

THE FAMILY NEWS

George Town Charge

Volume 200, January 2022



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Rev. L. Christopher Mason

Music & Worship Minister:

Antonio Sanchez

Youth Minister:

Roy McGregor

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Bethesda Counselling Website:

www.bethesdacounselling.ky

Service Times:

Sundays
Elmslie Memorial United
10:30am
Prayer Service last Sunday of each month 6:30pm

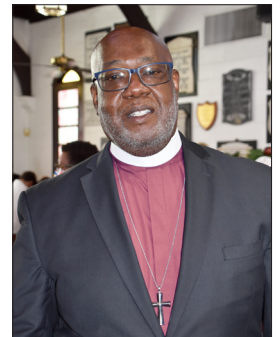
South Sound United
44 South Sound Road
9:00am

From the Pastor's Desk A New Year, A New Start

Amazingly, it's that time again. A new year is approaching right on schedule again. This is the time of year so many of us start making resolutions to change a certain area, or multiple areas, in our lives. Maybe we have some extra pounds to shed. We might be committed to changing a specific, harmful behaviour. New Year's resolutions range from simple desires to seemingly foolproof plans for an extensive life change. What we all have in common is the hope that something will change and life will be different - and better - in the year ahead.

Every year, people ring in the New Year with goals by which to live differently. However, a few short weeks later, many of these very same 'hopefuls' up discouraged and filled with shame and remorse over their failed attempts to make their resolutions come to pass. Who knows? This may be the second, third, fourth, or 15th year they have tried to "kick the habit." After so many misguided attempts, why would they even want to try again? That's a good question. First consider a few additional questions.

- What if the local birds that have migrated to some faraway place just decided not to return?



Continued on Page 4

200th Edition of Family News

This Family News is the 200th edition. A new format was devised in April 2007. Apart from during a couple of summers, one has been issued monthly since that time.

Featured in the first newly formatted edition was the visit of **Rev. Dave Hazle**, with his wife **Maureen**, with a view to becoming minister of the charge. Interim-minister at the time was **Rev. Randolph Turner**. It also recorded a workshop on stewardship led by **Rev. Oliver Daley**. The newsletter also laid out a comprehensive elders' board reorganization proposal. The month's ministry focus was on the men's monthly breakfast and Bible study, organized then – and still – by **Nicky Godfrey**. It also advertised the services of the "Get Out of Debt" ministry which is still headed by **Richard Coles**. There was a spotlight on youth, with the youth worker, **Ann Sully**, advising of plans to offer training sessions under the title, "Healing Hurting Kids".

The Family News over the years has featured each elder on their appointment, and in this first edition it focused on **Janilee Clifford** of Robert Young Church (which was part of the George Town Charge back then) and **William Walmsley**. Updated news from both South Sound Church (then known as George Hicks) and Robert Young was featured, and the "Mission Spot" focused on missionaries **Dan and Tina Chen** working in SE Asia and **Sam Rice** in Haiti.

It also gave a brief report on a visit by a mission team composed of **Louis Sully**, **Thomas Myles**, **Phillip Vassell** and **Rodney Webb** to the Mount Olivet Boys' Home. There was also a short article about the church's school, Cayman Prep and High and the appointment of **Bryan Bothwell** as chairman.

THE FAMILY NEWS
United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman
George Town Charge

Volume 200, April 2007

EDITORIAL

Whom do we have for the "Family News"? The old adage "it's not what you know but how you know it" is very true. We are so fortunate to have a group of people who are not only knowledgeable but also willing to share their insights and experiences with us. We are so grateful to have a group of people who are not only knowledgeable but also willing to share their insights and experiences with us.

Prospective Minister Visits

Rev. Dave Hazle and his wife, Maureen, visited the church from Jamaica in the week of February. Upon their preaching at evening prayer on Sunday, 27th, they were warmly received and, with the combined efforts of the church members, they were able to hold a service on Sunday, 28th. There were also opportunities for members to meet with them in a separate, more intimate setting on Monday, 29th. The church members were very pleased to have them and we are sure that they will be a great asset to the church.

