

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

THE FAMILY NEWS

George Town Charge

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9:00am

Suzanne Rejoins the Elders' Board

Suzanne Livingston was first appointed to the Elmslie Congregational Board of Elders on the 1st January 2012. She served continuously until December 2018 and was re-elected to the Board in January 2020. Over the past 12 years since attending Elmslie United, Suzanne has served in different areas of Elmslie youth ministries – and most particularly as a Sunday School, and Vacation Bible School teacher. Suzanne has been a member of the leadership team for Elmslie youth ministries groups since 2012 and, more recently, was assigned Sunday School Superintendent – representing Elmslie on the United Church Council's Mission Action Team all-island working group.



Suzanne is grateful to God for her Christian parents who instilled in her from birth that "God must be worshipped. You must give your talents actively, daily back to Him." Suzanne says she never knew a Sunday in her early years up to her late teens when she was not at Sunday School and church, playing a very active role. She says, "I cannot recall when I learned most Bible verses because they were learned at such a very young age. Being a member of the Body of Christ has real meaning for me." Her parents are Baptists; her

mother, **Mabel**, is still, at 89 years of age, an active member of the Church she has attended from birth, her father having died in 2004.

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A Farewell Message from Tom Mason

After fourteen years living on Grand Cayman where he has worked as general manager of the Comfort Suites, **Tom** and his wife **Terry** returned to Canada on the chartered flight of 22nd May. During his time here, he became a Christian, joined, first Elmslie, and then South Sound United, and latterly became a lay pastor in the United Church. During this time, too, he pursued theological studies through a Presbyterian seminary in Canada. He has left us a message: "Terry and I would like to thank **Rev. Chris (Mason)** and everyone in the George Town Charge whom we have met and who have offered us so much kindness, encouragement and support over the last 14 years.

Our journey has been a great joy and blessing, from my first visit to Elmslie by myself, where I was greeted with true Christian kindness by **Miss Selma (Eden)** and **Miss Gracie (Hurst)**, to both of us being baptised at Elmslie by **Rev. Dave (Hazle)**, attending worship

and Bible classes and home group and also serving and being a member at South Sound as the mission coordinator, elder and lay pastor. It has been a journey of both wonder and transformation for us which



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Covid-19 Round the World

We have a number of friends in different parts of the world whom we support and for whom we pray as a church. Several have been in touch and let us know of some of the implications of the virus where they live.

Nyoman Sumaryana (pictured right) is in Bali, Indonesia, where he pastors a small church. He writes, "Bali really depends on tourism, so when corona shut down the tourism sector, most Balinese have great hunger. So we have bought many bags of rice and are distributing it in the community. By God's will, this week we plan to share with HIV people as most of them have self-isolated to avoid further infection."



Walford Thompson (pictured left) and his wife **Jen** live and minister in their home island of St. Vincent. He recently wrote, "We are approaching the fifth anniversary of AVCA (the church they started), and God has graciously grown his church and has made it possible for us to purchase our own building. We are acquiring this property at 50% of its appraised value. We hope to occupy in June, following some necessary renovations." He added that in January, Project Home by Home completed house #33 in Fontamara, Haiti.

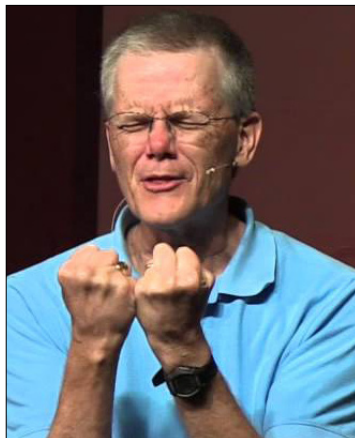
Among the prayer requests was the need for funds for renovating the new building. "We know that God is able to meet all our needs, even in a time such as this – dealing with the effects of Covid-19."

From Florida, **Pastor Bresile St Germain** (pictured right, 2nd from top) writes, "God is talking to the world, to draw their attention to him, the Creator. He is speaking to everyone – to the church and unchurched people - to wake us up because Jesus is coming back soon. He wants us to be ready for his coming. We are using this time to pray, asking that more people will



be saved for his kingdom and believers be encouraged to live obedient lives for the Lord. We ask our God for his protection in this time of crisis. Let us pray for each other. We know our God is in control; nothing can arrive without his permission (Lamentations 3:37-38)."

Chip Kirk (pictured below, left) writes that Covid-19 reminded him that:



- Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
- The media feeds on and exacerbates bad news.
- Sheep panic easily, and herd mentality is frightening and perilous.
- God has not promised to take care of our retirement portfolio, but He has promised to take care of his children. What really matters, then, is how much I trust Jesus (Matthew 6).
- Jesus' followers have reason to rejoice through it all because after all has been said and done Jesus is still Lord and neither the coronavirus nor anything else will ever change that.

