

The United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

THE FAMILY NEWS

Elmslie Memorial Charge

Volume 202, March 2022



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Service Times:

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

Robert Young United
583 Crewe Road
8:45am



Charge Realignment and Its Implications

The Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council meeting held on 16th November 2021 accepted a proposal document on the "Realignment of Charges and the Sustainability of the Ministry of the Council."

The proposal came about because of the stark realities of the COVID pandemic on congregational life and Council finances. It was determined that a new path for the church was necessary, and that that changes had to be made in order to continue with its ministry.

The most significant recommendation was to reduce the number of charges in the Council from five to four.

At the meeting of Council on 22nd January, Council agreed to changes. This followed extensive consultation meetings by the Regional Deputy General Secretary with the church's stakeholders – a total of twenty-six. This included visits to the Elmslie and South Sound congregations.

The new charges will be as follows:

- John Gray Memorial (West Bay) and South Sound United
- Savannah United and Webster Memorial (Bodden Town)
- William Pouchie Memorial (North Side), East End United and Gun Bay United
- Elmslie Memorial will become a one-point charge

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Anniversary Celebrations Launched

The official Launch of Elmslie's Anniversary Celebrations commemorating the building of the church's sanctuary 100 years ago took place on Sunday, 6th February, with a good number of people in attendance.

To kick off the launch, a short history of the church was narrated by **Kimberly Ecclston** in a slideshow which featured vintage photos of the church, followed by the unveiling of the beautiful anniversary logo by one of Elmslie's most senior members, **Nicky Godfrey**, and Elmslie's youngest member, **Zaine Guardado** (pictured right following the unveiling). A few of the events which everyone can look forward to in the coming months were highlighted by **Terri Merren**. These events are also printed on bookmarks which were distributed following the service. **Harriet Vassell** read the scripture and **Rev. Chris Mason** delivered a message on building on a **Sure Foundation**. The morning ended with a short fellowship after the service during which Cayman's traditional Swanky drink prepared by **Evelyn Rockett** was enjoyed by all.



Editorial: Facing the Abortion Issue

Many will be aware that Government has established a Law Reform Commission which has issued a discussion paper entitled "The Penal Code: Is It Compatible with the Bill of Rights?" in which various issues have been proposed for legislative revision.

The matter causing most debate is a proposal to revise legislation regarding abortion rights. The public is being invited to submit comments on this as well as the other issues outlined in the paper. The specific question being asked is, "Should the Penal Code be amended to expand the grounds for legal abortion?" with various of these being stipulated.

This proposal should be of great concern to Christians. However, abortion is an issue about which many who do not have a specifically Christian perspective also have a problem. They see it as a conflict of human rights - the rights of the unborn baby equally with those of the mother.

This is a highly emotive subject, and as Christians we need to be very clear as to how we regard the unborn and how we view abortion. However, we also need to be sensitive and gracious with those who disagree with us.

The fundamental issue has to do with how we view the unborn. There is much debate on when it becomes human, with arguments extending from conception to birth with many, especially among those who advocate for the right to choose, opting for the time the baby would be able to survive outside the womb. Many live in one of two camps; there are those who would advocate for abortion who are referred to as "pro-choice" and those who are opposed, as "pro-life."

This is not the place to enter into detailed discussion on the subject but one or two things should be established. As Christians, we believe in the sanctity of all human life. We believe, with Scripture, that humans are made "in the image

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Elmslie Appoints New Elders and a New Treasurer

Elmslie held a congregational meeting after morning worship on February 13th. **Nigel Boothe** and **Joan McField** were re-elected to the congregational board of elders for a further three years, and **Lorna Reid** and **Colin Wilson** were elected. Thanks were extended to **Astra Christian**

who has stepped down from eldership.