Service Times

Sunday
Elmslie Memorial United
10:30 am & 6:30 pm
108 Seafarers Way, George Town
Grand Cayman

Robert Young Memorial United Church
10:30 am
108 Seafarers Way, George Town
Grand Cayman

Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
9:00 am - 3:00 pm
Phone: 345-949-7923
Fax: 345-949-7722
Email: elmslie@candw.ky

Web Site
www.unitedchurch.org.ky

Our Mission Statement
Our purpose is to evangelize, nurture, and equip the church to witness to the world. We are committed to the growth and development of the church in the Caribbean and to the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

SSUC Baby News



Lila Christie Munro born 6th December to **Claire & Alastair Munro**. Claire is the daughter of **Valerie & Peter Anderson**.



Sovereign Aurora Smith born 9th December to **Craig & Olivia Smith** is the granddaughter of **Gerald & Jennifer Smith**.



Baby boy **Zaire Nathan Greed** born to South Sound United congregant, **Ann Greed**, on 12th November, in Miami.

SSUC Christmas Programme

Elder **Jennifer Smith** sent in her reflections on South Sound's Christmas programme: Not to be deterred by the restrictions brought on by COVID, the SSUC Sunday school teachers, **Valerie Anderson** and **Nadine Gray**, along with their IT team, gambled and won - BIG TIME - with the annual Sunday School Christmas programme. In past years, the January edition of the Family News has been filled with beautiful pictures of children performing, acting out the old but ever new story - the Christmas story. For pictures of SSUC this year, please turn to the ZOOM edition from which you can get still pictures as the pre-recorded video programme was sent out to all congregants.

The decree was sent out: controlled gatherings, wear masks in public places, sanitize often. This saw a large reduction in the numbers attending church each Sunday morning. Even worse, there was no Sunday School being held at church! However, lessons were sent home and parents returned pictures of their kids doing Sunday School exercises as Nadine and Valerie continued their efforts to keep the Sunday School alive and the children involved in church. With such Government restrictions in place, there was little opportunity to meet with and organize the kids in one place in order to pull together a Sunday school programme. What's a Sunday School teacher to do? Valerie and Nadine pondered these things in their hearts. Christmas wouldn't be the same for SSUC if there was no children's production. An idea struck! Through their use of technology, Valerie and Nadine rallied the children - and parents - and with great help from **Antonio** and the technical team of **Bradley, Bud** and **Juliet**, they produced a most enjoyable and entertaining traditional Christmas play.

All the Sunday school children were involved: from the tiniest babies - with the help of their parents' voices - to the older teens, speaking, reading, acting, scripture reading and singing. As the SS teachers admitted, the parents were inundated with e-mails but the kids all rose to the occasion despite the myriad of things going on in the life of their families.

Valerie and Nadine admitted they really missed seeing the children and were truly happy to see every one of them participating. "It was a joy and blessing to see so many of our children and youth whom we hadn't been seeing for so many Sundays," said Nadine. The two of them had pulled together lots of stuff and simply dumped it on Antonio and his team, they stated. Huge thanks to Antonio - who was being pulled left, right and centre for his expertise. South Sound could not have done it alone. It does not have the equipment nor the dedicated IT personnel and, as published in the Congregational Report for 2021, Property Manager Bradley is looking into how best to upgrade equipment and provide live-streaming services other than ZOOM in the near future.

Much gratitude and delight was expressed after service and the following from Juliet very aptly sums them all up: "It was wonderful and heart-warming to see so many of our children participating, and to just see them again after several months of absence from church. I know how much work goes into a regular children's Christmas programme, but this year it was so much more challenging with the video production, different equipment needs and pulling everything together so that it flowed seamlessly for those watching at church as well as remotely." The entire morning's service was devoted to the video with a few



Mark Frye presented gifts on behalf of the congregation to Sunday School teachers **Valerie** and **Nadine**.



Youth Minister **Roy** received a gift on behalf of **Antonio**

breaks for the choir to sing a well-received calypso lullaby, and the congregation two carols. Numbers in church and watching on ZOOM also went up considerably in comparison with other ZOOM morning services. Youth Minister **Roy** wrapped up the service with a very beautiful prayer and **Rev. Chris** thanked the Sunday School staff, Nadine and Valerie (who is now free to enjoy her grandbabies), as well as Antonio and the IT team, children, parents and the choir. He gave thanks for the offering and closed with the benediction.

Many thanks to everyone involved in this wonderful and memorable Children's Christmas Service video and to God be the glory always.

Has God Answered Your Prayers?

We often speak of God as the One who answers the prayers of his people, sometimes in remarkable ways. We are inviting our readers to submit a personal answer to prayer they may have had that might be an encouragement to others. Please keep it fairly short. We will publish those we receive in forthcoming issues of The Family News. Please submit them to bowerman@candw.ky no later than the 15th of the month.