He wrote that OM USA's office had shut down and all staff are working remotely. All of his personal meetings and ministry have been cancelled and thus he is working from home and involved in virtual meetings where possible.

OM's ship ministry, Logos Hope, has closed its doors to the public. The ship has remained docked in Kingston, Jamaica, with the crew and workers unable to disembark.



Joan Page Bain (pictured left with **Allemand**) continues to visit the clinic where she works. She reports that there have not been a lot of cases of Covid-19 but schools are closed – her husband Allemand is a head - although their church meets, albeit observing social distancing.

Farewell to Terry Mason from the SSU Ladies Group

By Jennifer Smith

Everything is for a time! After fourteen years living in the Cayman Islands, Lay Pastor **Tom Mason** and his wife **Terry** returned to their homeland of Canada on 22nd May. This article from the SSU Ladies Bible Study Group of which Terry was the founder is dedicated to her. The group has grown from strength to strength and is one of the many endeavours we can ascribe to Terry. It is now time to say, "au revoir"; it is not "goodbye."



The group meets weekly and the original aim was to read and discuss passages from the Bible as well as religious literature or any texts deemed interesting and relevant enough to share with the group and help with our spiritual growth. The meetings were often aptly referred to as 'therapy sessions' as the times spent together and discussions could only be described as uplifting and invigorating. The numbers grew and the meetings evolved into coffee mornings, weekly lunches at EBT, Fresh or other restaurants over the Island, birthday celebrations and, of course, the much anticipated Christmas luncheons. The shared joy and laughter will certainly live on.

Terry's caring was not just for South Sound church. It extended to many endeavours at Elmslie where she was heavily involved with the Pantry Ministry and, especially at Christmas time, with organising the Soup Kitchen Christmas party, making sure that each of us ladies was included in that blessing of contributing something - cheese cake, cornbread, roast beef, cole slaw, water, sodas, fruit punch - just about everything. She had her well planned list ready for each of us each year and we were all happy to contribute.

As **Sheila Johnson** reminds us, Terry, in addition to starting our Ladies Bible Group, also organised our Christmas luncheon and gift exchange. **Valerie** adds, "An abiding memory will be Terry's enthusiasm for our Restaurant Month lunches organised by **Rachael**." "It will be hard to forget Terry's deep bubbly laugh and head toss during our get-togethers," **Susan** points out.

Back at South Sound, **Emma** reminds us that Terry was the one responsible for our first efforts at organising our Congregational Care Groups which are now running from strength to strength under Sheila's efforts. Terry also tried to get the

Women's Fellowship up and running but that fizzled out, **Diana** reminds us.

Terry's boundless energy was indeed an inspiration to many and the SSU Ladies Group will not be short of memories of happy times with her. But there was another side to Terry. She admitted to being conscious of becoming a lay pastor's wife and what that demanded of her so started formal studies of her own to deepen her understanding of her faith. This was admirable.

Terry and Tom left on the Canadian charter flight along with 75 to 80 other people and 35 dogs in the cabin! She was asked how she felt about leaving. "My feelings are up and down," she said, "and I will certainly miss everyone, especially my church family, but I am excited to see and be with my sister and elderly dad again." She added, "I am looking forward to being at home where many projects await - after quarantine!"

We will all miss you, Terry, and wish you good health and God's richest blessings as you move on to a new chapter in your life.

Suzanne Livingston (Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

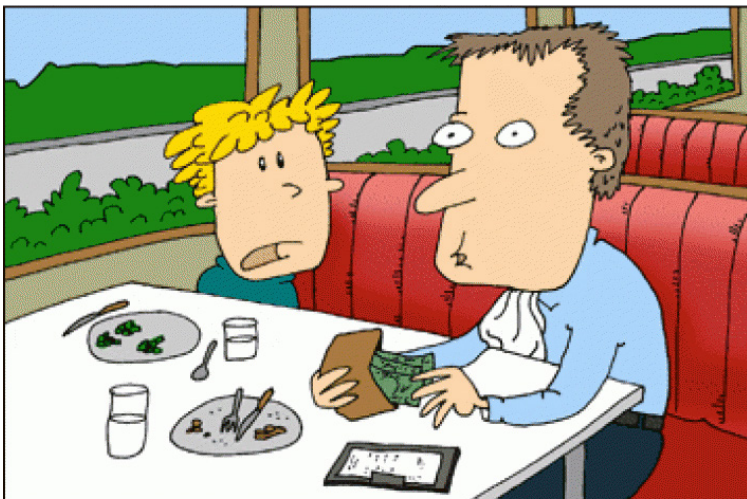
Suzanne attended a Closed Brethren Church up to her late teens, at which time she accepted Jesus Christ as Lord of her life and was baptized at age 16. She attended a Roman Catholic All Girls High School for seven years where, she says, she learned the importance of

spending time in prayer and in God's presence. "All persons in these places were instrumental in moulding my dedication to Christ," she adds.

