



The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

# THE FAMILY NEWS

George Town Charge

Volume 192, May 2021

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

South Sound United  
44 South Sound Road  
9:00am

## Cayman Keswick Starts

Plans have been announced for an 'interim' Keswick over the rest of this year, the annual one usually held in January understandably being cancelled because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Instead of a single location over one week, meetings will be held over five evenings, the first Sundays of May, June, September, October and November. They will be held in five different churches.

There is a line-up of local, experienced pastors and preachers, and they will be preaching at church locations other than their own! Services will be from 6.00 to 7.30 pm.

The schedule, with the speakers and locations, is as follows:

- May 2nd: **Pastor Steve Tillis** of Cayman Islands Baptist, held at the Church of God, Walkers Road
- June 6th: **Pastor Alson Ebanks** of the Church of God, held at First Baptist Church
- September 5th: **Pastor Jason Every** of Sunrise Church, held at Cayman Island Baptist Church
- October 3rd: **Pastor Torrance Bobb** of First Assembly of God, held at Elmslie Memorial Church
- November 7th: **Pastor Steve Brady** of First Baptist Church, held at First Assembly of God

## A New Government

By Mike Bowerman

We have a new government! Whether the outcome of the elections and choice of cabinet pleased or disappointed us, whatever our hopes or fears for the future of our islands, now is a good time to reflect on our duty as Christians towards "the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1).

Much could be said but let me briefly suggest three biblical principles with regard to government.

*First, having a government to run and order society is God's idea.* Proverbs 8:15-16 tells us - God speaking, "By me kings reign and rulers issue decrees that are just; by me princes govern, and nobles - all who rule on earth," and Paul states in Romans 13: 1 that "the authorities that exist have been established by God." It is not only 'good' governance let alone a democratic form which he had in mind. The authorities of Paul's day were both tyrannical and undemocratic! All those who govern are answerable to God and it is he who has ultimate authority. Pilate was reminded of this by Jesus' response in John 19:10-11. "Pilate said, 'Don't you realise I have power either to free you or to crucify you?'"

"Jesus answered, 'You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.'" Government has divine authority because God established it, and God is supremely sovereign.

*Second, we are to "submit to the governing authorities."* (Romans 13:1). Peter says similarly, "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority" (1 Peter 2:13). Notice the words "for the Lord's sake." He is speaking to Christian believers. If government is God's means of ordering society, then we as Christians are responsible to support and obey it. Christians must be model citizens.

This does not mean we may not disagree with policy or decisions, or even like the persons who make up government. It may be necessary to challenge and even protest from time to time. There are sometimes matters when 'Caesar' clashes with our Christian convictions in the legislative or public arena and we may need to speak out or even take action.

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## Youth Service at South Sound United

Youth Sunday was held on 7th March. It had been exactly one year since the last planned youth service had to be cancelled due to a government mandate to close churches as part of Cayman's response to the developing global health crisis.

Fittingly, the children had selected a theme reflecting the worry and anxiety experienced over the last year as the COVID pandemic affected life for us here in Cayman as well as our friends and family around the world. Led by **Megan** and **Gail**, the theme of "Do Not Fear, for I Am with You" was explored through music, scripture, prayer and drama.

**Azharia, Caleigh** and **Victoria** told the story of **Joseph Scriven**. Joseph penned the well know hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" originally as a poem to comfort his ill mother. It reflects the solace and support he personally found in Jesus when he experienced great tragedy in his life. He found that

even in the darkest of storms the peace of Jesus was able to calm his heart.

**Andrew, Aiden** and

**Logan** led prayers, thanking God for his many blessings through the pandemic, asking for his comfort for those suffering and bereaved, and thanking him that we can cast our worries on him because he cares for us. Continuing the time of prayer, the congregation were treated to a return of the South Sound United kitchen band which accompanied them as they sang the Caribbean Lord's Prayer.



Aiden and **Ryan** read Matthew 14:22-32 about Jesus walking on the water and Mark 4:35-41 about Jesus calming the storm, following which **Miss Valerie** and **Miss Nadine** took to the high seas in a cardboard boat as the disciples John and Peter in a skit presentation entitled Peter and Jesus Walk on Water. **Mr Roy** took the role of Jesus. While there are unlikely to be any Oscars handed out, the children and congregation enjoyed the fun-telling of the story!