Letter from Joan Page Bain

Joan Page Bain has written to Elmslie and South Sound:

"Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take him at his word, just to rest upon his promise, just to know thus saith the Lord".

My first year of retirement did not go as planned or as I thought it would but God has led me all the way and it has been good. On the 30th June 2020, I said thanks and goodbye to my staff at the Guichard dispensary as the director of the facility.

After a month, I left Haiti for Jamaica to do my medicals and carry out other formalities. I spent five months in Jamaica, during which time I took on a few speaking engagements but, because of the Covid pandemic, these were limited.



On my return to Haiti in February, I did not go back to the clinic to do cancer screening as previously planned, again due to Covid restrictions. My time was spent at home, engaging and preparing for the distribution of food packages and helping with the women's fellowship in my local church.

In June, as you all may have heard, we lost our president to a gruesome act of violence and, as such, we are still without one.

On August 14th 2021, at 8:30 a.m., disaster struck! Haiti was again left devastated, this time by an earthquake, which especially affected the five districts in the south of the country.

Many lives and properties were lost. Emotions, minds and spirits were challenged, and questions were asked regarding God's judgement on a country that is already so deprived. Or was it a sign of God's return?

Many tried to answer that question but we continued to trust the Father, our God who has the whole world in His hands. We were encouraged by those who sent funds and gifts to help. We got busy preparing love packages and tarps for distribution to individuals and churches.

A clinic was conducted in one church that we visited and the community was very appreciative.

Allemand continues to teach face-to-face at school amidst the various challenges which include gas shortages, strikes and the absence of teachers. He also preaches and conducts Bible studies at the local church, and he also preaches in other churches when invited.

Jiréné has done very well in college and is now teaching Spanish and French at Knox High School.

I am in Jamaica at this time, making my regular visits to the doctor and taking care of other important business. My plan is to return to Haiti as soon as possible to assist Allemand and to help in the reconstruction of lives and the livelihood of those we can help spiritually, emotionally and physically – and, of course, with their properties.

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year as we continue to negotiate the pandemic. Thank you for your love, prayers and support - always in Christ.

Love and prayers, Joan and family

Elmslie Anniversary Celebrations

The Planning Committee is pleased to announce that, in the coming months, commencing January, many events will be held commemorating 100 years since the building of Elmslie's sanctuary and 175 years of the ministry of the church!

The main celebratory events will include a banquet dinner followed by a special Sunday service to be held at Elmslie.

You do not want to miss this significant occasion in the life of our church so be on the lookout for further announcements in the coming weeks detailing the events and the dates thereof!



Special January Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations **Olsie & Neals Godfrey** on 55 years of marriage as of 31st of January!

Tithes and Offering

At the Elmslie congregational meeting on Sunday, 12th December, we received an update from our treasurer on the church accounts up to 31st October. The fact that our monthly freewill offering has dropped off significantly in October and November was one of the points that particularly stood out. The fall in offering is most likely attributable to the reduction in numbers attending Sunday morning service since September. While we have been able to meet our expenses so far, we will not be able to do so at current levels as we go into 2022.

Our treasurer is currently working on the budget for next year. It will be based on the presumption that our offering levels will return to at least the levels we saw earlier this year. It is going to be important that those persons who are not attending church in person consider how they can continue to give their tithes and offerings. The finance team has previously made the following suggestions:

1. Direct online transfer to the church's bank accounts. The account details are included below
2. Ask another person who is attending service to put your envelopes in the offering
3. Mail a cheque payable to the church to P.O. Box 494, George Town, Grand Cayman KY1-1106
4. Deliver your offering to the church office
5. Call **Janet** or one of the elders to arrange to pick up your offering
6. Set aside your weekly or monthly offering until such times as you next attend church in person

We appreciate that these are difficult times financially for many people but in order to avoid a deficit this year and next we are asking those of you that are able to continue to give even if you are not present in person on Sunday morning.

Bank accounts details as follows:-

Cayman National Bank

KYD Current Account # 011-06468

USD Current Account # 021-06954

Pastor's Desk (Cont'd from Pg. 1)

- What if the flowers just gave up blooming?
- What if the sun chose to hide behind the clouds all summer long?
- Worse yet: what if Christ had not come to earth as a baby or hadn't risen from the dead?