When asked about her vision for the Church, Suzanne responded, "My prayer is that we all be consumed with the Christ-established and non-negotiable mission of the church. We are to make disciples for Christ, proclaim the gospel so as to lead sinners to a saving faith in Christ, and nurture them to spiritual maturity in Christ. There is room for each Christian to find some way to contribute steadfastly to this mission."

Suzanne encourages us all to be resolute in our commitment - even in the face of discouragement and shared this: "Once a troubled youth told a youth worker, 'I am only here because my parents sent me. I don't have to listen.' The youth worker replied, "See, you're wrong again. You are here, hearing God's Word, only by his grace and goodness. I am here, speaking to you by his command." Suzanne feels very much that she is where she is "by God's command."

Let us keep Suzanne, as well as the other elders, in our prayers.



HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?

Tom Mason Message (Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

has led us on a very different pathway than we would ever have expected.

We have been allowed to share in so many things through our church and the people who have let us into their lives - the real relationship blessing and gift of Christ. I will always treasure the leadership group at South Sound, the mission trips, visits to Synod in Jamaica and the Council meetings that I was allowed to be a part of, the discussions and example of many of the men at Elmslie and South Sound through their Christian witness, all of which have helped shape and define my Christian life and its values.

The gift of faith has indeed been the most valuable gift that we could ever have received.

We leave the charge with a sense of sadness but also with one of assurance that this is the call on our lives at this time. The apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:28, 'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.'

Our hearts are filled with gratitude towards our God and the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, which has become such a big part of lives. We continue to pray, thank and wish nothing but the best to all of the amazing pastors, administrators, elders, the Council and all of the congregations that make up this body that we have come to know and have shared with in worship, communion and through the preaching and sharing of the Word of God throughout the island.

South Sound United and Elmslie will remain with us, always in our hearts, and we look forward to worshipping our God again with you all when we return to visit our son **Kyle** who continues to live and work in this amazing and beautiful island, and also to do so online.

On our return to Canada, I plan to complete my almost seven year quest of study and to pass my Master's Degree in Divinity in September when I return to Knox College, University of Toronto. It is with prayerful hope and much contemplation that this might lead to a pathway to serve as an ordained minister, wherever there may be a call and a need.

Until that time, both Terry and I leave you with this farewell:

'By God's amazing grace, we are the body of Christ. And because of that, let us go into the world in peace and courage, holding to the good, honouring all of God's children, loving and serving the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forever. Amen'

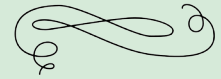
Love always, Terry and Tom"

Farewells

Tuesday, May 19th, proved to be a day of farewells to people known to many of us here in Cayman. We convey our sympathy and offer our prayers to their families.



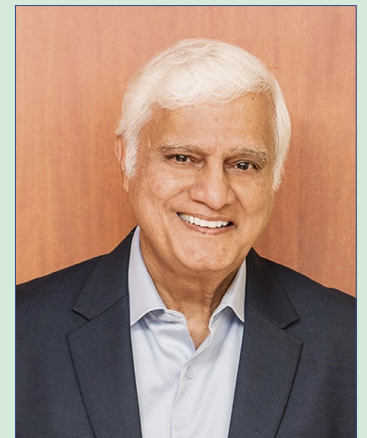
Olive Miller ("Miss Olive") was one of the most recognizable and best known members of the Cayman community, having lived here for most of the past seventy-five years, and a member at Elmslie during these years. She was 98. Special sympathy goes to **Kathryn** and to the rest of the family. More will be written on Miss Olive in the next edition of The Family News.



Ravi Zacharias, internationally known preacher and apologist, frequently heard on radio, and president of RZIM, died in at his home in Atlanta, Georgia. He was 74. He visited Cayman twice, in 1998 and 2014, as the Cayman Keswick speaker.



Ann Naylor Young was the wife of **Don Young** who was a part of Elmslie, together with his first wife, **Sylvia**, during the 1980s and 1990s. Ann lived with Don in Wareham on the south coast of England.



Special June Anniversary

Happy Wedding Anniversary to
Ann and Louis Sully
who will celebrate 20 years of
marriage of 10th June.



Special June Birthdays

Happy Birthday to
Riley Corbin - 16 on the 9th
Gregory Merren - 60 on the 16th

