God)

Jonathan Lamb (Guest Speaker, Keswick Ministries UK)

Winston Rose (Church of God Chapel BT)

Steve Brady (First Baptist Church)

Donovan Myers (John Gray Memorial Church)

www.facebook.com/caymankeswick

The interchurch Keswick Convention is restarting after a COVID lull, with the first meeting of the year being on Sunday, February 6th, beginning at 6pm. This will be held at the Cayman Islands Baptist Church, the speaker being **Pastor Torrance Bobb** of First Assembly of God.

Elmslie Church will be responsible for the worship time and for providing refreshments.

Training for Lay Leaders



UCJCI Lay Training Institute
TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS 2022
Offered in collaboration with The International University of the Caribbean

MODULE 1 BEGINS 12TH FEBRUARY 2022

ORIENTATION 29TH JANUARY 2022
Register now through your Regional Mission Council office.

Training Features:
Weekend and Weekday Classes
Saturdays 9am - 3pm
Thursdays 6pm - 8pm
(2nd & 4th Saturdays and Thursday in the immediate week following)
Combination of Learning in Virtual Classrooms via Zoom and in Learners' own time

For more information: nemc@ucjci.com, cirmc.info@gmail.com, wrmc01@yahoo.com or smic@ucjci.com

Special February Birthdays
Happy Birthday to
Sofia Tobutt - 50 on the 1st
Aileen Macdonald - 100 on the 23rd

Congregational Meetings

Elmslie will be having a congregational meeting immediately after church on February 13th. At this meeting, new and continuing elders will be chosen. The meeting at SSUC will be announced later.

This programme will resume shortly. It is designed for all members of the United Church who are interested in being trained for service in the church. However, all prospective and new elders are required to undergo this training. Orientation will be held on Saturday, 29th January, via ZOOM with the first session on Saturday, 12th February.

We congratulate elders **Liz McLaughlin** and **Nigel Boothe** on graduating from the first module, two of 15 throughout the Council.

Further information can be obtained from **Rev. Otto Menko** at 947-1963 or by email cirmc.info@gmail.com.

"A Dollar a Day" for Mt. Olivet Boys Home



Many will remember the late **Mrs. Olive Miller** standing up in church at the beginning of each year, encouraging the congregation to give "a dollar a day" towards the MOBH Feeding Programme.

Elmslie has been a longtime supporter of the United Church's boys home, situated in the hills of Manchester, Jamaica, with finances, frequent visits and its prayers. Mount Olivet is home to 45 boys and, currently, **Phillip (Slim) Vassell** serves on its board. The home is facing enormous challenges, and our ongoing support is very important.

It is time, once again, to make an appeal for this project. Please support it by placing your donation in the envelope provided at each door or by giving it in to the office. This can be done as a lump sum of \$365, or in monthly increments of \$30 – or in what ever way you find easiest.

Condolences

Our deepest sympathy to **Isolyn Facey** on the passing of her husband, **Percival (Mr. P)** on the 13th December.

We also extend our condolences to **Gary Lindsay** whose mother **Edna** died in England on the 18th of December. May God comfort you in this time of bereavement.

Cards for Zaine



These Sunday School children were so moved by the news of **Ms. Shelley's** passing that they put their little hearts into making these cards to comfort her son, **Zaine**.

Letter (Cont'd. from Pg. 2)

and to share my testimony, **Nicky Godfrey** and **Terri Merren** for the affable talks we had during the Sunday morning service, and **Betty Ann Mobley** and **William Walmsley** for involving me in the Global Missions Committee. Also, I'd like to thank the church members who sent messages at the time of our baby girl **Anni's** birth three months ago.

Looking forward, as you are going to celebrate 100 years since the building of Elmslie's sanctuary, I am filled with hope and optimism, knowing that Elmslie Memorial United Church is positioned for, hopefully, another 100 years.

For myself, the academic and professional advancements ahead will be full of new opportunities and challenges, all of which I am excited about, especially knowing that God plans to give us a hope and a future. And if God has called you to make a change in your life, act on it right away. These moments renew us and keep our eyes fixed on Christ.

Lastly, I want to say that it has been my distinct pleasure and good fortune to be part of Elmslie. The Mencijs family wish all of you a prosperous New Year 2022.

Love in Christ,
Dean Mencijs

Shelley Myles-Guardado



Our sincerest condolences to the family of **Shelley Myles-Guardado** who passed away on Saturday, 8th January, and whose funeral was held on Saturday, 22nd January. Shelley is pictured here with her daughter, **Zoe**, mother **Charlene** and son, **Zaine**. Shelley was an active member of Elmslie Church for most of her life and will be tremendously missed by its congregation.