I don't know about you, but I love fragrant flowers! Sweet singing birds are nice and, oh how I love that summer sun smiling down on me! But the thought of Christ not defeating death is downright terrifying. Without his resurrection power, we really would have no hope for a permanent life change.

However, He **was** born. He died. And he most definitely rose again.

That means this year, this month, today, or even this moment, is filled with hope for a better future - in Him. We don't have to be white-knuckled anymore. Whatever your "it" might be, you too can turn from your sin, and release it into the capable hands of the ultimate life-changer.

When we desire change, we have the perfect example to follow: *Jesus Christ*. When we are ready to implement change, we have the perfect guidebook: *His Word*. Finally, we have the perfect companion to strengthen our resolve: *His Spirit*.

As we pursue change God's way, hope for a better future is no longer a dream; it becomes our reality. We truly can experience freedom in our lives today, tomorrow, and forever. With Christ, we don't have to wait for another New Year to roll around, or for the big glittery ball to drop in Times Square. His mercy is new every morning. We can pursue our own new beginning right now.

FREEDOM is an acronym that will assist you as you start your new journey. It describes our relationship with a loving, redeeming God, one in which we will find the freedom we so desperately yearn for.

Follow him forward: *"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus..."* (Romans 15:5).

Repent readily: *"But if they repent of their wicked lives, I will think twice and start over with them"* (Jeremiah 18:9, MSG).

Earnestly pray: *"Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere"* (Ephesians 6:18, NLT).

Enjoy the journey: *"Then Hannah prayed: 'My heart rejoices in the Lord! Oh, how the Lord has blessed me! Now I have an answer for my enemies, as I delight in your deliverance'"* (1 Samuel 2:1, NLT).

Devour His Word: *"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart"* (Hebrews 4:12).

Open your heart and mind to his truth: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding"* (Proverbs 3:5).

Make new friends and move mountains: *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you"* (Colossians 3:12-13).

As we walk in godly love for one another, by forgiving, encouraging, and helping, we will find the strength to do what one person alone could never, ever accomplish. We need the Spirit's empowerment, and the encouragement we gain from each other.

As we've discovered, change can be challenging, but this New Year, as we journey together down the road to freedom, let's stay focused on the One guiding us - Christ.

Deaths

Our sincerest condolences to **Anthony Bodden** on the recent passing of his sister, and to **Isolyn Facey** who is grieving the loss of her husband.

Special January Birthdays

Happy Birthday to

Bethany Ramoon-Campbell - 50 on the 7th

Clarenton Myles - 65 on the 9th

Effie Johnson - 75 on the 12th

Hartwell & Harwell McField - 50 on the 14th

Lucille McLean - 80 on the 21st

Kayla Powell - 25 on the 22nd

Leonard Ramoon - 55 on the 29th

Shirlene Zelaya - 60 on the 30th

Pringle Home for Children

Sarah Ramkhelawan, mission chair of South Sound United, writes, "The Pringle Home for Children is located in Carron Hall, a small farming community in the hills of western St. Mary, Jamaica. The United Church is responsible for the administration and management of the home, which looks after girls between the ages of 7-18. Some of the adversities encountered by the home this year include not having access to internet which impacted online schooling, older buildings which require repairs and COVID-19 lockdown restrictions which slowed down the supply of essential items. Despite these challenges, the girls remain in good spirits and they are very grateful for our support. **Mrs. Yvonne Davidson**, wife of our last minister, is a member of the Board of Management for the Pringle Home and very involved with its life."

The Pringle Home has been in existence for about 70 years, and SSUC has been one of its primary supporters in recent times.

Quotable Quotes

We will be sharing, this year, a few quotable quotes each month on which to reflect. This month, they will seek to provide encouragement and comfort as we face another year of uncertainty.

"I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be better than a light, and safer than a known way'" (Attributed to **Minnie Haskins**, written in 1908, and quoted by **King George VI** in his Christmas speech at the start of World War 2).

"Courage is conquering fear by faith" (**Unknown**).

"God will comfort us. That is true. But God will, and already does, comfort us through those who accept us as sisters and brothers, bind up our wounds, wipe away our tears, and are kind to us in all circumstances. This is how God comforts us" (**Gerhard Lohfink**).

"You do not know that Jesus Christ is all you need until Jesus Christ is all you've got. When Christ is all you've got, then you realise that Christ is all you need" (**Ron Dunn**).