Mr Roy delivered a reflection on the theme based on the story of Jesus calming the storm. As the service came to an end, all the children, from toddlers to teens, came to the front to sing Be Strong and Courageous. This beautiful song reminds us there is nothing to fear as Jesus holds all his little ones safe by his side. The children held up signs they had made of things that frightened them and flipped them to show Jesus' name as the antidote to their fears. **Stephanie** did a great job managing the overheads, and **Mr Bradshaw** provided wonderful musical accompaniment.



## Neals & Nicky Celebrate Birthdays



Brothers, **Neals** and **Nicky Godfrey**, pictured with **Governor** and **Mrs. Martyn Roper** during their joint birthday celebration at the Lions Center on 20th March.

## Mr. Noel and Prince Philip

Following the passing of HRH, the Duke of Edinburgh, some were recalling the visit of **Her Majesty and Prince Philip** to Cayman in 1994. It was the occasion when **Sir Vassell Johnson** received his knighthood. **Effie Johnson** sent this photo of the Duke speaking to her late husband, **Noel**, a longtime member and elder at Elmslie, and Sir Vassell's brother. Apparently the conversation went like this:

**HRH:** So, when is it your turn to be knighted?

**Noel:** Postmasters don't get knighthood, they get retirement!



## Baptisms at Hog Sty Bay

Saturday, 27th March, saw a large crowd gathered at Hog Sty Bay to witness the baptism of several from South Sound United and Elmslie. After the initial baptism of eleven who had attended baptismal classes, an invitation was issued to any others who wished to be baptised, and a further eight stepped forward. The next day, Palm Sunday, both churches saw the reception of new members.



From left: **Rev. Chris Mason, Jeremy Ebanks, Jageida Sinclair, Shavourne Rolle, Celicea Myles, Harrison Shearer, Rolphie Braggs, Ryan Shearer, Zendaya Allen, Carol Braggs, Zerah Allen, Leoany Williams, Hannah Robinson, Gabriela Webb, Amaury Swaby, Gloria Webb, Mauro Swaby, Susan Whittaker, Aaliyah McLean and Samuel Webb**

## New Members for Elmslie



Pictured above are those who were received into membership at Elmslie on Palm Sunday. (Left to right) **Debra McLaughlin, Zendaya and Zerah Allen, Gabriela and Samuel Webb, Celicea Myles, Gloria Mitchell, Dean Menciuis**. Absent was **Susan Solomon**.

## Volcanic Eruption in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

By **Mike Bowerman**

Following the eruption of the La Soufriere Volcano on the island of St. Vincent in mid-April, various appeals for help have gone out. Special offerings were collected on the last two Sundays of April at all United Churches, with the funds and buying of goods being organized by **Ormond Williams**, himself a Vincentian, through the Regional Council office.

Many have also heard from **Walford Thompson**, whom Elmslie has supported for many years, of the great needs of his island. He writes, "We at the Arnos Vale Covenant Assembly Church have put together a relief and recovery committee, and have selected five evacuation centers where we will focus our relief effort initially. Yesterday, we purchased rice, flour, sugar, peas, bread, chicken and water, and distributed to several shelters that were in urgent need of food. Two of our pastors also conducted devotions at the centres they visited, which was greatly appreciated." He indicates that many, too, are in private shelters, mainly overcrowded homes of poor people who have taken others in, and with few resources, where the situation is equally desperate and they are reaching out to these, too.

He indicates the situation is not likely to end anytime soon. Apart from helping to meet the practical and immediate needs, he has put together a team of trained counsellors, and is also providing spiritual help to the many who have lost everything.

Walford is looking to those in the Caribbean islands whom he has been able to help over many years, both in relief work and through programmes of evangelism and church growth through Ministries in Action, for immediate assistance in this very challenging time.

For those who wish to send funds directly, the preferred way is to send them to the church treasurer, **Bertram Mapp**, through MoneyGram. His address is Warner Hill, Arnos Vale, SVG, and his telephone 784-458-4752. A special relief account has been set up. The amount and transaction number should be sent to Walford's email: [Walford.thompson@gmail.com](mailto:Walford.thompson@gmail.com) or he can be phoned at 784-456-9829 or 305-851-8221. All funds will be used for relief work.

"Since Hurricane Gilbert in 1988," he writes, "the Lord has privileged me to work in relief and recovery efforts following natural disasters in the U.S., across the Caribbean and in Latin America. Now, I work on my home island to bring relief in the name of Christ, for the praise of our glorious Lord. Thank you for your concern, love and interest."