Bernard McGrath

outlined the accounts for the previous year and presented the proposed budget for 2022, both of which were approved by the congregation. After eight years, he was resigning as Elmslie's treasurer. He was warmly thanked by the administrator **Janet**

Macmillan for his tireless work with the church's accounts, and she then presented him with a fruit basket as a token of appreciation. **Linda McField Boddin** who had been serving as auditor was voted in as the new treasurer for which the church expressed its gratitude.



FISH FRY
MARCH 19TH
7am - 11am
ELMSLIE CHURCH HALL
108 Seafarers Way, George Town
\$12 whole fish plate
\$15 fileted fish plate
Elmslie Memorial United Church
100
SANCTUARY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS
1922 2022
Built on Jesus Christ the sure foundation
Tickets available upon request. Walk-ins welcome.
Call 926-2909 or 949-7923 or email elmslie100anniversary@gmail.com to enquire.



Special Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to **Nickerson & Evelyn Godfrey** who will celebrate 63 years of marriage on 27th March. May God bless you with many more happy years together!



Cayman Keswick

2 0 2 2
'All One In Christ'



Sunday 6th March
6pm
First Baptist Church

SPEAKER:

Jonathan Lamb
(Keswick Ministries, UK)

www.facebook.com/caymankeswick

Charge Realignment (Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

Robert Young Memorial on Crewe Road has been declared a mission station of the Elmslie congregation, with its minister as the supervisory minister, and a lay pastor will be assigned to assist.

The newly formed charges have been declared vacant, with interim ministers named to oversee the call of the new ministers in accordance with the constitution. This will not apply to Elmslie, with **Rev. Chris Mason** remaining the minister.

The expectation is that **Rev. Donovan Myers** will be called to John Gray/South Sound, **Rev. Euthman Wray** to the Webster/Savannah Charge and **Rev. Rohan Forrester** to William Pouchie/East End/Gun Bay. The latter will be assisted by a lay pastor.

The new charges will begin functioning as of March 1st with the process of delinking and relinking occurring during that month.

The challenge to the church regarding its finances led Council to agree that congregations and the Church Corporation would be asked to contribute 30% of their 2019 stated income to this year's budget. Due to Elmslie's finances being seriously down at this time, it was not able to accept the increased amount requested and will continue contributing at its current level.

Elmslie congregation is asked to pray about these changes, and especially for the challenge to its finances.

Robert Young Memorial and South Sound United

In the February 2011 edition of *The Family News*, there was a front page article entitled, 'Divorce' and 'Remarriage'? Robert Young joins the Savannah Charge.' It had been on January 23rd of that year that the Robert Young congregation formally ceased to be part of the George Town Charge, which also consisted of Elmslie and South Sound, and realigned with Savannah.

Due to the drop off in membership, it has reverted to being a mission station of Elmslie, with Rev. Chris becoming the supervisory minister, with help continuing to be given by lay pastor, **John Macmillan**.

South Sound United had started life as a mission station of Elmslie but several years ago, as its membership grew, it was recognized as a congregation in its own right, and has been part of the George Town Charge since. Elmslie and SSUC are formally parting ways as a charge as SSUC will be linking with John Gray Memorial, and thus *The Family News* will not in future include its activities. However, with Robert Young now back in a relationship with Elmslie, the newsletter will, going forward, include news of that congregation.

Time for Change at South Sound United

By Jennifer Smith

Everything is for a time, change is inevitable, and after more than forty decades under the umbrella of the George Town Charge with Big Sister Elmslie, the time has now come for SSUC to step away and align itself with a new partner and thus becoming part of a new charge.

All nine United Churches in Cayman are being affected by this change, some more than others, and even though I have not canvassed the views of other congregants, it seems fair to say that things are being taken in stride.

There were several meetings and much discussion on the reasons for and against such a realignment but, on 18th January, SSUC members voted in favour of the transition. Since then, under the chairmanship of **Rev. Donovan Myers**, members of both boards met and were introduced to each other.