*If anyone would like me to send money on their behalf, please let me have the funds no later than Sunday, May 9th. I will then remit them all the following day.*

## Easter Sunrise Service

An Easter Sunday service was held on the Public Beach, led by **Pastor Alson Ebanks** and **Rev. Louis Sully**, starting at 6 o'clock. About 50 people attended as we were encouraged by Pastor Alson's message: "Christ is risen indeed!"



## Farewell to the Purdoms

After more than 27 years away from their homeland, **Richard & Sheila Purdom** have returned to Britain where they will be closer to their family. In that time, they have been living and working across the Caribbean - Venezuela, Panama, Jamaica and Cayman - and have made outstanding contributions to these countries. Sheila is an educator and before coming to Cayman she was the principal of a private school in Jamaica. Many will remember her as the principal of the High School at Cayman Prep and High for many years, until her retirement.

The Purdoms worshipped at SSUC for many years and contributed to several aspects of church life, serving as leaders of worship, Sunday school teachers, scripture readers and on the choir. They were both deeply involved with and greatly contributed to the weekly Bible Study group. Sheila will be especially remembered for her very inciteful contributions.

Sunday, 18th April, was the Purdoms last Sunday at SSUC. Congregants bade farewell and best wishes to them as they prepared to leave for their new life in the UK. Elder **Clive Hinds** and service leader **Juliet DuFeu**, presented them with a gift during the service and it was obvious that emotions were running high. Sheila later wrote to express their sincere thanks for the gift

- a picture of the SSUC church with the poinciana tree behind in full bloom. She said: "South Sound has meant so very much to us over the years and, in particular, the fellowship and love that we have grown to share within our Bible study group. We will miss you so very much, but will certainly be back."



They will be greatly missed and we wish them all the best in their new life. - **Jennifer Smith**

## SSU Baptisms & New Members

Three congregants from SSUC, (pictured below from left) **Jageida Sinclair**, **Jeremy Ebanks** and **Mary Bouck**, were recently received into membership at the South Sound United Church. Earlier, four persons from SSUC were baptized at the ceremony which was held at Hog Sty Bay during Holy Week. They were **Jeremy Ebanks**, **Jageida Sinclair** and two young brothers **Ryan** and **Harrison Shearer**,



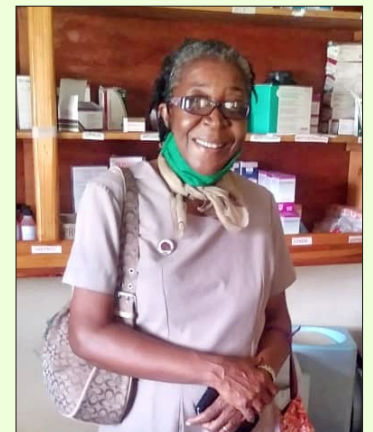
## News from Joan Page Bain

**Joan** has recently been in touch from Haiti. Having formally retired last year, she spent six months in Jamaica, returning to her home and husband in February. She says that she has spent her time settling back in but has resumed her work with the children's club, and she hopes to start another soon. She hasn't visited the Guichard Clinic as yet but plans shortly to go and help with cervical screening.

Meanwhile, **Allemand** continues as principal of a school in the hills but would like to retire as he is approaching 60. However, the government has been reluctant to pay retirement funds so he is holding on for the time being. He is already very involved with the churches in his district as a 'pastor' and would like to give his full time and energy to this.

**Jirene** is completing her final year at college in Jamaica and as yet is uncertain what she will do after finishing.

Please continue to keep Joan and her family in your prayers. Pray especially for guidance for Jirene.



## George Town Charge Synod Recognitions

During the recent Synod, several members or past members of our charge were given special recognition. We offer our congratulations.

**Clive Hinds** was honoured as a lay person for having gone beyond the call of duty and having sacrificed much in contributing to the advancement of the work and witness of the United Church.

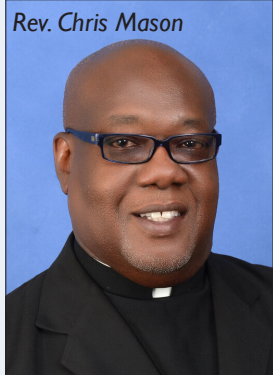
**Rev. Chris Mason** has received the Renewal & Transformation Award for his outstanding achievements in contributing and leading to the advancement of

the Renewal and Transformation Agenda of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands as he has demonstrated at the congregational level significant/ outstanding achievement in two or more areas of the Synodical Implementation Plan for the current Synodic period.

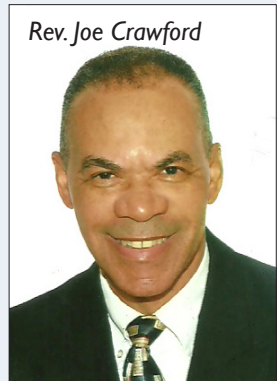
**Rev. Joe Crawford** was recognized for being an ordained minister for fifty years. His first



Clive Hinds



Rev. Chris Mason



Rev. Joe Crawford



Joan Page Bain

charge in 1971 was West Bay which then included the Savannah Church. After spending several years as a pastor in the USA, he became minister of the George Town Charge in January 2001 and served for five years. He continues to live in George Town with his wife **Mopsie** but has been in failing health in recent years.

**Mrs. Joan Page-Bain** commissioned by UCJCI in 1984 to serve as a missionary nurse in Haiti. She served for over 30 years responding to the spiritual and physical needs of the community. She has been self-less in her service to people to the glory of God.



**The Rt. Rev. Gary Harriott** (centre) poses for a moment with the outgoing Moderator, **Rev. Dr. Gordon Cowans** (left) and General Secretary, **Rev. Norbert Stephens** (right)

## Elmslie Youth Service

Special guest at the Elmslie Youth Service on 21st March was **Ray McLeod** who served several years ago as our youth minister. Below, musicians and Elmslie youth perform during the service.



**Special May Birthdays**  
 Happy Birthday to

- ▶ **Denny Hurlstone** - 101 on the 1st
- ▶ **Lorna Reid** - 65 on the 6th
- ▶ **Walling Whittaker** - 60 on the 17th
- ▶ **Zachary Merren** - 25 on the 22nd
- ▶ **Dean Mencius** - 40 on the 31st

## Candidates Service at Elmslie Church



A service for the candidates for the upcoming election, organized by the Regional Council, was held at Elmslie Church in mid-March at which the Chair of Council, **Rev. Rohan Forrester** (pictured above right) spoke. About thirty of the fifty candidates attended and each was presented with either a Bible or Christian devotional book.

## South Sound United Church Jumble Sale

It's Spring! Time to clear out the cupboards, downsize and get rid of stuff! Missions co-ordinator **Sarah Ramkhelawan** with her SSUC team of supporters did just this and all for a very worthy cause. The ladies, all enthusiastic and supportive of this project, raised over \$800, from their jumble sale at the Elmslie Hall on Saturday, April 9th. In addition there was a gracious donation rounding the number up to \$1,000. Despite the fact that there were several other garage sales going on at the same time in and around George Town, many people came and took advantage of the almost give away prices on linen, clothes, shoes, toys, appliances, books, framed pictures and several other items, all in very good condition. The leftovers were taken away to a thrift shop.



This was our first sale and the aim was to raise funds to help the Pringle Girls Home in Jamaica. Some of the ladies had never organized a garage sale before but quickly learned the trade!

A couple of the SSUC ladies were able to invite two customers to worship at South Sound. "Who knew our little sale could also be a mission field for planting seeds?" asked Sarah. She continued, "Although there were a few hiccups, I'm labelling today a huge success. This was our first sale and from this experience we will know how to improve the next time. We have much to be thankful for!"

## New Government (Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

But Peter gives those of us who are Christians clear guidance as to how we address the matters with which we may disagree. Do so, he says, "with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience" (1 Peter 3:15-16). Our attitude and the way we address issues must be Christ-like.

*Third, we are to pray for government.* 1 Timothy 2:1-2 tells us "... that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority." This is not an optional extra for our prayers, and nor can we be selective, in this context, as for whom we pray. He states, "... all those in authority."

One of the important reasons for praying for our government leaders is that many of them will not be praying for themselves as they may not be believers. So we must stand in the gap and ask God for what they may not themselves be asking for their enormously responsible, difficult and consequential task.

What specifically might we pray for them? Most importantly, for God's wisdom. This is not just ability and knowledge, though those, too, are important. It is the ability to legislate good laws and make right decisions, both morally and practically. We need to ask God to also give them integrity, a willingness to work hard and, last but not least, a spirit of humility.

A comment was made following the installation of the new premier: "He (and by implication government) has restored my faith in Cayman." Let us as Christians be reminded, however, that at the end of the day, "some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God" (Psalm 20:7). It is God, not government, on whom we must ultimately depend.