I have been attending SSUC since the '80s when there were far fewer congregants than today. Back then, if there were 10 people in church, I would exclaim, "Church is full today!" SSUC was a mission station under Elmslie at that time. Things have changed quite a lot since the '80s and now

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Quotable Quotes on Love

"Christian love is not the victim of our emotions but the servant of our wills" (**John Stott**).

"Agape love is a stranger to our planet" (**William Barclay**).

"The opposite of love isn't hate; it is indifference" (**Anon**).

"2 Timothy 3:2 says that during the last times 'people will be lovers of themselves.' What is stated as a disease by Paul is offered in the West as a cure: you need to love yourself. The opposite of self-hate is not self-love but love for God. The basic problem is misdirected love" (**Alistair Begg**).

"I don't do big things; I do small things with big love" (**Mother Teresa**).

"The more we love God, the more we will love our neighbour. And our neighbour starts with our closest family – our husband or wife" (**Anon**).

"Jesus tells us to love our neighbours and also to love our enemies because they are generally the same people!" (**GK Chesterton**).

Special March Birthdays

Happy Birthday to

Richard Coles - 75 on the 3rd

Neals Godfrey - 85 on the 8th

Shavourne Rolle - 50 on the 12th

Zoe Bodden - 85 on the 25th

Sheena Thompson - 50 on the 25th

Rachael Hanson - 60 on the 2nd

Gavin Gray - 50 on the 16th



Pictured above, congregants and visitors gather following the Anniversary Celebrations Launch on 6th February.

Time for Change SSU (Cont'd from Page 3)

the attendance was bordering on 75 each week prior to Covid. There are times when extra seating has to be put out, even after the chairs upstairs have been used. If the problems then were centred around getting more people to come in, now it is around accommodating the demands of growth: finding space for the Sunday School classes, finding enough parking spaces, finding room for fellowship events and finding more spaces to accommodate a growing congregation.

SSUC is very aware of its missional role in the community - large and small - and takes this role very seriously. As far back as I can recall, SSUC has always had a very enthusiastic, supportive and hardworking board which takes its role seriously and joyfully, and a very loving and supportive congregation from all walks of life. Regardless of the changes facing the church, the work of the church will go on as we all grow and continue to “love God, love others and make disciples.”

Editor's note:

We want to especially thank Jennifer who has been our primary SSUC link over the years. At the same time, we pray for God's blessing on the SSUC congregation as it transitions into a new time of ministry. We pray that its partnership with John Gray Memorial will enable it to continue to grow, both numerically and spiritually, for the glory of God.

Editorial (Cont'd from Page 2)

of God” (Genesis 1:27). The choice to abort an unborn baby therefore is a moral one. Further, there are several scriptures which strongly indicate that human life begins at conception. One such passage is Psalm 139:13-16, with the psalmist telling God in the last two verses, “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”

A question which needs to be answered in this debate is, “Who speaks for the rights of the unborn who can't speak for themselves?”

Another matter of concern is the slippery slope being created in allowing for abortion. What will be the next issue for debate? Will it be euthanasia? Will this be followed by arguments for infanticide?

As individual Christians and as a church we cannot sit quietly aside as the matter of liberalizing the Penal Code to expand the grounds for legal abortion is being proposed. We need to take the opportunity to submit our views - while first discussing it among ourselves so as to ensure we understand the issues - and to do so thoughtfully, reasonably and graciously.

Submissions should be forwarded no later than 15th March, 2022 to the Director of the Law Reform Commission, 4th Floor Government Administration Building, Portfolio of Legal Affairs, 133 Elgin Avenue, George Town, Grand Cayman, P.O. Box 136, Grand Cayman KY1-9000 either electronically to cilawreform@gov.ky, or in writing, by post or hand-delivered.



CAYMAN ISLANDS
REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL



Ash Wednesday Virtual Gathering

March 2, 2022. 9:00 am

Rooted, Resilient: Responding in HOPE

In the Spirit of Transition

Guest Speaker:
Rev. Norbert Stephens

Tune in to Elmstie Church YouTube channel